THE VOICE FROM WITHIN: TEACHER STORIES, EPISTEMIC RESPONSIBILITY, AND FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION

by

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for the degree of Doctor of Education
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Abstract

This study addresses the role of autobiographical teacher stories in the ethical imperative to know well in teaching First Nations students. As an account of my own construction of my teacher knowledge, the thesis makes the claim that teachers' knowing, as expressed through personal narratives, can be a valid explanation of and justification for actions in the classroom. Within this context, the study offers itself in part as an enactment of what feminist philosopher Lorraine Code calls a "storied epistemology."

The thesis begins with "The Trickster Brought Them," a story about my own classroom practice involving First Nations students, which acts as the backdrop for the study. This narrative is an articulation of my own teacher knowledge in response to the question, "How do I know what I ought to do?" in the literature classroom with First Nations adult learners. How I answer this question becomes the central problematic of the thesis.

Chapter 1 introduces the nature of the problem, my method, and plan of the thesis. In Chapter 2, I describe the British Columbia postsecondary college system within which I teach and tell my teacher stories such as "The Trickster." I then elaborate the influence of biographical forms on knowledge claims, after which I present excerpts from my teaching

autobiography, and consider the world in which I live and work from my perspective as a woman. Chapter 3 selectively surveys the literature on teacher knowledge: Argyris and Schön's work on "the reflective practitioner," researchers who use teachers' stories to make determinations about teaching and learning, critical and feminist pedagogies as they relate to stories about teaching, and educational theorists who use stories about teaching. Chapter 4 explicates Lorraine Code's theories of responsible knowing, epistemic community, and storied epistemologies, addressing how they support my use of stories as the justification for my classroom knowledge. Chapter 5 returns to "The Trickster," recapitulates the study, and sketches out unresolved problems in using stories to articulate knowledge claims when teaching postsecondary literature and composition to First Nations students.

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PRE-SCRIPT

I begin with a story about teaching. This story is where I begin not only in this inquiry but also in my own journey toward better teaching. The story is an appropriate beginning because it has been significant to my construction of teacher knowledge and it is central to this inquiry. I refer to this story frequently in this study, and its placement here serves as a backdrop against which the study is cast.

"THE TRICKSTER BROUGHT THEM"

It's raining today. I remember A.'s face speckled with rain the last time I saw her. I lost her. We're not supposed to say that. I lost her. She slipped from my hands into the rain, and then she was gone on the Greyhound Bus, going home. Except there is no home there anymore; my people took it away.

I remember the first year I taught English 100 to Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP) students, as if it were yesterday. This may seem like an announcement of unbearable clarity, as the cliché would have it, but unfortunately, what I mean by this employment of words is that while I can remember some aspects of the teaching with unbearable clarity, there are other entire sections that are lost to me. Thirteen years ago, I concluded my first and perhaps my last class in English 100 and turned the NITEP students over to the tender mercies of English 200 and the University of British Columbia English Placement Exam.

I remember where the students sat in that tin-roofed portable. I remember the perpetual expression of disdain for "this Indian junk" (her remark on her introductory letter to me) on S's face. I remember G., K., Sh., Se, Si, G., and P. I remember A., who answered the question.[1]

I remember rain drumming on the classroom portable roof so loud I could not be heard, we could not be heard. We all had to learn to speak up over the rain cascading from the skies. We are all coastal peoples, so used to the rain. But this was ridiculous. Rain

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[1]For First Nations peoples, names are important. Most of the students of English 100 and 140 so many years ago are willing to have their names remain in this account. It is necessary, however, to resort to initials. You know who you are, the students of NITEP, 1983-84.

would leak into the roof tiles and then emerge unexpectedly on students' work, on my face one day. The drips had perverse timing and target. We laughed. Laughter like rain. G. put a styrofoam cup under the drip one day and collected a cupful. Laughter like rain. Playing with the word 'drip.' The irony of our placement at the back of the secondary campus building in a portable that leaked when it rained was not lost on us.

In 1983-84, I was assigned a teaching task that was particularly challenging. The Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP) at University of British Columbia had set up a two-year bridging program at Fraser Valley College. The English Department had assigned a sessional instructor to teach English 100, and the coordinator of NITEP decided to advertise for someone with special interest or expertise with Indian students. I applied for the position and won it, even though I was a Communications Instructor teaching business writing in the career technical programs. The NITEP coordinator made it clear to the Dean and the members of the English Department that I was chosen over other candidates to teach English 100 because of my professed interest in Indian students and their experiences in my composition courses and because I was interested in the culture of the tribal groups that were to be found in Chilliwack and the surrounding area.

My appointment caused some concern for the English Department, although their concerns were somewhat allayed when it was discovered that I had attended graduate school at the same university as three members of the English Department. Because I had not taught English 100 and 140 in any form, there was also some concern that I was to adapt a course I had not yet taught in its original form. It was within this context of

concern, subsequently, that I did much of the work that year. I had one friend in the English Department, and he worked with me to synchronize our courses. These were the colleagues who would set the final exam; these were the colleagues who would mark "my" students' work.

When I was hired to teach NITEP students English 100, I was given an outline of the course that transferred to the University of British Columbia. It was expected that I would use the anthology commonly assigned, that the entire English 100 student body at Fraser Valley College would sit a common final examination, and that the faculty members would engage in a group marking session where we were not to mark our own students' exams.

Looking back, I see myself as a teacher who knew the answer to the question, Why teach literature? Literature was a vehicle for otherwise enlightened students to learn more about the recognized forms of writing and critical thinking. I had moved away from perceiving literature, at least in introductory classes, as a method through which students would achieve an admission into a higher state of culture. The goal of the course was to teach students to respond to literature and to write about that response in an acceptable manner, and to demonstrate competence in the authorised forms: exposition and argument. I would teach 'them' to read this literature so they could discover the system of meaning universally embodied in literature. They would enter the community of discourse that was the academy and be successful. They would earn degrees in primary education.

The second question, the question of what to teach, was not so easily answered. The bookstore had a class set of the current Norton's Anthology of short fiction and poetry.

With the encouragement of the NITEP coordinator, I decided to use this anthology and supplement it with relevant readings, by which she and I meant readings by and about Native Indians. The NITEP coordinator was a Stō lō woman who was completing her Master of Education degree, and we consulted frequently about what this list of supplementary readings would contain. The only author we could name immediately was Chief Dan George, a Burrard Native who had recently been cast in the film *Little Big Man*. In the meantime, I acquainted myself with the latest version of the canon represented by the anthology chosen by the English Department. This anthology contained selections of stories, scenes from plays, essays and texts of speeches. All of the entries were by British and Anglo-European men, a detail that did not escape my feminist eye. The newest story had been originally published in the early 70s. There was only a handful of Canadian selections, and none from the canon of what was then called Commonwealth Literature.

The first short story to be used by my colleagues in their sections of English 100 was George Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant" (Orwell, 1965). The first word I noticed as I flipped through the story was the word "native." I sat down on a stool in the bookstore and read the story.

It was the end of summer: I remember that. The bookstore had no appreciable windows, but I knew the day was warm and tinged with crispness. Sitting on that footstool, between the eight-foot high shelving crammed with textbooks, reminded me suddenly and acutely of crouching before the forbidden bookcase in my parents' bedroom. I remembered the fear I experienced, when I was a five-year old child, stealing into my parents' bedroom and pulling out one of the books. The book I found then both fascinated and repelled me.

I was fascinated because I could see the pictures and repelled because these pictures were gruesome, images I had encountered nowhere in my short, sheltered life. The book was Dante's *Inferno*, illustrated by Doré (Dante, 1948). I could not read but I could certainly see, and I recall looking at the illustrations and then looking at the accompanying columns of what I knew were words, trying to piece out what was happening. I couldn't ask my parents what the pictures meant, because I wasn't supposed to be touching the books in this bookcase, and I also knew my six-year-old sister would be no help; besides she'd probably tell on me. I taught myself to read in order to make sense of those pictures, but by the time I had mastered the Prince Valiant comics in the Sunday newspaper, and the word "unbreakable" on a valuable jazz record, the Doré had disappeared. I forgot about the arresting images in the Doré, although those images would populate my dreams for many years. I forgot about those images until I found myself sitting in the bookstore, reading another unfamiliar story. I had a flash of recall, a flash I shrugged off as I read Orwell's 1936 essay.

Orwell's essay, recounted in the first person, features a narrator self-described as "young and ill educated [who] had had to think out [his] problems in the utter silence that is imposed on every Englishman in the East" (Orwell, 1965, pp. 261-262) As a result of a working elephant going 'must,' and its mahout setting out in the wrong direction to find it, the narrator finds himself compelled to shoot the elephant "solely to avoid looking like a fool" (p. 268) The essay is characterised by many overtly racist comments directed toward "the evil-spirited little beasts who tried to make my job impossible" (p. 262), beasts identified as yellow, black, native, Indian and Burman. The narrator had to kill the

elephant, he tells the reader, because "it is the condition of his rule that he shall spend his life in trying to impress the 'natives,' and so in every crisis he has got to do what the 'natives' expect of him" (p. 265).

Based entirely on my experience as a woman reading sexist texts, I rejected the anthology for use with this class. I wish I had known about Rodden (1991), whose article on George Orwell entirely supports my intuitive and vehement rejection. My life would have been much easier if I had had some scholarly support for my adamant refusal to teach the story. My colleagues were bewildered and increasingly frustrated by my inability to explain adequately my decision. I had no way to explain why I was doing what I was doing except to relate the story about reading Dante when I was five, and I knew doing that was out of the question.

Rejecting the Orwell essay and the anthology it came in left me with a modest book budget and no books. The theory I brought to the selection of material for the class was simple. I was looking for relevant reading material that would assist the students in an appreciation of reading literature. My criteria were quite unsophisticated and covertly based on my assessment of the reading strengths of First Nations students, based on teaching five or six of them a semester, often unsuccessfully, since 1979. The texts had to be written by or about Native Indian peoples or on themes relevant to First Nations people. At the time, my theory of literature was also equally transparent: the students would come to understand the forms of narrative, exposition and argument by encountering such forms and analysing them and practising these modes using the reading material as subject matter. Because nothing in my formal education prepared me for this teaching assignment, I made

little connection between my education as a literary critic, my appreciation and understanding of literature, and my teaching practices.

Until I started looking for stories by and about Indians, I had not noticed their absence from the curriculum, the libraries or the bookstores. I was already tediously famous for flipping open the latest course descriptions and counting aloud the women represented within; I simply extended this sensitivity to other under-represented authors. Certainly, in the English Department no discussions about the canon included such details as "why aren't there any 'coloured folks' in the canon." We didn't even talk about our curriculum as the canon.

So the greatest literary rummage hunt of the decade began in our college community. I dredged my memory, I asked colleagues, I conducted my first ERIC search. I also learned to be evasive, as colleagues would wonder why I wanted to have these titles, since none of the names that sprang to mind (*Hiawatha*?) could be counted as literature. This is when, in my spare time, I began to wonder about what did count as literature, a question that lay uneasily over my selection of *In Search for April Raintree* (Culleton, 1983), a novel used at the Native Education Centre in Vancouver, recommended by an anthropologist who was teaching adult basic education grade eleven English.

By the time the semester began, I had a distressingly short list, and there were no examples from the canon. I settled on *Walsh*, by Sharon Pollock (1973), *Dance Me Outside* by W. P. Kinsella (1977), *Daughters of Copper Woman* by Anne Cameron (1981), *The Man to Send Rainclouds*, edited by Kenneth Rosen (1975), and short stories from *Spit Delaney's Island* by Jack Hodgins (1976) and selections from a special issue of *Sinister*

Wisdom (1983), and *In Search of April Raintree* by Beatrice Culleton (1983). At the time, these choices represented to me vehicles by which the students would come to experience the power of literature to express reality in ways that would transform their lives -- stir them sufficiently to meet the demands of studying English literature -- and pass the final examination, continue to be teachers in training, go on to second year at the university and pass the second year English competency exam, all conducted in traditional, university-oriented education and teacher training.

What I actually encountered were students reading for their lives. I wrote in my journal on September 15, 1983: "*These students are reading for their lives. Reading as if their lives depended upon it. Reading as if it mattered. As if they might find themselves there, might understand, might find a place.*"[2] What I encountered were students reading to find themselves in the text in ways that did not re-create the harm of encountering "the Native" in literature. What I had in class with me were fourteen students, encountering for the first time a curriculum entirely devoted to Native literature and resulting themes, and some of them were suspicious and some resentful. My perception, which I admit I came to

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[2]I recognize in Barbara Christian's words an echo of this journal entry: "I can only speak for myself. But what I write and how I write is done in order to save my own life. And I mean that literally. For me, literature is a way of knowing that I am not hallucinating, that whatever I feel/know *is*" (Christian, 1988, pp. 77-78). See also Alice Walker's essay "Saving the Life that is your Own:" "I don't recall the exact moment I set out to explore the works of black women, mainly those in the past .... My discovery of them -- most of them out of print, abandoned, discredited, maligned, nearly lost -- came about, as many things of value do, almost by accident. As it turned out -- and this should not have surprised me -- I found I was in need of something that only one of them could provide" (Walker, 1983, p. 9).

by freely crossing from my experience of exclusion from the texts I had read for many years, was that English literature was a foreign, unwelcoming land, with an absence of a reflected self, populated by "savages" and "squaws."

I was unaware of the cultural differences that would exist among these students, who were far from the homogenous "Indian student" NITEP was developed to accommodate. The students in the class were Haida, Nishga, Stö ló, Carrier, and Kwakiutl, names which represent distinct tribal associations and distinct cultural identities. I also discovered students struggling with reclaiming their identity, unfamiliar with terms used freely by others, lost in a discourse not intended for them. Together, we began the process of dismantling the curriculum, unpacking the texts, learning how to speak to each other about literature and knowing, how to find a way to 'do' English 100 and emerge alive, so that they could proclaim, as a student did when she called to report she had graduated from the University of Lethbridge, "I did it and I'm still an Indian."

The entire time I taught this class I was uneasy. I was uneasy about the methods I used to teach the material. I was uneasy about the learning that was going on. I was uneasy about the determinations of value I was required to make at every turn. As I transformed the curriculum, sometimes in mid-sentence, I became more and more uneasy about the quality of this avowedly emancipatory education. What I took for granted was the structure within which I re-created English 100. With every amendment, I had to assure the department that 'yes, it is literature,' assurances based on a shared acceptance of what the word itself meant.

I stopped wearing my teacher disguises that year, because it was too cold in the

portable. I began to wear long woolen skirts and sweaters, or bluejeans and jackets. These outfits, mind you, on a woman who had been raised by a woman would didn't believe "ladies" wore slacks in public, and certainly "ladies" of my size didn't wear bluejeans anywhere, let alone in a classroom. It seems to me that my intellectual dis-ease was matched by a growing acceptance of my body, my appearance, and inspired by the cold and damp classroom, I began to dress less like a teacher at a professional school and more like myself.

I quickly abandoned what I thought was the standard discussion of the text that would quash discussion of the text, because whenever I asked the students, "What do you think?" about a story assigned for reading, an eerie silence fell. I came to understand they believed they knew how a student is "supposed" to respond to such questions. What they did not know, often, was the "correct" response to such questions, far removed as they perceived themselves to be from the English university tradition of literary criticism. What they had learned, all too well, was that whatever they thought -- it was probably wrong.

The first short stories we read were from Kinsella's *Dance Me Outside* (1977), a book the students devoured. We began each class with a sheltered start, where for the first ten or fifteen minutes, as students assembled, we would engage in what we freely admitted were gossip sessions about the characters in the stories. Students hungry to find themselves in the text began to discuss *Daughters of Copper Woman* (1981) and *In Search of April Raintree* (1983), even though we weren't supposed to be on those texts yet. The characters in the fiction became inhabitants of the classroom, and we talked about them as if they were in the pages of tabloid journals. We nearly got into fisticuffs about the "meaning" of

Hodgins "By the River" (1976). When it became apparent that I either didn't know or wasn't going to tell them, a free-for-all broke out that I recorded in my journal.

K was so annoyed with A today. He gets that look on his face and she just ignores him. He had imposed his meaning on the story, no doubt. And I think he's wrong, although no one seemed inclined to ask me anyway. What was interesting to me was what happened when they realised I didn't know the answer. S. looked suitably disgusted. The roll-her-eyes I-can't believe-they-let-her-teach look I've come to know and love. But once they realised they were on their own with it, I'll bet that story got read ten times at least for each group. K. just wanted to be right, and that's a problem. He didn't win, though, and there were some good explanations. Talk about close reading.

All the while, I was bent on the objective: I would teach 'them' to read this literature so they could discover the system of meaning universally embodied in literature. *Dance Me Outside* was the vehicle we would learn to drive toward the goal. They would learn with these trivial pieces and then the good stuff would be easier, I figured. The New Critical tradition I had been educated in claimed one true reading. How could I introduce the seriously flawed novel *In Search of April Raintree* into such an arena? I kept trying to connect our boisterous discussions to elements of fiction. I kept trying to explain the difference between narrative voice and the author. I kept trying to explain omniscient narrator. I kept trying to explain plot and theme.

What the students kept asking for was context (who was this storyteller); a time-marker (when was this story told); the stated intentions; the background ideology; the psychology of people; psychology of the characters in comparison to the psychology of characters known to the reader; and then guidance as to how the author tells the story, that is, translates this specific experience for 'I.' I also saw, partly, a taxonomy that is complex, infinitely compounding meaning, extending the story past my sight to some immense

narrative structure unknown to me. I recall how uneasy I was. Trained in Practical Criticism[3] at a conservative university in the mid-seventies, I feared this was all beside the point, irrelevant somehow to the text, not really "about" literature. And then A. spoke.

One morning in the late autumn, we were reading "New Shoes" (Hogan, 1983). Linda Hogan's "New Shoes" is the story of a Sullie, a First Nations woman who is a chambermaid at a small, roadside motel, where she and her twelve-year-old daughter live in poverty. Two items are prominent in the story: a beautiful quilt made by Sullie's family and a brand new pair of patent leather shoes she finds under the fold-away bed in their room. The story is a meditation on the life Sullie leads, on her memories and dreams for her daughter. "New Shoes" is a beautifully written, perplexing story, very rich with possibilities and often read with pain. The careful reader does not discover in the text the answer to the question the woman asks: Where did the shoes come from?

Where did the shoes come from?
What were some possibilities the girl's mother was considering?
How did those shoes get under the bed?
What was the mother afraid about?
Finally, in desperation and exasperation, I ask again, Where did the shoes come from? and A. replied "The Trickster brought them."
"Okay. The trickster brought them. Okay?" [now what?] Was I seriously going to launch into a critique of the trickster as deus ex machina for their instruction and delight. I think not. I think not. I don't can't begin to know what it means to A. and her friends when

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[3] Practical criticism, from I.A. Richards's *Practical Criticism: A study in literary judgement* (1956), is a method of literary criticism that became the foundation for New Criticism developed in the 1940s. New Criticism "insisted on close reading of the text and awareness of verbal nuance and thematic (rather than narrative) organization, and was not concerned with the biographical or social backgrounds of works of art. The text existed as text on a page, an object in itself, with its own structure, which should be explored in its own terms: inquiries into the writer's personality or motivation were considered ... irrelevant" (Drabble, 1985, p. 693).

she says so confidently the trickster brought them. I also was really embarrassed. As if I now knew what they had all known so long. The trickster brought them. Of course. Of course.

When A. replied, "The trickster brought them," to my persistent question about the appearance of a new pair of patent leather shoes under the bed of the impoverished narrator's thirteen-year-old daughter, she was attempting to steer me back to a fruitful discussion of the story. A. was speaking as an elder (for that was the status she had in the classroom), and her response was intended to silence me, to rebuke me for pressing the students for an answer, for "the" answer. One student made a snort of dismayed laughter at her reply, which brought from its realm of mystery one of the central figures of many First Nations mythologies. But even that is expressing it in my terms. A. did not need to explain, her classmates did not need to explain, the mechanism by which these shoes arrived in the story. The trickster brought them. We were face to face with the mystery. The writer of the story knew that. The readers, except me, knew that. That's all that needed to be said. I was speechless.

I talked to R. today, about the class. She's still trying to teach me how to teach. I hope she's got about forty years. I talked to her a little bit about the trickster, but she always gets so impatient with me when I try to talk theory. I get impatient with me too. I just don't know how to connect them to the material. The trickster. I can even, almost, make the connection to literary form, but then we'd still be paddling around the damn rock in the river. Most discussions still begin with this rock in the river. Getting rid of the rock, finding a different rock, attaching something to the rock, all continue to recognize the rock. Maybe it is time to look elsewhere, to get into a different river, find a new, entirely unconsidered way. The question is: how? When I posed this question to R., she said: You should think more about singing.

The first semester of English ended with a final exam, which was to be marked by the English Department members in a group exercise in evaluation. We were not to mark

our own students' examinations. I was invited to submit questions specific to the reading we had done that semester, which I found very threatening, exposing as it did some details of what I had been teaching. I contributed several questions for consideration and a list of the texts we had read. When I arrived to invigilate the examination, which included sitting at the front of the classroom in the main building while the students wrote, I discovered a question that required the students to explain the plot mechanisms in a story of their choice. "New Shoes" was one of the choices. I sat in painful observance while the students struggled with the format and layout of the exam, and I wrote in my journal.

A., you can't say "The Trickster brought them." If you say that on the test, you'll fail. That can't be the answer. We have to find a way to make that answer the answer. But we won't find the way during this final exam. Don't write "The trickster brought them," on the test. Okay?

But she did. She did. And she failed the test. And she went home. And sometime in 1991, when I was deciding what I ought to write my dissertation about, A. died. How and where are private matters. She died. A., you were right. The trickster did bring them.

Sitting in the warm, bright classroom in the main building during the final examination, watching my students floundering with the structure of the final exam, I came to know what A. had been teaching me all along. I came to realise that nothing, no amount of critical distance, can efface the role of English language and literature in conquering and nearly destroying First Nations peoples in British Columbia. The relationship of the First Nations student to mainstream education is always a relationship of double and triple

ontological shock (Bartky, 1979; Bogdan, 1992).[4] For many First Nations peoples who lost their own language abruptly as a result of the intervention of English, English is now their only language. The cruel paradox of English 100 as a barrier to NITEP students, who are working to liberate the primary curriculum for their peoples, is unbearable, not to be borne. And yet it must be borne. We have to find a way.

As a well-educated White woman, I could only trade on my own keen experiences as an outsider to the literature of 'my' people, and perhaps share some of the ways I learned to read for my own life. Facing those keen experiences means unearthing pain, digging up exclusions unutterable. Could it be that I have wasted all of my adult life in the appreciation of a literature never meant for me? The exquisite shock of that question compels me to find some reason, some use, some sense out of all those years spent sitting on the floor before a forbidden bookcase, struggling to discover between the picture and the word some message meant for me.

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[4] Sandra Bartky (1979) writes of "a 'double ontological shock': first, the realization that what is really happening is quite different from what appears to be happening; and second, the frequent inability to tell what is really happening at all" (p. 256). Deanne Bogdan (1992) extends this notion to "the recognition of misrecognition--of the triple ontological shock that not only are things not what they seem but they are not all right, and that they will probably not be put right, at least not by literature" (p. 198).

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This inquiry begins with a story, a not-uncommon beginning for a discussion of teaching in the last two decades of this century. Linda Kauffman calls such stories "biographeme ... restricted to the threshold of a book or the opening moves of an essay, after which the personal vanishes" (Kauffman, 1993, p. 26). I offer "The Trickster Brought Them" as a knowledge claim. This story represents how I came to know something of value, something that continues to shape my practice. The story is an articulation of my teacher knowledge. This story is an answer to the question, "How do I know what I ought to do?" in the literature classroom with First Nations adult learners. This question is the central problem of this inquiry: How do I know what I ought to do in the classroom? The answer to this central question is partly expressed in the story "The Trickster Brought Them" and also partly expressed by the "storied epistemology" of this thesis, that is, the recognition that the subsequent stories in this inquiry are "about a situated, socially produced and exercised human agency whose newly audible voice requires 'changing the subject' of the individualist tradition in epistemology" (Code, 1995, p. 160).

This inquiry is about teacher knowledge. It is an interpretive account of the construction of teacher knowledge in postsecondary English literature classes from the teacher's point of view. 'Teacher knowledge' in this context refers to how a teacher comes to know what to do; the focus is the justification for one teacher's classroom practices. The study takes seriously many elements of knowing -- such as the context of the knowledge thus constructed, the gender of the knower, the form the knowledge claim assumes, and the

community in which the story is told -- elements that are frequently overlooked or discounted in standard treatments of the relationship between theory and practice, set in the context of the moral dimension of teaching English literature and composition to First Nations adults.

The problem this study addresses is twofold. First, at the level of personal experience, the problem takes the form of a question asked in one form or another by almost every teacher I know: "How do I know what I ought to do in the classroom?" In my case, the question becomes more specific: "How do I know what I ought to do in the literature classroom with First Nations adult students?" Through examples like "The Trickster Brought Them," I partially answer that question. In the ensuing pages of this study, I claim that story-telling is an appropriate way to answer the question responsibly. At the level of educational research, furthermore, the problem is that there are relatively few studies that show the sense in which stories can come to be responsible knowledge. Thus, in spite of much research about story and teacher knowledge in the educational literature, few inquiries focus on the epistemological and ethical status and function of stories as they shape and guide teaching practice.

I make three claims in this study: I express my knowing through stories, which I offer as explanation and justification for my actions in the classroom; these stories are biographical forms, and biographical forms are culturally specific productions, productions which have bearing upon what and how I express knowledge claims; and the Canadian philosopher, Lorraine Code, provides theories of responsible knowing as guidance for reflection on such teaching stories. These three claims are significant because, while telling stories about teaching is an acceptable method of reflecting on teacher knowledge, few examples exist of what ought to be done with such stories and how they are to be incorporated into responsible

knowledge claims.

This study is intended as a heuristic for other postsecondary teachers. Using a grounded hermeneutic approach, I enact a method of story-telling as support for my teacher knowledge claims. As Addison advises:

> A grounded hermeneutic approach is not a method in the sense of a prescribed set of techniques that can be applied to any research project. A hermeneutic approach cuts below specific methods or techniques. ... it seeks to illuminate social, cultural, historical, economic, linguistic, and other background aspects that frame and make comprehensible human practices and events; ... it is grounded in the everyday practices of individuals in ongoing human affairs (1992, p. 111).

I hope this heuristic may be of use for another teacher who finds herself in similar, uncharted, unfamiliar, exhilarating territory. I wish neither to abrogate my responsibility for my teaching practice nor to avoid taking responsibility for teaching actions that may prove to have been wrong or inadequately thought through. I hope to achieve partial, impermanent closure to certain memories, to say not only what happened but what what happened *means*, at least to me then, as I remember it. This study, then, is not meant to be an unmediated text handed over to the reader who will then assume the role of expert in my experiences. I am engaged in "an active acknowledgment of the presumptive validity of a woman's perceptions, experiences, and capacities" (Code, 1991, p. 221).

Method

What is it I do in this inquiry with the story I tell? First, I explain how I construct stories about teaching, then I explain what I do in my daily teaching life with such stories as tools for reflection for myself and my colleagues. These two sections of the Introduction constitute my

method of story-telling in my professional and personal life. Because the use of the narrative form has such an important and perhaps unrecognized impact on the stories I tell, I foreground these implications in an overview of narrative forms at the end of the Introduction to this inquiry.

In Chapter Two I provide the context within which I tell stories such as "The Trickster." This is necessary, from my point of view, because the context and the story are imbricated with each other. I believe it is not possible to use the story to make responsible knowledge claims without an adequate understanding of my perspective of the context in which I teach. An awareness of the context, by the way, is also an important 'piece' to up-date. The context in which I was teaching in 1983-84 has changed. Understanding the context, therefore, is important to me because doing so provides important details about the background against which the events of "The Trickster" unfolded.

When I tell stories and when I explain the British Columbia college system from my own standpoint, I find myself writing autobiographically. I became aware that the genre of biography using the form itself created expectations too. Therefore, I sketch out those concerns before I present excerpts of my teaching autobiography. The teaching autobiography, based on an established tradition of learning about teaching by investigating our own experiences of teaching, situates the woman teaching in "The Trickster."

One element of my knowledge claim often invisible to me is my gender, that is, my relationship as a woman to the world. I believe, for example, that "The Trickster" would have been a very different story if one of the "high status" men of my own age in the classroom had provided the unruly response (Bogdan, Davis & Robertson, 1997, p. 100) instead of A.

Since I consider myself a feminist teacher, I consider the world in which I live and work first "as a woman," hence "Gendered Knowing" is a section following my teaching autobiography.

The literature relevant to the subject of this inquiry is vast and rich. I chose to begin the literature review in Chapter Three with a discussion of the ground-breaking work of Argyris and Schön, whose work on the reflective practitioner is where I began my own investigation into my teaching practices and my teacher knowledge. This research led me to theorists and researchers in the field of collaborative inquiry, teaching stories, and the use of narrative in qualitative research. Related fields are critical and feminist pedagogies, especially in the specific area of literature education. The literature review concludes with a survey of the theorists whose work provides guidance and support for my use of stories about teaching to reflect on my practise.

The theoretical centre of the inquiry is my explication of the work of Lorraine Code. I engage in what Code calls "epistemic responsibility"[5] (Code, 1987, esp. 1-14) and construct knowledge from historically and contextually situated experiences by telling stories, among other activities, and reflecting responsibly on them. One example of these stories is "The Trickster Brought Them." Code urges us to "focus upon how everyday, practical, epistemic life provides the context in which knowledge, belief, understanding, *and* epistemological questions themselves can be developed" (Code, 1987, p. 9). Her theories of responsible knowing, epistemic responsibility, epistemic community, and storied epistemologies are

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[5] Epistemic responsibility is a stance assumed within a community of knowers, those who have come to share a commitment to knowledge claims that integrate the subject (the one who knows), the situation (the context in which one knows), and the dialogue that explores the knowledge claim and resulting actions (ethics).

crucial to what I do with stories as articulation of knowledge. Her work anchors the theoretical justification for my teaching stories. With her work, I know what I am doing when I tell a story.

I return to consider "The Trickster Brought Them" at the conclusion of this inquiry. I know that I have to know well on my own. Even within the circle of knowers committed to knowing well, no one is going to do this for me -- just as no one is going to be standing at my shoulder when I turn, in the heart-breaking moment I hear a student proclaim "The Trickster Brought Them." I have to know what to do. The first thing I have to do is to hear that proclamation for all its unruly particularity, for its message of knowing well and deeply something so different from what I know about teaching that it may as well be in another language. I have to attend to what I know now that I did not know the moment before and resist the temptation to not hear -- to abridge the inquiry -- to cease to know better by refusing to know that I don't know well at this moment.

I return, therefore, to "The Trickster" in this inquiry as I return to the story in my daily life, wondering. I wish I could promise the reader of this inquiry that, in the end, I pronounce a discovery so fine that I will have forever protected myself from making such a mistake again, that I will know so well and so *utterly* that the reader will be convinced I do indeed know well enough to proceed. Alas, the conclusion I reach is far more modest and probably far more frightening.

Stories about Teaching

I tell stories such as "The Trickster" to explain how I come to know what I ought to do in the classroom. I find myself telling stories to justify my actions in the classroom, classrooms that may be unfamiliar to many of my colleagues. These stories are created from recollections in my personal journals, which have chronicled my experiences in this adult education setting. These stories embody the justification of my practice; it is within the interface of First Nations cultures and the culture of the academy in which I work where explanation is frequently required.

My stories of teaching invoke the "epistemic privilege"[6] of one teacher in a specific classroom, at a specific point in her own history, with a specific group of students, in a particular institution. The intention of the stories I tell is to explain my sense of the teaching problem and then to examine my actions. This tendency to experience teaching decisions as dilemmas may have developed in me as a result of my involvement in First Nations education. First Nations education is fraught with ethical issues, and there is abundant evidence in the

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[6] Epistemic privilege is a term I first encountered in Uma Narayan's article (1988). The term was used by Alison Jaggar in her seminar on Feminist Epistemology at Rutgers University in 1985: "The claim of 'epistemic privilege' amounts to claiming that members of an oppressed group have a more immediate, subtle and critical knowledge about the nature of their oppression than people who are non-members of the oppressed group" (p. 35). Narayan often uses the phrase 'epistemic privilege of the oppressed,' and identifies key terms: insider and outsider. "An individual who is an 'insider' with respect to one form of oppression (say, by being a woman) may be an 'outsider' with respect to another form oppression [sic] (say, by being white)" (p. 35). Following Narayan's working definition, then, epistemic privilege can be invoked by me when discussing my experiences as a teacher in my classrooms. This does not provide me with insider knowledge as a student in the classroom, as a colleague in the classroom, or as a researcher in the classroom, or as a First Nations person in the classroom. Claiming epistemic privilege does not mean that as a teacher I believe I am a member of an oppressed group.

official and unofficial records to indicate that mainstream educators of First Nations peoples either did not often think about what they were doing or did not often think adequately about what they were doing.[7]

Using my journals and similar documents, I make stories from the experiences of my life. These stories do not come from nowhere. I have experiences; I experience joy, pain, confusion, fear, frustration, and so on. I keep a journal, in which I at times write about these experiences and these emotions. I recall these experiences partly through the journal pages. I create stories and then tell stories. These stories are often defences/explanations of my actions. They are my attempts to answer the question: "How do I know what I ought to do in the classroom?" When I tell these stories I intend to be questioned about the conclusions and the supporting evidence. Within a community of knowers, I seek to interpret the text (the stories) within the philosophical context of Lorraine Code's theories of epistemological responsibility in order to know what I ought to do.

Because I use material from my journals to create stories about my teaching practice, I begin the discussion of story-telling with a description of the journals I have kept in my life. I recognize in the many pages of my journals a life history -- a self-written biography. The form the life history assumes is affected by the physical form of the journals themselves. When I was sixteen, for example, I began writing a "Dear Diary" journal, modelled on the five-year diaries that were popular gifts for girls of my social milieu. I used a school exercise book, but

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[7]Anyone who undertakes First Nations education should become familiar with the history of the residential school in Canada and the United States, beginning with Celia Haig-Brown, *Resistance and Renewal* (1988), J. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision* (1996), and Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996).

I at first made entries modelled on the physical form of the diaries with which I was familiar: three or four short lines per day, recorded every day, meant to be physically juxtaposed with three or four lines written the next year, and so on. I kept my first journal for two years, a practice abruptly ended when I discovered my parents had read it. I did not undertake journal writing again until I was twenty-six, when my marriage ended unexpectedly, and I was left alone to raise a four-year-old boy. I wrote on loose leaf paper, discovered wherever I happened to be. This erratic practice ceased after three months. It was not until many years later, when I was organising a box of letters, that I realised I had a journal of the dissolution of my marriage and the beginning of my life as the single parent of an only child.

I entered my first postsecondary composition class as a thirty-year-old woman in September 1979. The night before this very first class, I sat at my desk for several hours after my son went to bed, and I planned the introductory lecture in a notebook I had bought especially for the occasion. I used this notebook to help me keep track of students' progress, plan lectures and discussions, and, increasingly, to express my excitement and bewilderment at this challenging job. This notebook, which resembled a public school teacher's day book, became my journal.

In 1981, I began a new journal at the request of the resource person at a residential workshop, who asked us to use the categories of Jungian typology: Sensing, Thinking, Feeling, Intuition (Briggs & Myer, 1977). For several months, I used this format, then I returned to the less structured form familiar to me. The categories persist in my journals, especially when I am at a loss to record and explain an experience. In 1983, I was still using this style quite frequently in my journal entries. I have not determined whether these

categories shaped the entries and the experiences thus recorded.

My journals contain descriptions of teaching situations, personal details of my life, commentary on what I am reading, dreamwork, ideas for fiction and poetry, and transcripts of conversations. I am an inveterate eavesdropper, and my journal is always nearby, so I capture bits of conversations, sometimes while I am listening in to students in or near the classroom, and sometimes immediately after words. I do not confine this activity to students' conversations, but rather have collected conversations in coffee shops, airports, malls, everywhere except prisons, where I am not allowed to carry my journal or make personal records of any kind. I write in my journal at least four times a week, and in some journals, such as the journal I kept while I was living in Old Crow for eight months, I write every day. My journals have always been used to make sense of my experiences, especially the painful and overwhelming ones. As I write, I make sense of my experiences and offer explanations to myself. My journals are private, intended for no eyes but mine, and the space, the rhetorical space, is sacred. It is for me a good test of the relationship if I feel I can leave my journals lying about, undisturbed by those with whom I live and teach.

Since 1981, when I began training in the Instructional Skills Workshops, a faculty development initiative supported by the Ministry of Advanced Education,[8] I have kept extensive records of workshops, residential retreats, and similar training. These records contain notes of lectures and collaborative learning experiences, planning notes for residential retreats, and other records of my own professional development. I also developed the habit of

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[8]This ministry is frequently renamed. It is now (1996) the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, previously (1996) the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour.

making notes about classroom experiences in the margins of these records.

Using these journals and records, I find I can recall teaching events with clarity. I also have a talent for recalling the spoken word in conversations, although my memory seems to me to be more reliable than it probably is[9]. These recollections are not infallible, however, and I have been confronted many times with contradictory recollections, not to mention contradictory interpretations of shared events. I want to understand what happened, and I have developed the habit of retracing my teaching steps, of returning again and again to the actual experience to find more of what Argyris and Schön (1974) would consider data to support my understanding of the experience. I thus begin to appreciate key events or significant teaching puzzles, which are often recalled by me as stories.

I began to experiment with stories about teaching, partly as a professional development tool and partly as a means of communicating with my colleagues, some of whom were new to teaching. I use story-telling as a method when I teach composition and humanities courses, so it seems natural for me to tell stories as I encourage my students to tell stories. Because many of my students are First Nations students, I encountered the various ways of story-telling in First Nations communities, and these various ways served to encourage me to find my own ways to tell stories. As I became more interested in the diverse ways of knowing I have discovered over the years, and more concerned with the difficulty of

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[9] Harold Rosen's recent article in *Changing English* (1996) undertakes an introduction to the study of autobiographical discourse. He provides a "guide to major theoretical studies" in order to emphasise the questions "which arise when we write, read and speak life-stories" (p. 21). He is specifically concerned with autobiographical memory, and memory as a social construct. See also Lorraine Code's commentary (1996) on "Loopholes, Gaps, and what is held fast" (Potter, 1996) about evaluating experiential memory claims.

telling stories in a foreign mother tongue -- for this is what my students do -- I began to consider the ways in which stories contain, shape, and express[10] the experience and the resulting knowledge. Stories in my life are containers for experiences as I make sense of them, make meaning from them.

In other words, stories in my life are the result of a deliberate series of acts. Telling some of those stories -- another series of acts -- is a way of communicating what I have come to know. I also use stories as an invitation to consider the dilemmas I encounter, dilemmas that I appreciate as ethical problems I have solved or want to solve.

"The Trickster Brought Them" is one such story, produced from the records, journals, recollections, and story-telling described above. The first time I told the story I was sitting with an elder, trying to explain my frustration with my own teaching practice. "The Trickster" is an example of stories that reflect key incidents in the development of my teacher knowledge. It is not my intention in this inquiry to develop a new method to use in the construction of teacher knowledge, but rather to explore the consequences of the methods I use and to keep before the reader an awareness that the forms themselves may contribute more than is usually acknowledged when teacher knowledge is expressed in what I refer to as biographical forms (discussed in Chapter Two).

Storied Epistemology

I have explained how I create the stories I tell about teaching. Here I will explain what I do

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[10] This is not a new or unique insight. Anthropologists have been telling us this for decades. See especially Robin Ridington (1990).

with these stories in my professional life. When I tell a story about teaching, I take myself to be making claims of knowledge and to be providing reasons for such knowledge claims. By knowledge claims, I mean conclusions about teaching and learning based on my experiences in the classroom and my reflections on those experiences. Central to this activity of telling stories is my expectation that I will come to know more about the teaching practice as a result of a collaboration between me and my interlocutor. When I tell a teaching story, as opposed to writing one, as I have done in this study, I am consciously undertaking what Belenky *et al* (1986) and Goldberger *et al* (1996) identify as "connected knowing," that is "the conviction that the most trustworthy knowledge comes from personal experience rather than the pronouncements of authorities" (Belenky, 1986, pp. 112-113). The collaboration with the interlocutor, which I take up in Chapter Four, does not preclude my own persistent return to the story, and to the pages of the journal that provided the raw material for the story. The collaboration with the interlocutor, however, is an important element of what I do with the story in my workplace. These stories become a text on which to build discussions within an epistemic community, with those who would have available to them descriptions of how I justify knowledge claims and why I decide what to do based on what I know. What do I do with the stories, the perilously small point on which my teacher knowledge apparently rests?

The first thing I do is remember them. I remember. "The Trickster Brought Them" is an invocation of a classroom of my past, lest I forget what I came to know that autumn afternoon. I cannot learn from my teaching experiences if I don't remember them. I cannot undo the classrooms recalled in my stories. I cannot undo any harm done. I can learn from the experiences thus recounted. I must remember what I learned in the moment of A.

speaking. I learned that no amount of transforming the curriculum could obliterate the barrier presented by the method used to present the curriculum. I learned that A. had something important to tell me about the false ubiquity of the "elements of fiction." I learned that by attending to her disruption, I came to know better. Once I learned what she had to teach me, everything changed. I could not go back to who I was before she spoke. I can know well and act accordingly as a result of the knowledge gained at that moment, as long as I remember and reflect on the memory. Constructing and telling a story helps me to remember.[11]

The second step for me is to acknowledge that the stories may have meaning and then to 'hear' them. In order for me to 'hear' the story, I have to tell it out loud to someone. Those who elect to hear the stories have set themselves, at least for the moment, within my epistemic community (see Chapter Four). Telling a story, especially if it contains a difficult or threatening experience, helps me to confirm what happened and begin to understand what what happened means. By telling stories about my teaching, I make certain declarations, some of which I have highlighted above. I hope the story will engage the interlocutor, but I do not expect the interlocutor to make sense of this story for me. I also do not expect the story to be untouchable. I expect the text will be created between the interlocutor and me, partially known by both of us, and infinitely changeable.

Once the story is told, I determine the knowledge claims implicit and explicit in the story. I also turn back to determine what in the narrative shapes the knowledge claims. Part of determining the evidence includes considering to what extent the form I use shapes the

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[11] I must also remember that "The Trickster Brought Them" is an imperfect, incomplete story in "the halting voice of the first person" (Goldstein, 1990, p. 55). It is not the only story. It is partial, open to infinite returns.

knowledge thus expressed. Did I know at the moment A. spoke? Or have I only come to know over years of reflecting on the situation? Was there another significant event I have missed? I am aware that "[it] can be a soul-shattering experience to catch the drift of the tales others are telling themselves about the events we are engaged in together" (Goldstein, 1990, p. 57). What version of this story would A. have told?

I must be self-conscious in the classroom, as far as I am able, and I must be aware of the interaction between what I know, what I think I know, what I am experiencing in the world, and how the narrative form itself may shape what I say, what I come to know. The "Trickster" story has what I recognize now as a familiar structure, which may have shaped the experience I am recalling. Rebecca Goldstein, philosopher and novelist, reminds me that I have been conditioned to use a classical narrative form that grounds most of western European culture:

> There are some general rules we employ in going about making up the stories we tell ourselves; and a few, to our credit, are principles of aesthetics; for we are, none of us, completely indifferent to the claims of Beauty in the telling of our tales. Take, for example, the profound pleasure we derive in the apprehension of a whole, which is, as Aristotle tells us in the *Poetics*, with staggering simplicity, "what has a beginning, a middle, and an end." (Goldstein, 1990, p. 57)

What other ways would I have, if I were not writing within this particular "great tradition," if I were not one of the "we" addressed by Goldstein? As I tell teaching stories, I am aware of them as narratives, and my apprehension of the narrative form may impress on my life story a certain structure, a certain *way* of expressing myself.

Understanding narrative as a form is central to my method of using teaching stories to make knowledge claims, as I am advocating. According to some theorists (Polkinghorne,

1988; Bruner, 1986; Saussure in Belsey 1980), narrative is the primary form by which human experience is made meaningful: "it is nature, not art which makes us storytellers" (Hardy, 1975, vii in Beattie, 1991, p. 79). Whether we tell stories naturally or have to create them through artistic effort, narrative is both activity and structure, and represents a systematic synthesis of reality. Narrative is the invisible and perhaps unconscious process that operates to turn an incident into a story. What remains to be discovered by me is twofold: whether this process is translation, discovery and/or interpretation, and what relationship exists between narrative and the preceding experience and how both of those are connected to knowledge. These are enormous questions, questions that invoke an entire field of inquiry, namely narratology, which this inquiry can only brush against.

Ochberg (1994) maintains that "[e]ach life story selects, from an unlimited array, those moments that the narrator deems significant and arranges them in a coherent order" (p. 114). For example, a life story establishes what counts as the main line of the plot and, thereby, which incidents should be construed as progressions, retreats or digressions (Gergen & Gergen, 1983; Mishler, 1992 in Ochberg, 1994, p. 114).

Telling a teaching story has a formative effect on a teacher's identity:

> First, there appears to be a structure to sequences of lived action that is similar to the structure of a traditional plot. A plot, conventionally, is a way of organizing events into a rising crescendo of tension that reaches its peak in a climax and then resolves into a dénouement. Second, individuals appear to address these plotlike sequences of action to various audiences. In turn, the identity of the protagonist/performer depends on the audience's response. It is in this sense that a life lived in the form of a story is part of an individual's public record. Third, by virtue of how the plot turns out and how the audience responds, life performances justify the idealized images that narrators hold of themselves. Here, too, is a connection between living a life and telling -- or performing -- a story. For a life, again like a story, is a kind of argument. It is a way of claiming that one construction of experience should be privileged and that some other, negative alternative

should be dismissed. (Ochberg, 1994, p. 117)

Ochberg goes on to suggest that "[b]riefly, a story brings to a head the possibility of being undone -- and then attempts to rescue itself. This confrontation with the possibility of negation occurs at the three levels just described. As *plot* a story exposes its protagonist to the possibility of defeat. As a *performance* a story risks the disbelief or disinterest of its audience. As an *argument* a story risks being supplanted by an invidious alternative" (Ochberg, 1994, p. 117).

Recognizing that stories with certain structures are embedded in the culture of the story-teller's community, I wonder how that structure shapes the experience thus expressed. I listen to First Nations story-tellers who are Stólō, Haida, Tlingit, Vuntut Gwichin, Chilcotin, Carrier, and Cree. Their stories are expressed in significantly different structures, different among these groups and different from the structure I would have identified as "mine." To my sensibility, the stories I encounter in First Nations communities often lack "a point"; that is, when I first began to listen to these stories, I often failed to detect the purpose of the story. I am the subject of many jokes describing my persistent, thinly-veiled enthusiasm for hearing a story and then trying in a variety of polite ways to quiz the story-teller about the purpose or moral of the tale.[12] Being the subject of humour encouraged me to realise that what made these stories work might be significantly different from what I would recognize as the "natural" elements of "any" story. It is not my intention to deal with this theory, but rather to say only that listening to stories in distinctly different cultures has caused me to consider how

[12]I am not referring to fables based on First Nations literary tradition created by story tellers deliberately for a non-native audience.

the conventions of story-telling, which are present in all stories, differ from one culture to another and what happens to an experience thus expressed.

I tell stories like the Trickster. I don't usually write them. When I do write one, what am I to make of aesthetic evaluations (this is not a good story, it is flat, it lacks verisimilitude, etc)? I am not creating a story about teaching as an act of fiction, but as a tool for reflection, for my own reflection. When I tell a teaching story, the listeners and I spend our time talking about the story as an example of teaching, not talking about the story as an example of creative writing. And since it isn't an example of creative writing anyway (that is, the plot of the story existed first as an experience which I then recalled and then translated into a story), I can't do much to improve the story qua fiction. I can certainly "tell a better story," but I can't make different characters, establish a more appropriate setting, select and sustain a different tone, tell the story from a different perspective, add or subtract plot, and so on. The story, especially the ones I have told recently, simply "arrive" when I'm talking about teaching, and the telling changes the story every time.

I become aware of details I included and 'read' for details I have omitted. I ask myself what I am still not talking about. I have participated in constructing the meanings I have assigned to particular events in the past. These are constructed stories I tell, using recognized forms, some of which bear the imprint of their origins. I attend, in the process, to "*how* it is that actual, historically situated, gendered epistemological and moral subjects know and respond to actual, complex experiences" (Code, 1988b, p. 187, my emphasis) by taking the reader inside one of these complex experiences. This may mean describing details that the reader will not appreciate, or leaving out pieces of information. What do these apparently

meaningless weather reports have to do with anything of value? Why do I return in my memory to a First Nations man drawing complex obloid forms on the cover of his binder as I taught a mechanistic theory of communication? In what ways did these details begin to support the still, small voice that claims "I know," often in the face of evidence marshalled against what I knew (Belenky *et al.*, 1986)? What other details have I neglected, details that help to answer the question, How do I know what I ought to do?

Which details to include and which to exclude is problematic. Here is an example. In the version of "The Trickster" used in this inquiry, I write the following:

> So the greatest literary rummage hunt of the decade began in our college community. I dredged my memory, I asked colleagues, I conducted my first ERIC search. I also learned to be evasive, as colleagues would wonder why I wanted to have these titles, since none of the names that sprang to mind (*Hiawatha*?) could be counted as literature. This is when, in my spare time, I began to wonder about what did count as literature, a question that lay uneasily over my selection of *In Search for April Raintree* (Culleton, 1983), a novel used at the Native Education Centre in Vancouver, recommended by an anthropologist who was teaching adult basic education grade eleven English.

I could leave the identity of the helpful colleague as above. In fact, the more complete identity is this: The helpful anthropologist is my partner, and at the time of "The Trickster" we were in the first year of our discreet relationship, which we kept hidden from those who were in the classroom and from most of our colleagues. At the time I decided to use *April Raintree*, the novel had just been published, and it was not considered good literature or even acceptable literature for use in the university classroom. I depended upon "my helpful colleague" not only because he knew a great deal about teaching First Nations adults but also, and perhaps most importantly to my decision to use the book, because I knew him well enough to trust his judgment. We talked often about the wisdom and value of using *April*

Raintree. We concluded, based on our individual experiences with it, that it was valuable in the classroom. We took a chance to use the book.[13] The not-so-small detail about who the helpful anthropologist 'really' is is important to the integrity of the story, to the integrity of the meaning of the experience in the NITEP classroom. It is also important to note that this detail, strictly speaking, 'ought' to be left out in the context of conventional teacher stories. And when it is left out, an important detail of the story, of the knowledge created from the experience in that classroom, gets left out. I could not defend my choice of *April Raintree* at the time by claiming the relationship that made it possible for me to risk using it.[14]

Another detail that is not obvious when I tell "The Trickster Brought Them" is my experience of teaching as a woman who weighs considerably more than the average for an anglo woman of my height. This is a fact of my adult life. It is also an "invisible" fact in the construction of my knowledge. The story I tell is about my appearance (and how I feel about my appearance), as much as it is about being unprepared in the classroom, or having a group discussion fall apart, or dealing with a hostile student. The persistent failure I experience because I am not 'normal' underlies everything I do. My teaching autobiography, furthermore, can be mined for similar details that illuminate "The Trickster" (see Chapter Two).

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[13]Since then, of course, Culleton's book has been accepted for what it is -- a powerful recollection in the authentic voice of a gifted writer. Now, of course, this novel and many of the other writers I choose that year have been canonized as Native American literature (Petrone, 1990; Goldie, 1991; Swann, 1994).

[14] For me, and for many with whom I tell stories, the relationships between and among people is important. We identify each other by our familial relationships. I am not related to anyone in the communities in which I work, but by now I know cousins, aunts, uncles, fathers, grandfathers, grandmothers, mothers, and so on. When I meet a student in a classroom now, there is early on a "You taught my dad" conversation, which establishes a necessary relationship, a connection, where teaching and learning can proceed.

It may be that some parts of the meaning of my stories may remain unknown to me. As Shoshana Felman advises, "*it takes two to witness the unconscious*," (1992, p. 15, emphasis in the original), and she goes on to express her belief "that there is in effect such a thing as an *unconscious* testimony, and that this unconscious, unintended testimony has, as such, an incomparable heuristic and investigative value" (p. 15, emphasis in the original). Felman reminds us that "one does not have to *possess* or *own* the truth in order to effectively *bear witness* to it, that speech as such is unwittingly testimonial; and that the speaking subject constantly bears witness to a truth that nonetheless continues to escape him [sic], a truth that is, essentially, *not available* to its own speaker" (p. 15, emphasis in the original). The story, then, becomes a site for investigation for both the speaker and for the listener.

Stories such as "The Trickster Brought Them" assume a listener. Most of the time, I tell stories in specific contexts, often to illuminate discussions about teaching and learning. Sometimes I tell stories to advise a bewildered teacher. Sometimes I tell stories to explain why I have done what I have done. Sometimes I tell stories to seek advice. Sometimes the stories are explanation; sometimes the stories are defence. They are always told assuming a listener/reader who has some interest in them. The stories have a purpose; I have an intention. They are explicit attempts to explain why I do what do, and how I come to know what I ought to do.

Because I teach literature, because I have studied English literature formally, because I am a reader, I find in the pages of fiction, as well as in the pages of the *Harvard Educational Review*, a community of knowers who help me to understand the role stories play in my professional life. Rebecca Goldstein has this to say about the role of stories in our lives:

> But *the* story -- the one we live but cannot hear -- is very largely generated by the versions of it the participants tell themselves. It's these internal reconstructions that determine [our] actions, which is why the narrative mode is so much better suited for the explanation of human behavior than some more straightforwardly causal account. (Goldstein, 1990, p. 56)

Goldstein, as well as the other voices you will hear in these pages, advises me about the central place stories have in my own actions. Stories, at least for me, are the way I reflect on my practice and the way I enter conversations about teaching. I need knowledge that I can rely on in order to make a difference to the students -- to teach well. And that knowledge, to be useful and accessible to me, has to become my knowledge. I have to know what to do and why from within. I also need the opportunity to express not only what I know but also how I came to know it, which often involves telling stories about teaching. When I tell such stories, I know I risk a response far from what I hope for, a response aptly described by novelist Russell Banks:

> The kid's friends nodded, patiently waiting for the story of how nobody screwed over Deke once, because that's the way most stories get told when they're told in person. First the teller sets out his principles, and then he shows you how those principles get enacted in the world, usually by describing some incident or event in his recent past, so that what you end up with is the storyteller's philosophy of life. If you'd asked him straight out in the beginning to tell you what his philosophy of life was, he probably wouldn't have been able to tell you, any more than Deke could have. Sure he'd have one, at least he'd believe he had one, but unless he happened to be a professional philosopher, the chances are good he wouldn't be able to tell you what it was in so many words. And if he was a professional philosopher, the chances are just as good you wouldn't be able to understand what the hell he was talking about anyhow. (Banks, 1981,164)

Banks's narrator makes it clear that Deke's listeners, who have assumed the appropriate stance to hear Deke's story, do not reach the same conclusion Deke does. The narrator also, listening to Deke tell his story, comes to a major conclusion about his own life:

> Claudel drifted back into his troubles, when all at once, as if entering a room he hadn't

known existed, he realized that while he had been listening to Deke's story and thinking about it and while he had been watching the youth and attempting to understand him, he hadn't thought about himself once. Claudel had let young Deke become the center of his thoughts for a few minutes, and his mind and his heart now felt strangely refreshed for it ... A coherence had momentarily come over his life, and he understood it, knew where it had come from, which gave him a feeling of wholeness he hadn't even imagined possible before. (Banks, 1981, 167-168)

Banks is always concerned with the ethics of his characters; his novels are all explicitly explorations of principles of living and morality. Banks offers narratives that insist the reader adjudicate the actions of the protagonists, who are all white, working class, American men in middle age for whom everything is going wrong. One might conclude that this particular story has been told many times before, but Banks puts the reader into a different relationship to the characters, a relationship that requires the kind of empathy and judgment that Code advocates (1991), as I will discuss in Chapter Four.

Inhabiting the rhetorical space created by "The Trickster" helps me to understand what I ought to have done, what I now must do. Is what I conclude from such storying normative? The process of inquiry is normative; I ought to undertake similar solitary journeys to understand what I know. It is my responsibility to look ever deeper, to return again to classrooms that exist now only in my memory and in my journals and in the memories of those who were there with me. I ought to seek, as Code (1987, 1991, 1995) advocates, deliberate and public expression of those solitary journeys so that those who would be included in my epistemic community would have sufficient information to assist me to adjudicate my knowledge claims.

I came to know that, within the context in which I taught, it was not morally

defensible to impede students from accessing postsecondary education by teaching in ways that provide unnecessary barriers to learning. I came to know that teaching that separates students from the content of their own daily lives and prevents them from drawing satisfactorily on their own experiences prevents learning. I failed to understand that changing the curriculum to relevant texts was only part of the transformation. I did not realise that the *method* used to teach literature was also culturally bound. What I did not do following this realisation was to talk in a meaningful way, in a responsible manner, about my conclusions and subsequent changes in my teaching practice. "The Trickster Brought Them," then, breaks the silence of the classroom, in an attempt to make knowledge claims, to be responsible in my knowing.

The "Trickster" story is not finished. Sometimes its significance vanishes before my eyes. Sometimes it seems to be a story that happened to someone else, somewhere else. Sometimes I wonder if I imagined it. I find myself adding marginal commentary. The last time I revised the "Trickster" story I discovered the following message to myself, scrawled sideways in the margin beside my invocation of A.: "While I fuck around with this, people <u>die</u>!" The violence of my reprimand of myself reminded me how important these issues of knowing well are for me *now* in the classroom.

If I can find no place, no rhetorical space, to tell my story, then, it would seem that in some profound way the experiences did not happen, A. did not speak, she was not heard, and I did not cross over to where I did not know any longer what I ought to do. I did lose my way. I did cease to know what I had known. I began to know what I ought to do. I came to know something. I did hear her. A. did speak. By speaking, A. created

a rhetorical space, if only for a brief moment, one I am commanded to respect and maintain.

Plan of Presentation

In Chapter Two, I establish the context for "The Trickster Brought Them" by describing from my perspective the culture of teaching in which I have worked for many years. I then provide a teaching autobiography, because central to the question of how do I know what I ought to do is the claim that my teacher knowledge is situated knowledge (Haraway, 1988; Smith, 1987) and thus particular to a time and place. I am a woman with a history, who teaches in the context of that history. Furthermore, this teaching autobiography is necessary because it provides the personal context for "The Trickster Brought Them." In Chapter Three, I review the literature on teaching stories in three intersecting fields of research: the reflective practitioner, collaborative action research, and critical and feminist pedagogies. In Chapter Four I articulate Lorraine Code's theories of responsible knowing, epistemic community, and situated knowledge in order to justify the function of stories in my construction of knowledge. In the final chapter, I return to "The Trickster" and also point to issues still unresolved around accepting stories about teaching as knowledge claims.

CHAPTER TWO - SITUATING KNOWLEDGE

In this chapter, I establish the context for 'The Trickster" by describing from my perspective the culture of teaching in which I was working when I taught the class I describe in the story. I then discuss the theoretical implications of using biographical forms to express aspects of my professional life. This chapter concludes with a teaching autobiography, because central to this study is the claim that my teacher knowledge is situated knowledge (Haraway, 1988; Smith, 1987) and thus situated in time and place. As a woman with a history who teaches in the context of that history, my teaching autobiography is necessary because it provides the personal context for the "The Trickster Brought Them."

Teaching in the BC Postsecondary College System

Since 1979 I have taught composition, literature, college preparatory courses and life skills in the postsecondary college system in British Columbia. For much of that time, I have taught First Nations adults returning to learning after unsatisfactory educational experiences. My construction of teacher knowledge has taken place almost entirely within the context of this job in this system. It is essential to appreciate the system in which I began and in which I continue my teaching life in order to understand the context in which I construct personal, practical knowledge of teaching at the postsecondary level.

The British Columbia college system was developed in the late 1960s out of a vision of university educators and community members to provide high quality education to more students than could be accommodated at that time in the single university in the province (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986). The primary goal of the community college system was to

provide postsecondary education with an emphasis on teaching, in small, community-based, community-controlled, and comprehensive regional colleges. The colleges were conceived as bridges to higher learning -- first and second year university transfer courses were to be offered in small classes designed to heighten learner involvement -- and were also to provide technical and para-professional training in such fields as early childhood education, business management, criminology and social services. The intention of the system was to de-centralise postsecondary education and to serve more students nearer to their home communities.

The faculty hired in the late 60s and early 70s were young men and women with Bachelors and Masters degrees in academic disciplines, or journeymen, business and professional people. The average age of the faculty I encountered when I began teaching in 1979 was thirty-two. There were no ranks within the teaching faculty; we were all "Instructors." By that time, we were also unionized. A high value was placed on collegiality, defined by college faculty and administrators as interaction with the intent of encouraging relationships that emphasized our common commitment to the endeavour of education and that de-emphasized hierarchical systems. Consultation and consensus were to be used to arrive at decisions. The faculty members were to serve on administrative committees as equal partners; the college boards were to have elected community members and faculty representatives. The colleges were to be managed jointly by committees of faculty and administrators, and the institutions were envisioned as non-hierarchical, student-oriented and responsive to the community.

When I joined the Communications Department in 1979, therefore, the admission

policy of Fraser Valley College was straightforward: The student had to have grade 12 or be at least nineteen years-old. Admission was made according to a first-come, first-served basis for all programs. The explicit intention of the system was to invert many of the key practices of the university model (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986; Tom, 1991). Approximately half of the services provided were university-transfer, first and second year Arts and Sciences courses.

While the community college system was committed to high quality teaching, few of us were trained as teachers, let alone teachers of adults (with the exception of the trades instructors, who had to have experience with the provincial apprenticeship training model). The hiring practices varied, but the emphasis was on hiring instructors with experience in the "real world" of trades, business, arts, or human services. Academic credentials were of secondary consideration. Most instructors who were hired in the 70s and 80s were not asked to demonstrate competence in teaching. An egalitarian approach to students and to each other, a knowledge and appreciation of the practical world, and a down-to-earth attitude toward learning were more in demand than teaching qualifications or research interests.

What became evident by the late 70s, however, through an innovative method of asking students to evaluate their instructors, was that many of us could not teach as well as we supposed we ought to. Examples of instructors who were being fired for incompetence in the classroom began to emerge. The faculty associations (unions) in most colleges began to confront situations where colleagues were being fired for failing to teach well, and we found ourselves grappling with defending colleagues who, while often unfairly evaluated and arbitrarily treated, were not good teachers by anyone's estimation. These failing teachers,

however, were offered no chances to improve their skill levels. The evaluation procedures, particularly the questionnaires, came under fire. It became evident, consequently, that there was no agreement on what constituted good teaching, and how it could be discovered and fostered. The perception developed that many of us were not providing the excellent instruction that was to set us apart from the universities, with their emphasis on research and teacher-centred lecture halls and seminars. This perception created a fault-line, as administrators began to be perceived as 'teacher-managers,' somehow responsible for the quality of education in the B.C. college system, and as classroom-based faculty began to experience what they concluded was unwarranted interference in the teaching-learning process. A guardedness developed about the classroom. The untested assumption that we were good teachers, somehow 'better' than our university-based colleagues, began to face unaccustomed, and perhaps unfair, testing. In this context, it was difficult to find a safe place to talk openly about the sorts of teaching experiences that I describe in "The Trickster Brought Them."

By 1979, when I entered the B.C. college system, several perspectives on teaching had emerged.[1] These conclusions are based on my experiences working with teachers in the B.C. college system since 1979. I have been a member of a professional development network in B.C. and the Pacific Northwest since I began teaching. I have participated in four provincial professional development committees representing teaching faculty, facilitated

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[1]Daniel Pratt is about to publish the findings of a major research project about postsecondary teaching: *Five Perspectives on Teaching* (forthcoming). I was unaware of this research, and no one I have spoken to with the provincial faculty union knows anyone who was surveyed. I am aware of a much earlier work, "Three Perspectives on Effective Teaching" (unpublished).

over fifty instructional skills workshops, facilitated a dozen college-wide discussions with faculty and staff on instructional development, surveyed and interviewed faculty and administrators about teaching, and was seconded by the Ministry of Skills, Labour and Training to develop and nurture a network of instructors in the system. Since 1979, I have been committed to peer consulting with instructors in the postsecondary system.

One perspective of teaching in the B. C. College system views the instructor as a subject-matter specialist. This is the most common perception of teaching in the B. C. college system. The instructor's knowledge base is what Peter Grimmett and Allan MacKinnon (1992) refer to as "syntactical knowledge," derived usually from university-oriented knowledge. From this perspective, knowledge is teacher-centred, and students acquire this knowledge by set standards developed and supervised by provincial articulation committees. Those who teach in specific academic subject areas determine curriculum, text books, and standards, usually in direct response to the requirements of the universities now operating in B.C.: University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, and University of Northern British Columbia. Teaching methods are rarely discussed formally by subject-matter specialists. The assumption underlying our practice from this perspective is that the good teacher is the knowledgeable, university-educated, research-oriented academic.

A second perspective of teaching is rooted firmly but often unconsciously in the theories of critical pedagogy or transformative pedagogy, although until recently I had rarely heard the teaching practices themselves directly related to this field of theory. Instructors who teach from this perspective view their actions in light of the larger social and political

reality. Teaching becomes a political act of liberating students from the oppressions of class structure, racism, sexism, and the structures of traditional educational practices. All the experiences the student has, from the application procedure to the graduation process, are critiqued from this perspective. Maintaining the open-door admission policy and adequate access programs and services are seen as political acts. An informal network of instructors developed, committed to connecting the social realities of students to teaching decisions about methodology and curriculum context. Largely uninformed by the theorists in this field, these instructors have laboured for many years in the system and have contributed much to the overall awareness of what is now known as the "chilly classroom."[2] Instructors with this avowedly emancipatory perspective frequently identify themselves as Marxist, feminist, socialist, or evangelical Christian. The extent to which the education offered in the system binds or frees the student from oppressive practices is how teaching success is measured. Classroom practices which replicate oppressive systems are noted and discouraged; classroom practices that do not replicate oppressive systems but are equally forbidding are not often acknowledged.

A third perspective on teaching in the B.C. college system developed in those who derive their knowledge from practical, work-related experience. From this perspective, the

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[2]Many scholars and teachers, beginning with Hall and Sandler in 1982 (Sandler, 1991), have described this phenomenon, where the environment created by the teaching practices, the curriculum, the interaction of the students, and so on conspire to create an environment either not conducive to learning or actively hostile to learning for a particular group of students (Belenky, *et al*, 1986; Britzman, 1986, 1991; Burbules & Rice, 1991; Caplan, 1993; Cooper & Self, 1990; Ellsworth, 1989; Griffin, 1992; Grumet, 1987, 1988; Houston, 1985; Lather, 1991a; Lewis & Simon, 1986, November; Lewis, 1993; Merod, 1992; Murphy, 1990, December; Nelson, 1986, Prawat, 1991; Sandler, 1983; Simon, 1991; Thompson, 1983; Treichler & Kramarae, 1983; Wolff, 1991).

learner is expected to be mature, autonomous, and able to take charge of his or her own learning. The instructor's task is to present material clearly and completely, to test frequently and fairly, and to raise the student knowledge level to some external, usually industry-mandated standard. Instructors with this perspective view teaching as training.

The fourth perspective derives from the concept of the instructor as a technician, governed by a body of technical knowledge about the skill and science of teaching. Within this context, it is perceived that there are competencies in teaching as in many other trades, and that these competencies can be acquired systematically. This perspective is most useful when attempting to assist colleagues facing termination and/or teacher-managers determined to achieve excellence in teaching through quantitative methods of examination. Viewing the instructor as a technician means that teacher competence can be measured scientifically. Most observation and evaluation methods in the college system are informed by this perspective. It can lead to uniform ranking of teacher dispositions -- a competency-based approach to instructing. In my institution, an instructor has to 'get' 3.5 on a scale of 5 to 'pass' his or her three-year evaluation. Quantifiable evidence of good teaching is sought. This perspective, which supports low tolerance for ambiguity, is favoured by faculty association members, who can approve the checklist, establish the pass mark, and be assured that no faculty member who has demonstrated competence according to the statistics will be refused continued employment.

These four perspectives each may preclude "teacher talk" in specific ways. With such diverse perspectives on good teaching, teacher knowledge means different things to different instructors, depending on their frames of reference. Consequently, the teachers in the B.C.

college system may have what Grimmett & MacKinnon call "unexamined craft knowledge" (1992). Because teacher knowledge may be unexamined and therefore only personally accessible, it is rarely shared, developed or articulated. The uneasy peace in the B.C. postsecondary system is fostered by a common silence on the part of teachers about the nature of our work. What speaks loudest in that silence, then, are the misunderstandings fostered by the unacknowledged and different perspectives we all bring to the inquiry. It is not only difficult to discuss teacher knowledge across these perspectives but it may also be impossible to adjudicate knowledge claims across them. What is perceived by me to be a declaration of good teaching from one perspective could be derided by a colleague looking from another perspective. What counts as evidence is different depending upon one's perspective. We become vulnerable, then, to initiatives that remove control over our daily teaching lives: shortened teaching periods; centralised curricula; articulation requirements; distance education and instructional technologies that replace regional control; teacher-proof delivery methods; university-oriented and controlled diploma and degree programs; learning outcomes and competency based training; issues of accessibility solved by rising standards; and so on. Because we are vulnerable to such initiatives, we are defensive. Because we are defensive we cannot be open with each other about teaching, let alone about teaching in difficult and threatening situations.

This is the context in which I work and live. This description may not be 'objectively true'; that is, empirical studies to test my conclusion might yield a different picture. My conclusions are the perceptions I have developed based on experiences of the system from within since 1979. I operate within this system believing my perceptions are accurate. Given

these perspectives, it has been difficult to find a rhetorical space to discuss the knowledge claims in "The Trickster Brought Them."

This overview is important to this study in order to locate my teaching practice within a specific context. Of course, the college system continues to change. My own institution recently was given degree-granting status, and we are now officially instructors in a university-college. One of the issues we are debating now is whether we should be called "Professor." These changes have had a tremendous impact on the perspectives on teaching I identify here. The system, which has changed dramatically in a very short time, now has replicated, some would say, almost entirely much of what we sought to change in the university model. It is within this context that I began my teaching career, within this context I teach First Nations adults, within this context I construct situated knowledge from daily lived experience (D. Smith, 1987), experiences such as "The Trickster Brought Them."

Biographical Forms and Teacher Knowledge

If, as Brodkey (1987a) and D. Smith (1990), among others, argue, writing is a social practice, then I need to be aware of those aspects of the practice that are affected by the discourse community in which I find myself writing. If, as Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub contend, "[e]very life is always already partially scripted" (1992, p. 73), then my apprehension and comprehension of the genre of auto/biography has certainly impinged on the stories I use as articulations of my teaching knowledge, articulations of how I come to know what I ought to do. My teaching stories are thus affected by my awareness of auto/biography as a genre, and this awareness affects my relationship to my pen, perhaps from the beginning when I

recorded my experiences in my journal. My resulting knowledge claims are also affected by the genre.

My construction of my own teacher knowledge depends to some extent on my stories about teaching, which form the substance for my claims to know something about teaching literature and composition to First Nations adult learners. 'The Trickster Brought Them" is an example of the stories I tell about teaching, an example I use to explain how I use stories to articulate my knowledge. In this chapter, I add details, expressed in biographical forms, to situate my knowledge claim in "The Trickster Brought Them." Because my stories about teaching are autobiographical, it is necessary to consider the theoretical implications of using biographical forms to make knowledge claims, beginning with a definition and proceeding to several issues arising from the use of such forms.

As I explain below, the gender of the one making the knowledge claim is epistemologically significant; the form used to make the knowledge claim is epistemologically significant as well. The knowledge claims in narratives such as "The Trickster Brought Them" are cast in what I refer to as biographical forms, an inclusive, derivative term I define and explain below.

Definition and discussion of biographical forms

By biographical forms, I mean deliberate and organized forms that reflect an individual's life. Examples in teacher research are life writing; journals; letters to and from the individual; essays; reflections, meditations, images that evoke stories, and other records of the inner life; interview transcripts; memory work; written material from work activities (memoranda,

letters, reports, reviews, etc.); and autobiographical fiction and poetry. Kaplan (1992) offers additional modes of biographical forms, such as prison memoirs, testimonial literature, ethnographic writing, 'biomythography,'[3] 'cultural autobiography,'[4] and 'regulative psychobiography'[5] (p. 119). The phrase biographical forms, then, is meant to invoke a wide variety of activities that teachers use to express aspects of our teaching lives. The phrase is inclusive rather than exclusive, used to make connections to certain forms of texts that articulate the teaching life. I use biographical forms as a linking phrase, to emphasise the

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[3]Kaplan notes this term comes to her through Katie King's essay "Audre Lorde's Lacquered Layerings: The Lesbian Bar as a Site of Literary Production." Lorde uses the term to describe her autobiographical memoir, *Zami*. The term refers to "a variety of generic strategies in the construction of gay and lesbian identities in the USA" (King in Kaplan, 1992, 129) with specific reference both to the materials of such biographical forms and to the process of creating such biographical forms. "Biomythography," King suggests, is "a writing down of our meanings of identity ... with the material of our lives." (King in Kaplan, 1992, 129).

[4]Cultural autobiography describes those efforts to preserve and transmit experiences of a specific, perhaps threatened, way of life. Connected to bell hook's "Writing Autobiography" and Bernice Johnson Reagon's "Coalition Politics" (in Kaplan, 1992, pp 130-131), cultural autobiography may explore the conditions of "home" and "the precarious locations of coalition work without utilizing the conventions of identity celebrated in mainstream autobiography" (Reagon in Kaplan, 1992, p. 131). According to Kaplan, Reagon's cultural autobiography "expands the parameters and content of life writing ... [by] reclaiming a history and constructing a community of strength and diversity ..." (Reagon in Kaplan, 1992, p. 132).

[5]Kaplan refers to Spivak's use of this term: "Since poststructuralist psychoanalytic theories of subject formation and object relations cannot adequately address the constitution of the neocolonial subject and her oppressors, Spivak argues, feminist critics must develop an alternative procedure, a more intensely collaborative method. The "narrative" form that must be invented is "regulative psychobiography": the expressions "that constitute the subject-effect of these women, give these women a sense of their 'I,'" [n 61] The model narratives that Spivak refers to as "regulative psychobiographies" are less obvious to "us" at the present moment. Spivak asks: what narratives produce the signifiers of the subject for other traditions? ... traces of this psychobiography can be found in the indigenous legal tradition, in the scriptures, and of course, in myth." [n 62] (Kaplan, 1992, p. 134).

connection between various modes of expressing the teaching life. When I refer to the genre of biography, I also use the slash, to indicate my perception of the connection between biography and autobiography, hence auto/biography. Several issues arise from the use of biographical forms, which the reader needs to be aware of as he or she encounters "The Trickster Brought Them."

Auto/biography

The point I make in this section is simple but has a profound impact on method in practice and, consequently, on method in inquiry. It is this: our personal understanding of what the genre of biography *is* shapes the construction of the biographies we write, including our own. If one holds a "great man" image of biography, for example, it will surely influence how he or she writes a biography. The point is central to this inquiry. Let me elaborate its dimensions, particularly with respect to biography as an account of great men's lives.

When teachers and researchers use biographical forms as the data for qualitative research, consideration must be given to the extent those teachers and researchers are affected by their apprehension of the genre of biography. Some fairly well-established conclusions about the origins, the subjects, and uses of biography illuminate a concern I have about the impact of the genre on the ways I have recorded my experiences and the ways I have expressed those records as stories.

A book on women's biography (Wagner-Martin, 1994) begins with Virginia Woolf's well known declaration: "History is too much about wars, biography too much about great men." (Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* [1929] in Wagner-Martin, 1994, p. 11). What does this

assertion mean to those who elect to use biographical forms to express teacher knowledge? Is Woolf's declaration valid? Autobiography as a sub-genre of biography has been convincingly critiqued by feminist theorists who question whether this particular form of narrative is itself a script created by men for the exposition of the life of the 'great man.' [6]

Samuel Johnson himself, who set his mark on the genre, advocated writing about a 'great man' or a man whose life embodied a 'great lesson.' "Each life story selects, from an unlimited array, those moments that the narrator deems significant and arranges them in a coherent order" (Ochberg, 1994, p. 114). This call for a coherent order may require some pruning of the complete life story, to fit what is deemed significant, that is, what demonstrates the 'greatness' of the 'man' and the 'greatness' of the lesson.

A biography, then, is generally supposed to be an accurate expression of a real, usually notable, life. An autobiography is therefore expected to be a faithful portrayal of a real, notable life. Both biography and autobiography are produced, i.e. published to impart a moral, a lesson, an example, and so on. Feminist critiques of auto/biography attempt to recuperate the form for our own subversive uses, to re-define what a great life would be, to re-draw the lesson or moral an auto/biography ought to impart. Feminist literary and social theorists question whether this particular form of narrative is itself a script created by men for

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[6]Muzzey (in Garraty) tells us that "[t]he story of illustrious men cannot be too often retold. Like great outstanding mountain-peaks, these men invite description but elude definition; they provoke examination ..." (1964, vii). Garraty's thorough overview of biography as a genre provides evidence that the form itself was first construed as vehicles of praise and example, to educate the reader, beginning with Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*. The suitable subject of biography, since its inception, has been 'the great man' whose public career is a litany of "those aspects of men's lives which affect the movements of the crowd" (Lee in Garraty, 1964, p. 5).

the exposition of the life of the 'great man'.[7] Now, with postmodern theorists expressing "radical doubts about the unity and stability of the self" (Tress, 1988), and the growing suspicion of personal experience as the site of authoritative discourse (Greene, 1993), and with the concepts of self and gender becoming possibly discredited categories, the genre of biography has shifted once again.

As well as considering the effects of biography as a genre on the production of biographical forms, I also consider the relationship between the use of biographical forms and the woman writing her life (Heilbrun, 1988), or having her life written for her by a biographer. Whether in auto/biography spoken or written, I concur with Sidonie Smith that "male distrust and consequent repression of female speech have either condemned her to public silence or profoundly contaminated her relationship to the pen as an instrument of power" (1987, p. 7). Biography itself may be an expression of that instrumental power, a discourse surely not intended for her (Lewis, 1993). Heilbrun acknowledges this: "I was profoundly caught up in biography because it allowed me, as a young girl, to enter the world of daring and achievement. But I had to make myself a boy to enter that world; I could find no comparable biographies of women, indeed, almost no biographies of women at all" (Heilbrun, 1988, p. 27). Okely (1992) makes a similar point: "there are differing narratives of the self; the 'feminine' one being open to representing experience as interpersonal while the 'masculine' one privileges individualism and distance (Smith 1987: 12-13). Moreover, the

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[7] The authors cited below make similar points about what I refer to as the "eminent" man model: Alcoff & Grey, 1993; Bateson, 1989; Brodzki & Schenck, 1988; Culley, 1992; Gilmore, 1994; Graham, 1991; Heilbrun, 1988; Iles, 1992; Jouve, 1991; Kadar, 1992; N. Miller, 1991; Reinharz, 1994; S. Smith, 1987, 1993; S. Smith, 1987; S. Smith, 1993; Spender, 1986; Stanley, 1992; Steedman, 1986; and Stivers, 1993.

girl/woman enters a world where the dominant paradigm is that of masculine experience" (p. 12). If it is true that as women we have been conditioned to live our public lives as 'masculine' expressions of self, what happens when we attempt to tell stories about that public life, attempt to find a way to tell that story that is not imbricated with the expectations and the structures of the genre?

The first autobiography I read was Thor Heyerdahl's *Kon-tiki: Across the Pacific by raft* (1950), a tale of male adventure I encountered when I was ten. It did not occur to me to notice that there were no women in the story. As a model of adventure and as a model for story-telling, *Kon-tiki* may represent in my life a template for telling stories. Those who listen to me telling stories may encounter the template of *Kon-Tiki;* many of the stories in my own repertoire reflect my personal belief that teaching is the metaphoric equivalent of setting sail across the well-charted seas in an unstable raft. Other storytellers have certainly been influenced by the experience of reading, and this influence may be imperceptible. It may be there, nonetheless, in the dramatic presentation and, I argue, in the initial perception, selection and interpretation of experience. It is always there, at least in my own experience, when I experience myself as a woman writing her life, particularly her teaching life, which is a public expression of a public activity. As stated earlier, the form itself may create in some ways the knowledge thus expressed.

My contention is that biographical forms are shaped by genre and by gender expectations. If most auto/biographies conform to a particular form, which I have described, and most auto/biographies are about men—the Great White Man that Corbett (1992) describes—and I am neither Great nor a Man (and my whiteness is tempered first by my

gender, second by my Jewish faith, third by my association with and identification with First Nations learners, fourth by my class of origin, and fifth by my position *vis-a-vis* the academy, to mention only the most obvious), then to what extent is the text of my experience affected by all these awarenesses, affected by me as I write? This sense of a gender-specific text may have an impact on the story a woman tells. The perception of who may be listening may also have an impact on the story a woman tells. I do know that First Nations storytellers are adamant that certain stories not be told when men are present, so presumably certain stories would not be told when women are present.[8]

If biography was originally conceived as a container for an eminent man's life, this original use will continue to leave imprints on stories from women's lives, if only because the writer writes within a genre that has been thus defined, and the reader may read expecting, even if subconsciously, a great man (or a great woman by eminent man standards), a significant life, and a great lesson. Most teachers do not live the lives of eminent men; most of us who teach do not move from one highly significant event to the next. In the constant dailiness of the classroom, turning points of narrative action do not often provide signals. We may be unaware of "turning points" in the moment. Once it has passed, we may recognize the turning point. The whole concept of the turning point, I believe, springs from the imprint of the eminent man model of biography, which requires a well documented public

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[8]This was pointed out to me by a former student, who told me in 1983 he did not believe any of the stories in Anne Cameron's *Daughters of Copper Woman* (1981), because he had heard none of these stories, even though he was raised in the culture where Cameron claimed to have heard them. He was corrected by another former student, who reminded him these were women's stories and how would he know what he had not been told. This story is further supported by Paula Gunn Allen (1986), Barbara Godard (1985), and Greg Sarris (1993).

life, complete with significant events, seen in retrospect. What of the many experiences we did not recognize, did not record, did not appreciate as a highly significant event?

Many auto/biographies have a clearly stated purpose. The earliest biographical forms by women were written in self defence; in the case of Anne Clifford, Countess of Montgomery, quite literally (Spender, 1986). This quality of defence clings to biographical forms, particularly when the subject is a woman or anyone who is not readily identified as an eminent anglo-european man. The biographer's task is to select, interpret and judge the significance of his or her subject, focusing on "the effects he produced in public life" (Gosse in Garraty, 1964, p. 23). The privileging of the public domain of an individual's life over the private domain may extend to personal thoughts and feelings. Thus details from a teacher's private life may be automatically and unconsciously eliminated from the category of "what's important." This leads at times to an auto/biography of a teacher that leaves out information on the grounds that such things are *not* important, partly because the genre of biography has taught us well how one ought to be written.

Auto/biography has also been shaped by many different communities. Culley, in her introduction to *American Women's Autobiography*(1992) identifies a practice that may have had an impact on the use of biographical forms. She writes of the Puritans, who believed that one's life was a text to be read, and explicitly connected to liturgical texts and texts of conversion experiences. Conventions dictated how the self as text was to be received. The congregation had the task of hearing this intertextual creation and determining if the teller was fit for full communion. Hence, the story had a specific use and was constructed appropriately. It is unlikely, for example, that a storyteller in this context would proceed to

relate events that would disqualify her from full communion or that could be construed as capable of disrupting community faith.

Like the Puritans who told stories in order to qualify for full communion, when I tell stories about teaching, I am writing for a community of teachers. One possible consequence of my stories is that I could be accepted into this community of teachers. Another is that I could be "cast out" from the community of teachers if my stories are taken to have breached common community values. Bearing this in mind as I tell stories certainly shapes what I tell to whom and under what conditions. Many of the stories that have to do with my being a woman who teaches fall into the category of marginalised or subliminal stories; they are stories I tell, but rarely in public and rarely to unsympathetic listeners. These stories are often, however, central to my knowledge claims.

Culley notes that many women wrote in the expressed fear of judgment from their readers, who were often explicitly assumed to be other women. These authors, as Culley notes, are aware that the very act of writing breached the silence imposed upon women and also countermanded the requirement that women not be self-centred or self-absorbed, two stances required for most autobiographies. Culley points to examples where the writer has to deal with thus disrupting the mandated, customary silence of women and then negotiating the unmediated public gaze. Truly, the autobiography is making a double spectacle of its author, by speaking in public and by speaking of oneself. This conclusion by Culley is supported by Spender (1986) as she explains the Lady Mary Wroath's decision to publish *Urania*, modelled on Sidney's *Arcadia*: "To seek public attention -- which was precisely what the *public*ation of a book entailed -- was for a woman to lay herself open to every charge of

indecency" (p. 13).

Corbett (1992), writing about similar trials for Victorian women writers, notes that women who were establishing themselves as professional writers found themselves apparently stranded between the private, and hence silenced, sphere of women's lives and the public, and hence celebrated, sphere of professional writing. Corbett points to the double-bind that psychologists such as Jean Baker Miller (1976) identified in the late twentieth century: success in the public sphere jeopardizes a sense of self that has been developed and sustained in the private sphere, thereby somehow de-gendering (or perhaps re-gendering) a woman (p. 61).

Teachers telling stories, particularly teachers who are women, may find ourselves experiencing a similar double bind: to talk about teaching publicly seems to run counter to a belief, at least in postsecondary teaching, that teaching is a mysterious and personal process, conducted privately behind the classroom doors. For a teacher to talk about teaching, therefore, disrupts the privacy of such acts. Ceasing for the moment to teach and undertaking to talk about teaching moves the teacher into the purview of the researcher, who normally considers the teacher part of the scene to be studied. The teacher who talks about teaching invites possibly hostile commentary based not only on the activities described but also on the validity of talking about such activities. Much of the content of "The Trickster" story would be dismissed as unnecessary to a teacher trained to collect data to prove a hypothesis. Further, when I write explicitly as 'a feminist' and as a 'feminist teacher,' I am aware that my writing may be scrutinised for error, for evidence that I am not sufficiently feminist to warrant the description. When I use biographical forms to inquire into my practice, I

apprehend these tensions within the form itself, and I question to what extent these tensions affect the stories I tell publicly and the stories I recite privately, in my journals and in the margins of my classroom notes.

Auto/biography may be shaped by the author's requirements, thus providing a version of 'what happened'. When autobiography is offered as entertainment, this may not be a problem for the speaker or the listener. When biographical forms are offered to support epistemological claims, this shaping may destroy the knowledge claim thus constructed. If I use stories as proof of my knowledge claims, then I may select and interpret my experience to support the claim. I may mislead the reader, accidentally or deliberately, by omitting details or arranging them in a particular manner to "strengthen my case." If I perceive myself to be writing for a sceptical or hostile community of knowers, then that perception may shape my biographical forms too, perhaps without my being entirely aware of it. As I note in the literature review in Chapter Three (especially in the section on Critical and Feminist Pedagogies), using personal anecdotes is becoming more acceptable in academic discourse; however, this acceptance itself may shape what kinds of anecdotes (stories) are acceptable, in which places in the writing, and for what purposes. This awareness itself may shape how stories come to be told in academic writing and speaking.

Auto/biography as a form may affect the text produced in several subtle ways. First, the expectation of an eminent life recounted in climactic moments that contribute to a hypothesis the writer is supporting may affect the way the auto/biographer remembers or

reconstructs the experiences. Second, women[9] may construct identity differently; therefore, the biographical form may not reflect the way humans construct meaning.[10]

Finally, biographical forms require competence with a language or a skilled interpreter. Good stories do not survive bad tellings. Because of my experiences as a teacher of First Nations adults, as someone who lives and works in First Nations communities, I witness the efforts to produce biographical forms that do not damage the life thus told. I became sensitive to the way that an apparently universal form could not adequately express the lives of First Nations people. I witnessed the distortions that occur when biographies of First Nations individuals are written by competent and well intentioned anthropologists, linguists or historians[11] (Birchwater, 1995; Blackman, 1982; Cruikshank, 1990; Moran, 1994; Neihardt, 1932; Radin, 1927; Wickwire, 1989). I know the subjects of some of these biographies, and I know that something is missing. It is as if the story at the heart of the person does not survive the transcription, because the translator looks elsewhere for 'the truth,' or uses a form that distorts the information that was available. It is not only the story but also the knowledge claims attendant upon that story that has gaps.

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[9] It is difficult to avoid using the word women without invoking essentialism (Spelman, 1988; Martin, 1994). There is no stable category "women" in some senses of the word. There are no "safe" uses of the word women. As Lorraine Code (1995) reminds us, however, to avoid seeking for similarities among women in order to avoid trivialising differences defeats the intention of much feminist practice.

[10] The Western tradition of the structural form narrative may not be a universal notion. 'We' (whoever that is) may tell stories differently.

[11] *Black Elk Speaks* is the product of persistent editorial correction by Niehardt (Castro, 1983 in P. Smith, 1987); *Crashing Thunder: The Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian* (Radin, 1927) was admittedly a series of concocted stories to earn drinks in the bar where Paul Radin conducted his interviews.

The question I pose, as a well educated, well read English-Canadian woman, is to what extent can the biographical forms ever adequately explain my teaching life and support my knowledge claims? What of "the incoherent bits that won't go into any kind of story we can tell ourselves -- incoherent *because* they won't go in: that is, if we notice them at all" (Goldstein, 1990, 56)? Attending to these incoherent bits is important to teaching because often the bits that won't fit the container are clues that something has gone terribly wrong in the classroom.

If "The Trickster" is an example of auto/biography, then what? I am aware that the story describes a turning point, although I did not recall how profound a turning point for many years. This puzzles me. When I tell "The Trickster," I am reminded of the opening of Heyerdahl's *Kon Tiki*. There is a 'setting sail' quality to the way the story starts. When I tell the story now, I find myself beginning with the moment in the bookstore and then doubling back to explain how I came to be sitting in the bookstore. I dwell on the memory of myself as a child looking at the forbidden books. And my pain at the discovery embedded in A's answer is still present. I often read from the journal itself. I am not denying the performative aspect of the story, but rather pointing out the structure of the biography, the story of an eminent man told for a didactic purpose, is still tangible to me when I consider "The Trickster" and other stories. I feel, therefore, like an imposter when I tell "The Trickster." I am not an eminent man. The story reveals me as not a very good teacher. Sometimes what seems to be learned in the story is how proud I was and how foolish. Telling "The Trickster" always feels risky to me. I fear that I might be 'cast out' by my profession -- that the story will not gain me entry into the guild. How could anyone capable of making such a mistake

be given the responsibility for teaching similar classes year after year? For I don't arrive at the Pacific Islands. My voyage is not a triumph. I don't arrive. I am aware, therefore, that when the story is cast again, in a different form and context (in the pages of an academic form) it -- changes. Loses significance. Is not something that ought to be found within the bindings of a scholarly text, or any text. Is not, indeed, the stuff of a great life or even a great moment in teaching. It is a simple story, making its way separated from its teller and from all the world in which it is accustomed to be found.

Teaching Autobiography

> We live our lives by telling ourselves stories. ... [*T*]*he* story -- the one we live but cannot hear -- is very largely generated by the versions of it the participants tell themselves. It's these internal reconstructions that determine their actions, which is why the narrative mode is so much better suited for the explanation of human behavior than some more straightforwardly causal account ... One has to try to recapture an agent's telling in order to grasp the significance of his or her actions; that is, to provide the matrix for saying what, in fact, the action is. But then, our human creativity is, for the most part, exercised not in the production of new forms but rather in the finding of ways to force our material into the finite available few. We trim off and discard into forgetfulness the incoherent bits that won't go into any kind of story we can tell ourselves -- incoherent *because* they won't go in; that is, if we notice them at all. (Goldstein, 1990, 55-56)

Rebecca Goldstein's comments introduce my teaching autobiography because I am aware as I present it that it cannot possibly be the whole story. Stimulated by well established practices in pre- and in-service teacher training in the primary and secondary school systems in North America, the autobiography I recount below provides the details that I believe are essential for understanding this study. There may be "incoherent bits" I have consciously trimmed off, modestly omitted, or just plain forgotten. What is here, then, are those bits, incoherent or

otherwise, that form my explanation at this point in my life of my teaching life.

During a class taken with Kenneth Zeichner (whose approach is described in Zeichner & Liston, 1987; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1991) at Simon Fraser University in 1991, I was asked to reflect on some key experiences in my life that shape my teaching practice. I was then encouraged to collaborate with a group of classmates to discover and articulate my teaching values, and then to determine to what extent those values are connected to what I consider to be key experiences. What follows is part of what I wrote.

I remember my father helping my brother with homework. I remember Dad getting so angry with John, the house would be held in the grip of his rage. I didn't, as a young one, understand Dad's anger and impatience, but I did know that the last thing I wanted to happen was to have him help me with my homework. I recall only one instance when he did help me with math, when I was eleven, and it was a terrible experience. The more angry he became the more dense I became. He was a very scary person when he was angry, and learning became impossible, which only fuelled his anger. I was afraid he was going to strike me. Not knowing, in his presence, was dangerous. ...

I remember Miss Becker, my grade six teacher. She was the classic old maid school teacher, an image created in unkinder times. She had short, severe hair, low sturdy shoes, tweed suits, and unnoticeable blouses. She also had a kindly face, and she saw *me*. She refused to teach grade six boys, so for the first time in my life I was in a class entirely populated by girls, overseen by a woman. I loved it. Miss Becker had us sit in rows; we had to say 'Present, Miss Becker' at roll call, and when our hands were not meaningfully employed they were to be folded on top of our desks. We sat in alphabetical order. We learned according to what now must be unpopular methods: we had to stand and do math aloud in competition with others, although I realise she always had us evenly matched. Maureen Larkey, my best friend, and I would often arrive, breathless and laughing, at the totals of different problems at the same moment. Miss Becker would have us stand and read aloud until we made a pronunciation error. I remember sitting down after pronouncing 'laboratory' as 'labratory' and seething for days, since that was the way every adult I knew pronounced it. ...

Miss Becker was tough and honest and funny, and she believed in us, believed we were smart and could be smarter. She gave me a B for English on my first report card and a U for work habits (the first Unsatisfactory I had ever received) and she told my mother that any time I got less than an A in English I was not working hard enough. She believed in me, she instilled in me confidence that I wasn't a stupid little girl, that I was capable of achieving anything I wanted. She was fair, and she expected the best

from all of us. That expectation of effort was exhilarating. She was the best teacher I have ever had. She went to Europe every year with her best friend Miss Cram, and she was the first adult woman I knew who had a woman for a best friend.

From Miss Becker I learned about discipline, achievement and daring to learn. I also learned what it was like to learn in a class that was not filled with the peculiar pressures that arose in my grade five class, where boys seemed to be in a permanent snit if we (the girls) did well in spelling, map work, arithmetic or anything else. ...

The next memories come quickly, fuelled with bitter fire. I had a grade eleven math teacher who informed the whole class that girls couldn't do math and he didn't know why we (all three of us) were even there. He called me Bertha, and the boys would snicker, and he would often ignore my hand in the air announcing the answer, although he frequently called on me when I was stuck. I remember the guidance teacher who told me (the girl with the high B average in academic studies, including science, math, and Latin) that I could go into hospital-based nursing when I expressed an interest in medicine. I remember the grade 12 English teacher who treated me with such disdain that I vowed never, ever, to go on in English. She wanted us to be able to answer spot quizzes on the great works (why aren't there any women writers, Mrs. Haramia) and was not interested in my interpretation of Lady Macbeth, and finally accused me of plagiarism when I wrote an exceptional paper on *Macbeth*. My father, bless his heart, went to bat for me on that one, and, defeated, Mrs. Haramia never forgave me for proving her wrong and for refusing to write the Grade 12 scholarship exam for English.

I graduated from grade 12 feeling like an outsider to knowledge.

Almost immediately, I went back to school, to night school where I took English 100. I transferred to the University of Victoria after two years of night school.

There, I learned I knew nothing worth knowing, because all true knowledge existed somewhere else. Most of all, I learned that my perspective as a woman was an invisible, unwanted, false perspective; genderless, I endured the academy. I also sat pregnant in classes where men were not accustomed to seeing women at all, let alone very pregnant women. Less than a month after delivering my son in a dramatic last-minute caesarian section, I was dismissed in my criticism of a similar experience in Hemingway's writing, as I tried to explain that he really had not described the experience as brilliantly as the professor claims. How did I know that? ...

I learned, alone and frequently in spite of my professors. On my second draft of my M.A. thesis, my supervisor at Queen's University wrote admiringly, "We've finally taught you to think like a man," and to my everlasting chagrin I was immensely pleased. I wrote a paper on my theory of poetics for George Whalley, without once using the pronoun I or she. ...

Several experiences stand out for me during my first year of teaching at Fraser Valley College in 1979. One was that I taught the same course in composition to different sections on the same day. The students in the morning class were White women older than I who were returning to learning, and eight Native Indian men. The students in the afternoon were all very young, very Christian White women going into

early childhood education and one ex-military White man in his late thirties who was working as a guard at a local prison, who had been sent to the writing class by his supervisor.

One young woman, about two months into the course, posted a letter on the bulletin board of student services, demanding I be fired for being rigid and inflexible with the students. This public condemnation was taken very seriously by my supervisor, a White woman who spoke to me for about an hour on the issue, most of which was spent on the way I wore my hair (long and braided) and my clothes (didn't I have any pretty blouses and tailored skirts?). The fact that my rigidity and inflexibility were based in my penalizing students for spelling errors and lapses of logic was not discussed.

From this experience, I learned about the public nature of what I do. I also learned that everyone who is not in the classroom has an opinion about what goes on in the classroom, but no one could tell me what to do. No one helped me to work out the conflict between marking errors and developing good writers. No one talked about the teaching practice. Leaving Queen's University as a post-residency doctoral student, I did not know there were entire journals devoted to teaching English in the postsecondary classroom. It did not occur to me to apply my considerable research skills to this particular puzzle.

I lost all my Indian students by mid-term. I write that the way I wrote it at the time. The way I felt it at the time. I lost them. And I missed them. I wondered what I had done, that they should all be gone. I knew they needed the courses I taught, and that they had to be dropped from the program if they weren't in my class. I was supposed to report their absence, although I didn't, at least not right away. I knew enough by then to know how important their goals were; they were all returning to their communities to work with their people on social issues.

With the loss of the Indian students, the morning class was entirely filled with women returning to learning. We taught each other that first semester. I was scared enough to admit I didn't know what I was doing and together we figured out what worked and what didn't work. What I did know was how the language worked. What I didn't know was how to teach someone else how the language worked, because as far as anyone knows, I was born able to write well. What I discovered was I wanted to be a teacher more than anything else in the world -- I took a job and discovered a calling. Teaching the left outs and the left overs, the overtaken and the overlooked. Teaching the unteachable, one of my less sympathetic colleagues told me recently, adding "why do you waste your time with those people?"

And that's where it began. The motley crew and I, the original White, privileged woman with a naive approach to the profession. I was a single parent, but that represented a mere blip on the profile of the school marm. Every time I tried for the Great White Mother routine with this bunch, I would receive a smack on the side of the head. Nothing worked completely. Some things didn't work at all. Most things, if they worked in one place, didn't work anywhere else. What was constant, however, was our care for each other. I cared about what I was doing; I cared about who I was doing it

with; and they cared about me. I looked at the classrooms of 1979-80 and I saw folks, one at a time, desperate to learn. This was no academic exercise for them. Failure was serious business. As I reached the end of the first teaching year, I thought more and more about the eight Indian men who had left my classroom before mid-term of the first semester. Where had they gone? ...

I believe there are many connections between my teaching autobiography and my construction of teacher knowledge. This conclusion is not unique to me (Beattie, 1991; Connelly & Clandinin, 1985; Elbaz, 1983; Graham, 1991; Grumet, 1988; Kadar, 1992; Miller, 1995, Spring; Prawat, 1991). What I didn't tell Kenneth Zeichner and my classmates in 1991 was another story, a more recent story. For another purpose, in my own journal, I used the strategies Kenneth Zeichner had introduced to me. I wrote about a difficult year for me, a year filled with keen, bewildering experiences I could not bear writing about for an inquisitive group of elementary school teachers at Simon Fraser University. I did send Ken this essay, because I felt I owed it to him to fill in the picture. This is what I wrote in my journal, the summer I was creating a sanitized version to discuss with my classmates.

When I began teaching in the College Achievement Program in 1985, I was filled with expectations for myself and the students, all First Nations adults. I knew the traditional classroom methods of education had failed the students and I knew together we would have to discover new strategies for learning, for bridging the chasm between where they were and where they wanted to be: law, nursing, wild life management, social work, psychology, counselling, band management, film making, writing, Native language instructor, and teaching.

I began the first class in a traditional classroom, with pedestal desks bolted to the floor in rows. My first move was to find us a portable classroom, with tables and chairs that could be re-arranged. So I re-arranged them into a giant horseshoe, with me standing behind a desk at the front of the class. The first class was Personal and Career Development (privately referred to by my colleagues as life skills, and what was life skills doing in the postsecondary curriculum?). The students and I were working our way through the course outline, which contained the news that they had to keep journals, worth 40% of their mark. Let them speak now.

"What's a journal?"

"That's on tv. The Journal. Y'know?"

"We have to keep The Journal? How? What for? I don't watch the news on tv. How do we keep it? For ever? What do we do?"

<A journal is like a diary. You write in it everyday. You write about what you're feeling. You make an entry every day. So we can ...">

"An entry? What's that?"

"A diary? That's sick. I won't write a diary. That's for girls. That's kid's stuff."

"Do you mark it? How do you mark it?"

"On tv? Do we do this on tv?"

"Who reads it? Do you? Why?"

And so on for nearly forty minutes. I felt like I was refereeing a hockey game, and the puck kept hitting me in the chest. Then two things happened at once. A woman asked "Do we get to read your journal" and I said "You can just tell me a story."

So that's what we did. I kept a journal for them, and they told me stories. I learned about hockey games, weekends, school, how they travelled to school every day, their families arriving for visits, hunting trips, memories of grandparents, community dinners, watching videos, buying groceries, talking to kids, going to bingo -- the stories poured out of them.

After a few weeks, the conversations going on between each student and me in the pages of individual journals, and the collective conversation going on in the community property journal (mine) deepened. I began to read about abuse and neglect, about triumph over alcohol, about worries over kids, about memories painful and deep that simply arrived in the middle of stories about other things. I read things that left me breathless, that made my chest ache.

When we got stuck in class and didn't know what to do, we would say to each other "Tell me a story." When the group bogged down in a project we would hear, "Let me tell you a story," or "This is a true story" (which usually prompted snorts of disbelieving laughter). I learned to listen to stories, and I learned to tell stories. I learned that while the teller is telling, I listen. I learned stories are not for judging but for understanding. I began to learn about the dialogue between the teller, the told, and the listener. I witnessed my students constructing an understanding of their lives.

Their stories spilled into their writing class and their anthropology class. They learned to preface their own remarks in academic classes with catch phrases we made up: "Stories among my people indicate" and "I have heard it told by my elders" and other phrases to validate their own perspective and experience and to give them a way to get into the conversation of the academy.

When they were well into story telling, they began to write. They wrote and wrote, and then they created a play of their stories and then performed it for their communities. When life became difficult, and learning just too damn hard, someone would say "Tell me a story" and in the rhythm of the telling we would find meaning and a momentary peace.

That piece of classroom research, the presence of stories in the First Nations

classroom of adult learners, became an important part of my work. I began to use story telling in faculty development, as I worked with instructors who were struggling to be better teachers. Story-telling began to emerge in the literature on teaching. The stories, however, were often shaped and contained, polished parables of recovered failures and insightful, witty, evocative, 'well-written' pieces that made excellent public statements ... but I seemed to have drifted a long way from the vibrant stories in the classroom.

Then the bottom fell out of my life. In June, 1988, the program I cared for so deeply and had nurtured to strength was cut without warning, leaving thirty students outside the open door of Fraser Valley College. I was appointed union advocate for a close friend who was denied promotion and endured a bitter and lengthy semi-judicial review. My son and only child graduated from high school and left home. My partner, who had been marginally employed for several years, took a permanent job in the Yukon. The administrators at the College, faced with mounting pressure from the Native community to re-instate the program, ordered me to remain silent in the raging debates about the program closure. I was silenced. Nothing made sense anymore. All of my records and files, the data proving student success, the longitudinal studies, the reading scores, the graphs and tables measuring performance, student evaluations, everything, were removed from my office one weekend. My students' journals, books of stories, poetry, their play, a video they had made, everything disappeared from my office. All of my course outlines and curriculum material were also removed. It was as if the students had never been part of my life.

I thought I would die of the grief. Gripped by silence, unable to understand let alone explain, doubly isolated, I was assigned to business management writing classes, with the most traditional of the traditional students, who were as bewildered as I. They knew I taught Indians. What was I doing in a 'real' classroom? I saw no First Nations students anywhere in the College in 1988-89. It was as if someone had wiped them all away. I was unspeakably lonely.

I could not understand what had happened. I could not speak about what was happening. Nothing made sense anymore. However, I prided myself on my stoical performance. I was praised by my immediate supervisor for my professional deportment. I wrote innovative lesson plans for the business students. I went home, alone, and thought about those students who were not there anymore, students I was not even supposed to have called 'mine.'

One day in January 1990, I logged onto the faculty computer in the production room of the College. I had been working with a network of instructors in the province, sharing ideas and information and just passing notes to each other about our lives. There are two modes on the electronic mail: one can leave a message for someone, or one can go into 'chat mode,' which means that both parties (or as many as can get on-line) can communicate in real time. A colleague had left me a message, asking me how I was. I replied tersely that I was fine, considering. I sent the message. At once, the cursor began to flash, indicating she had come on-line while I was typing my reply. As she typed her comment to my comment, it appeared on my screen.

WENDY (she typed) TELL ME A STORY

At the end of her request hung the cursor, flashing silently at me. The request and the patient cursor reminded me of years of inquiry in classrooms filled with stories. I saw my students struggling against silence, struggling to make meaning and to shape their lives. I saw how my silence was shaping my inability to understand this new challenge in my life. The cursor hung, waiting for me to press ENTER. Tell me a story.

So I did. I told her a little story, one that was safe. She asked me a question. I answered. I remembered another, less comfortable story. While I was typing, she went off-line, leaving me alone with the computer screen. During that long semester's march toward Spring, she listened to me electronically as I told her stories I did not even know I had. I remembered things about being alive in the classroom that I did not know I had forgotten. I talked and she listened. She asked me questions, she read, she wrote back, and she never once knew what the answer was, or where the fault lay. She asked some of the toughest questions simply by saying "How do you know that?" I imagined stories, told her fairy tales, re-wrote the end of my father's life, told the secret tales of parenting alone, talked about teaching endlessly. She walked with me back from the bitter edge.

... I have begun to make sense of what happened to me. I learned that silence will, indeed, finish me. I learned, through stories to an attentive observant interlocutor, that I can begin to make sense of my life, begin to know what I know, begin to understand what actions I must take. What I came to know about the classroom appeared to be inadmissible evidence, particularly when I was required to remain silent. In difficult and threatening situations, I disintegrate and lose my critical ability. I cease to learn. I get stuck. What I know becomes inaccessible to me. Story-telling taps another wisdom, another way of knowing and being known in the world.

It is important to me that the version of my teaching autobiography my classmates and I puzzled over during one summer semester was grievously incomplete. It is still incomplete. Any autobiography, any story, is incomplete. The entire, unabridged version is my lifetime. There are things I am deliberately or accidentally not telling. These two versions of my autobiography were also largely unmediated. I created them from a series of exercises during a seminar on teacher knowledge. Much of the second story comes straight from the pages of my journal of 1989. But I also appreciate that in a much more complex sense these stories are entirely mediated, by the exercises, by the environment in which they were written and are now presented, by numerous invisible details, by the larger issues I wish to sketch out

here, and by the language itself. The important point for me, however, is that these stories were unheard. They were untended narratives. I lived those stories, without consciously connecting them to the experience in the English 100 classroom in 1984. In order for me to understand "The Trickster Brought Them," I add the particulars of how I come to know what I ought to do. They provide details about who I am, where I am/was, and what I was experiencing.

Reading these extracts from my teaching autobiography, I make connections to "The Trickster Brought Them." As a girl in school, I often felt excluded and over-looked, as a result what I believe to be my stupidity. As the child of a family with little money, I often experienced the blunt edge of poverty. Being recognized by a teacher I admired, Miss Becker, as "smart" was an experience that sustained me for many years. Notwithstanding her support, however, I experienced the formal study of English Literature as a relentless exercise in "overcoming" my gender. I received countless messages that I was not "good enough" in graduate school, although I received first class grades. I believe my persistent sense of myself as "not smart" affects my relationship to my colleagues. I don't want to confess failures, failures I feel keenly and often. Not wishing to confess failures has made it difficult, in the past, to tell "The Trickster Brought Them."

I cared deeply to do well in the classrooms in which I found myself, and I felt marginalised by my increasing interest in what was then called "Indian Education." As an Elder recently reminded me, I had a calling to Indian Education -- a concept itself rife with personal and political implications in the early 1980s. Reflecting on my autobiography is an open-ended exercise, which cannot yield anything close to conclusive explanations. I teach

from this context, however, as surely as I teach within the context of the multiple perspectives of teaching in the British Columbia postsecondary system.

Gendered Knowing

> Like any other knower, a female knowledge claimant has to claim acknowledgment from other participants in a form of life. But advancing such claims is as much a political action as it is a straightforwardly epistemological one. Before she can so much as seek acknowledgment, a woman has to free herself from stereotyped conceptions of her 'underclass' epistemic status, her cognitive incapacity, and her ever-threatening irrationality. She has to achieve this freedom both in the eyes of other people, who too often deny her capacity by refusing to listen or give credence, and from her own standpoint, shaped as it also is by stereotype-informed assumptions that neither her experiences nor her deliberative capacities are trustworthy sources of knowledge. (Code, 1991, p. 215)

I "read" all of my teaching autobiography, including "The Trickster Brought Them," as the schooling of a woman (Miller, 1995, Spring) in a society that systematically oppresses women. I am a white, heterosexual, anglo-European woman of working class origins who is Jewish. At the time of "The Trickster," I was thirty-four years old and the single parent of a thirteen-year-old boy. I was the same age as many of the students in the class. I was at least twenty years younger than A. I was at least fifteen years older than S. All of these variables make a difference in the classroom, particularly in a classroom populated by students who may be none of the above. To what extent is my self-identity as a Jew part of my teaching self, who faces with her students the sense of being an outsider in this particular academy, in a small, right-wing, conservative Christian community in what is frequently referred to as the "Bible Belt?" To me, as I teach, the most significant variables are my gender and my race, because these are the variables visible to the students. I am assumed by them to be heterosexual, Christian, and a mother. My race is no longer obvious to the students, by the

way, and I am often reminded that who I am in the communities is not first and most obviously a White woman. My gender is never overlooked; my race frequently is.

My assumption is that in order to make knowledge claims about teaching, I have to explain where I am *as a woman* in the classroom. It is from this standpoint that I tell stories about teaching. I agree with Gannett, among others, who maintains that "discourses and the people who generate them are always socially and historically situated, and ... [that] gender has historically played a critical role in situating all writers and readers[,] ... [especially] the profound social and epistemological consequences of discursive marginalization" (Gannett, 1992, pp. 10-11). It is also imperative that I explain how my colour, ethnicity, and class enter and leave the classroom, and how my sexual orientation, appearance and age also inform the situation I describe. It is not sufficient to state that "I" was there and this happened, but to explore all that it means to be embodied in the classroom. Gender, especially being gendered female, is still rarely considered in the postsecondary classroom in British Columbia,[12] and many of the variables I consider to be essential might also be determined to be irrelevant to a conclusion about what I ought to do in order not only to teach well but also to be deemed to teach well. Those of my colleagues who teach from a perspective different from mine might ask: "What difference could or should skin colour play in the choice of curriculum for an English 100 classroom? What does it matter who is there with the teacher?" These questions

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[12] In spite of recent events at University of Victoria in the Political Science Department, University of British Columbia Political Science Department, and Simon Fraser University's discharging of a swim coach for sexual harassment (Jimenez, October 25, 1997), gender as a category of difference is still rarely considered. The British Columbia postsecondary system seems to be impervious to repeated claims to consider gender imbalance in the classroom, in administration, and in the curriculum, and women still experience a "chilly climate" largely created by an indifference to our experiences as women.

themselves make the students who are there with the teacher invisible. Ought we not to teach as if everyone in the classroom with us is the same? I am often asked this question. I often reply, "We do act as if everyone is the same. We act as if everyone is young, white, straight, middle class, Christian and male."

These questions also render much of who I am invisible. In order to redress the epistemic underclass status (Narayan, 1989; Summer, 1988) that I assume *because I am a woman* means looking at the experiences from the standpoint of me *as a woman.* Before articulating a strategy for "claiming [my] cognitive competence and authority" (Code, 1991, 218) as a woman, I need to pose some simple questions that invoke auto/biography. In order to articulate a strategy, as Code urges us to do, I need to re-claim what I have learned from my experiences teaching literature and composition to First Nations students. The site of my knowledge claims is not incidental to my knowledge claims. The integration of my personal and professional life occurs in the moment; it is only in recollection that there is an attempt or a demand to separate my life into public and private, as if somehow the fact that my thirteen-year-old son became suicidal in the same months I was teaching *Dreamspeaker* (Hubert, 1978) was irrelevant to me and to the students, beset as they so often are with the experience of suicide in their lives. For whom was I weeping at the bitter postscript to Jutra's film of the novel? What epistemic privilege did I possess as a result of such personal detail? What epistemic privilege did the students possess, struggling as they often do with suicide, child apprehension and an unresponsive child welfare system? What happened when it became apparent I could not control my sorrow at the end of the film, when it became apparent that the students and the teacher shared a private trouble? What we knew in that classroom

informed what we encountered when we read *Dreamspeaker*. Within which rhetorical space[13] can I explain this? Where could I discuss the loss I experienced when A. spoke. Nowhere could I find a rhetorical space to mourn her loss, to mourn the error I had made persistently throughout that year of teaching.

When I review the literature in the next chapter, I am attempting to discover the rhetorical space in the community of scholars where I could reflect adequately on "The Trickster Brought Them."

[13] Late in the writing of this dissertation, I discovered the metaphor used by Lorraine Code in *Rhetorical Spaces: Essays on gendered locations* (1995).

CHAPTER THREE - TEACHER KNOWLEDGE

My impressions of teacher research have been forever shaped by an experience I had in 1988 with a faculty development officer from a university in eastern Canada. He was one of two male resource people at the annual retreat of the British Columbia network of Instructional Skills Workshop facilitators. I was listening intently when he began his first session on the methods of professional development advocated by Christopher Argyris (Argyris & Schön, 1974). What I heard intrigued me, and I was taking notes. He sketched in what he identified as Model I behaviour, and I noted a dissonance between what he identified as 'our' behaviour in difficult and threatening situations and my awareness of my behaviour in difficult and threatening professional situations. Model I behaviour, he explained, is characterised by four stances: we define goals personally and then try to achieve them collectively or cooperatively; we behave so as to maximize the chances of winning and minimize the chances of losing; we seek to avoid generating or expressing negative feelings; and we desire to be rational. I puzzled for a moment or so then raised my hand.

We were a group of about twenty-five men and women, seated in a large circle. The workshop leader happened to be standing directly opposite me. The video camera that was to capture our exchange was slightly behind my shoulder, so he was facing the camera for the entire exchange, and I can be heard but not seen. Captured on film, my voice sounds soft and certain. I remember feeling slightly nervous as I asked my question:

> W. When you described the four things that you saw as the design that we often use, when I started to write it down I had the feeling that I was looking at a masculine model for dysfunctional behaviour, control, etc.
>
> As a woman, in my institution, I see those as values that are highly praised. But what I'm questioning is that -- I agree that I may espouse a theory and that my actions are often quite different. But I feel as if you have written me out when you talk about this is the design that we often use.
>
> I don't think this is the design that I, as a woman, use. ...
>
> But for me, I don't think that is the way I behave. I agree with you that when I'm espousing one model I'm often using another. But I don't think that is one I use. (From transcript, June, 1988)

A dialogue ensued that I found, and still find, threatening. (It is a good example, in fact, of my behaviour in a difficult and threatening situation). The key, for me, was the moment when the workshop leader, who was still standing facing me, said, "In the

language of this theory, what you have stated is your conclusion. What you haven't offered me is data. Which we can look at. The second thing though is that I disagree. I think she does behave that way."

A dignified scuffle broke out, with several of us attempting to re-construct elements of our conversation in order to reconcile our opposing viewpoints. During this exchange, the workshop leader concluded thus:

> **I want to be tough on people's reasoning. You just happened to give me a piece of reasoning to be tough on. I hope I will be tough on everybody's reasoning in the same way. But there are features in the way you are reasoning that will make it very hard for me to work with you, I think. ... (from transcript, June, 1988)**

I explained that I found his conclusions about me hasty and therefore offensive and that I also found his conclusion about whether I could be "worked with" very painful. Part of my response came from the consequences of a difficult year I had just experienced in my institution [described in my teaching autobiography in Chapter Two], so I was far from indifferent to claims that I was "difficult to work with." I also believe that what the workshop leader had been about to do was tell stories about me, or rather stories *on* me drawn from his experiences of me thus far in the retreat. (We had, as far as I knew, had no interactions.) I felt unfairly judged and I said so, just before the workshop leader decided that this digression had gone on long enough and he moved us onto the point of his discussion. I sat in miserable silence, staring blearily at my notes and finding in his descriptions of how "we" mismanage difficult and threatening situations nowhere to place my knowledge of my own feelings and behaviour.

This man represented 'the expert' not only in my professional life but also in the professional lives of many of my colleagues. I was 'just' an instructor who free-lanced in the instructional skills workshop network whenever I had the time, inclination and opportunity.

One of the key consequences of this exchange was my apprehension that I had been swiftly and utterly misunderstood *and* that the conclusions made about me were expressed publicly; that is, they became a version of me that could supersede all other possible versions. This incident propelled me onto a path to determine why it happened, what evidence led the workshop leader to his "hypothesis," which I maintain controlled his apprehension of me. My perception, my hypothesis in the language of the theory the workshop leader was using, was that once the hypothesis was formed, only the evidence which supported it became evident to the researcher. When I discovered that a transcript of our exchange, called "Wendy's Case," had been used in a graduate seminar on Argyris's theories the following autumn, without my consent, I was horrified. My story had become the subject of research. I had become, unwillingly, the object of research.

It is important that this literature review begin with a story that could easily lend itself to a negative explanation of my motives for writing this thesis. Am I trying to even an old score, by

returning to the theories behind the behaviour of a man in a sunny meeting room so long ago? Is this my way of proving once and for all, in a public and academically acceptable manner, that I was right and he was wrong? This is a possible interpretation. This story is relevant not only to this review of the literature but also because it provides "the autobiography of the question" (J. Miller, 1995) that motivates this inquiry. As a result of that experience, I became curious to know how "we" come to "know" others, especially in professional situations. I became curious to know how data about teachers is collected. I discovered that much data are stories "we" tell each other about teaching, often about painful events and apparent failures in the classroom, in the hallways, and in committee rooms of our professional lives. From these stories, how do I come to know what ought to be done? How are biographical forms used in efforts to construct, interpret, and adjudicate teacher knowledge?

What I attempted to find in the literature were examples of stories used in research about teacher knowledge in order to understand how stories became evidence for subsequent knowledge claims. This review of the literature on teacher knowledge seeks to answer these questions: How do teachers and those who conduct research with and on teachers use stories? What practices and theory can I derive from the literature? What seems to me to be missing in the literature surveyed? Stories about teaching are found, among other places, in the research on the reflective practitioner, collaborative action research, and critical and feminist pedagogy.

The Reflective Practitioner

Much of the literature on teacher knowledge makes reference to "the reflective practitioner." Those unfamiliar with this specialised term might think that somehow there are

practitioners who think about what they do and those who don't, which would be an absurd claim. To be self-conscious in the classroom means to think about teaching; to manage to complete one's career without thinking about teaching would be impossible. The phrase does, however, have a fairly specific meaning. In 1910, John Dewey provided educators with a distinction between routine and reflective action, a distinction encountered through most of the literature on the reflective practitioner:

> *routine action* is behavior that is guided by impulse, tradition, and authority. In any social setting, and the school is no exception, there exists a taken-for-granted definition of everyday reality in which problems, goals, and the means for their solution become defined in particular ways. ... *reflective action* ... [is] behavior which involves active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or practice in light of the grounds that support it ... the educational, social and political contexts in which their teaching is embedded. (Grant & Zeichner, 1984, pp. 3-4)

Initially, the leaders in the field of reflective action in postsecondary education were business and training-oriented, American organizational development consultants, looking for ways to dispel cognitive dissonance, facilitate efficient learning, and improve productivity in a specific economic system (Kolb, 1984).[1] Since the early 1970s, this connection with the world of business has slipped from our awareness, at least our awareness reflected in the literature. The mechanistic aspects of the concept and the techniques are still detectable, however.

In 1974, Jossey-Bass published *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional*

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[1]From [Kurt Lewin's] studies came the laboratory-training method and T-groups (T=training), one of the most potent educational innovations in this century. The action-research method has proved a useful approach to planned-change interventions in small groups and large complex organizations and community systems. Today this methodology forms the cornerstone of most organization development efforts. The consistent theme in all Lewin's work was his concern for the integration of theory and practice, stimulated if not created by his experience as a refugee to the United States from Nazi Germany. (Kolb, 1984, pp. 8-9)

Effectiveness by Christopher Argyris and Donald Schön. This book was written in a decade in the United States when Hannah Arendt was writing her way to an understanding of the Holocaust through her biography of Adolf Eichmann, in which she determined that the banality of evil resides in our individual and collective unwillingness and inability to practice the art of knowing -- "to think what we are doing" (as noted in Greene, 1986c, p. 479) *and* to make judgments on it (Arendt, 1964). Writing in the same political and social climate as Arendt (1964) were Jackson (1968), Kohlberg (1976), Kolb, 1984), Perry (1971) and Polanyi (1958). Argyris and Schön were attempting the same intellectual task: to make sense of how 'we' come to know.

Argyris and Schön's book was derived from research with business, medical and agriculture professionals and was an attempt to articulate how professionals improved their performance and how professionals who managed professionals could improve performance and productivity. This book operates on several important assumptions about human nature and subsequent conceptions of reality. It is taken as a given, for example, that "man[2] ... is ... motivated by a sense of competence and the need to be effective" (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. x). Both terms -- "competence" and "effective" -- are connected to controlling and mastering self and environment. Another explicit assumption about the nature of reality is stated in the preface:

> Linking individual human behaviour with the state of the world in which it exists made it possible to ask how the environment affects its creators and led to the realization that this effect depends on how people experience the environment and that how they experience

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[2]The use of "man" and "he" to represent men and women is not only personally offensive but also no longer acceptable in academic discourse. Some of the material I am using here does so, however, and the choices I have are to write [sic] after every offending occurrence, ignore the usage, amend the usage with complicated square brackets -- [s]he or [wo]man, or attempt to even the score by using she and woman in my own text. None of these choices is satisfactory. The reader may add subliminal quotation marks whenever encountering sexist language in quotations.

> the environment depends on how they construct it. Individuals are ultimately responsible for the impact of the environment because they learn from personally constructed experience. (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. xi)

This is not a unique insight, and it is disputable. Nevertheless, the ground on which the teacher finds herself is to some extent created by her, and many theorists and researchers remind us of this commonplace belief (Baier, 1985; Blumer, 1969; Drew, 1989; Polanyi, 1958, viii in Beattie, 1991, p. 66). Dorothy Smith's perception of the 'everyday world as problematic' (D. Smith, 1987; 1990a; 1990b) is a useful one for the reflective practitioner, who, according to Argyris and Schön, creates the everyday world in which she or he works. The point here is this: Having created the world, it seems 'natural' to perceive it as largely 'good.' Reflecting on that created world may mean discerning much that is 'not good' about the world the teacher herself created. Confronted with that possibility, and being unable to play the 'It's not my fault' card, the reflective practitioner might simply choose not to 'see' what is 'not good' about the world she has created.

Because the model Argyris and Schön developed is derived from empirical research, what is reflected on -- data -- is only that which can be verified. When 'the workshop leader' and I analyse the data to discover what happened during our confrontation, we use transcriptions, which omit much valuable data on the videotape, such as the quality of my voice, his body language of disconfirmation, and the frequent laughter of the participants. What is also omitted are the physical and emotional responses I had to this confrontation and presumably the physical and emotional responses of 'the workshop leader.'

The object of investigation, according to Argyris and Schön, is 'what happens,' usually in critical incidents, *between* the practitioner and the object of her practice -- the object of her

intention. The question is not 'What did I do?' but 'Why did I do?' or 'How did what I do create this affect?'[3] These are important questions. The context in which these questions are asked and the language/metaphor of the questioning are also important, because they also shape the inquiry as surely as they shaped the reality being investigated for confirming or disconfirming data. Throughout, the critical questions for me have to do with what is not seen, not taken into consideration, not known. Often these invisible frames have to do with White-skin privilege, educational advantage, power, gender, class, heterosexism, and assumptions of physical well-being, elements of the false 'we-all.'

Being reflective means both to take action and to reflect on the immediate and long-term consequences of this action in order to learn from it. Argyris and Schön discover a theory of action in the meditative behaviour of their subjects, a theory that shares general properties of "all" theories: generality, relevance, consistency, completeness, testability, centrality and simplicity. Within this model, knowledge is defined in terms of information that is acquired by developing an hypothesis (with the criteria explained above); testing the theory by acting; collecting evidence to confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis; and observing the consequences. The researchers remark that "much formal academic knowledge has emerged through making explicit the informal knowledge of everyday life" (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 8) and the process is through critical, or reflective, practice. Tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1958) and explicit

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[3] What did I do is still an important question, particularly when I am recalling events of significant emotional import. In *Maternal Thinking*, Ruddick recalls a story about Julie Olsen Edwards, who was afraid she would throw her ceaselessly wailing infant against the wall. The question put to her as she told the story is "But what did you *do*?" Because it is not only how she was feeling that she needs to recall, it is what she did that provides the wisdom for her. She did not injure her child; she did something to prevent it (Ruddick, 1989, pp. 65-67).

knowledge must be explored by the "outside observer" and the "agent." The observer is expected to be able to "find ways to make use of the agent's intimations and imaginative experiments" but is cautioned not to "confuse espoused theories with theories-in-use" (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 12).

Argyris and Schön were investigating the reflections of professionals who were performing ineffectively and who were driven by what Argyris and Schön consider to be the *universal* urge to be effective. Argyris and Schön's theory, then, is concerned with remediation, and with a natural resistance to become conscious of ineffectiveness and the resulting inability to change ineffective behaviours. The reflective practitioner must be assisted by somebody who is to make explicit the agent's theory-in-use, compare it to the espoused theory, and investigate alternatives. Only then will change be possible (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 15). The stimulation to change occurs when incongruence is noticed. Congruence has specialised meaning for Argyris and Schön and occurs when the theory-in-use and the theory-of-action (espoused theory) are apparently the same. For a set of behaviours to achieve the status of theory-in-use, there must be detectable governing variables, appropriateness of strategies, and accurate and adequate assumptions. These elements would prevent a theory-of-action from prescribing immoral or illegal behaviour. Argyris and Schön, therefore, extracted from professions in engineering, clinical medicine and agricultural technology a model of evaluating theories of action that rest on determining internal consistency, congruence, effectiveness and testability.

The agent is motivated to change when actions have no effect, or have an unintended (and presumably negative) effect or when governing variables change or "someone with a different theory-in-use ... expose[s] the practitioner to a different behavioral world" (Argyris & Schön,

1974, p. 27). The data is collected by observing the interaction of theory-in-use and the behavioral world (what happens). The first inkling that something may have gone terribly wrong is often expressed as a dis-ease in the world created by the theory and "the protagonist ... must begin to make a connection between his own theory-in-use and those features of his behavioral world he most dislikes; ... (and) envisage ... a behavioral world different from the one he has created" (p. 29).

Because the agent has created her own reality, she can persist in unknowing because "the continued exercise and confirmation of a theory-in-use ... proceeds from suppressing certain kinds of behavior and information to creating conditions in which others repress both elements" (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 27). The agent is able to create situations where valuable stimulating information about incongruence and ineffectiveness are repressed by the agent and suppressed by others in the situation. If a teacher considers himself to be a good listener, he may unconsciously screen out data which could provide clues that his Theory-of-Action (Teachers ought to be good listeners) and his theory-in-action (I listen well by [observable action]) are incongruent. He may do this by announcing whenever possible disconfirmation is about to occur, "I am a good listener," thereby making it difficult, if not impossible, for disconfirming data to be collected. This creates one of the types of dilemmas the researchers identify:

1. incongruity between espoused theory and theory in use
2. inconsistency in governing variables
3. governing variables become less and less achievable
4. the behavioral world becomes intolerable
5. the behavioral world created cuts off information (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 29)

According to Argyris and Schön, men[4] have apparently developed a repertoire of devices by which they try to protect their theories-in-use from data generated in dilemmas. They compartmentalize experiences, become selectively inattentive, suppress offensive data, remove themselves or others from the dilemma, experience satisfaction with self-fulfilling prophecy, and endlessly execute what Argyris and Schön identify as single-loop change; that is, they make only surface changes, such as talking louder as students cease to pay attention. They also adhere to Model I behaviour. As long as the agent persists in such Model I behaviour, effective change will not occur. The practitioner may reflect, but he will reflect on insufficient data or look in the wrong direction. Therefore, the practitioner must be confronted by his inability to inquire into his action adequately (Argyris & Schön, 1974).

Much of *Theory in Practice* concerns itself with the techniques used to assist agents to uncover the assumptions that inform their theories in action, discover the governing variables that inform their theories of action, and solve the problem. The technique hinges on capturing dialogue in challenging interactions and reflecting on "what was going on in your mind while each person in the dialogue (including yourself) is speaking" (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 41). The data generated concerns itself with conclusions the teacher was acting on, evidence gathered to support the conclusion at the moment, and methods of testing the conclusion while in action. Group discussion and one-on-one explorations are important elements in the design. The interaction is expressed in a biographical form, from which data is derived.

Argyris and Schön advocate a stance of inquiry that "maximizes valid information,

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[4]The authors do not single out men, they simply use the male noun and pronoun throughout.

maximizes free and informed choice, and maximizes internal commitment to decisions made." This is called Model II behaviour. The group process relies on data generated from personal experience (the cases cannot be hypothetical) that express dilemmas, and the group must value individuality and expression of conflict. The group must also be "guided by an instructor who has more faith in the participants than they may have in themselves, who recognizes the limits of the participant's learning methodologies, and whose idea of rationality integrates feelings and ideas" (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 98). Argyris and Schön believe that "... in order to test one's defensiveness, one must confront issues such as one's own defensiveness, the defensiveness of others, and the ineffectiveness of the group ..." (p. 76), and assume that "most participants are not effective sources for learning about Model-II behavior" (p. 111).

Embedded in these theories are some assumptions that need to be noted. Argyris and Schön perform an interesting sleight-of-hand in declaring that the reflective practitioner's view of reality *is* reality and it is created by him or her. I have worked with instructors who know there are many realities besides their own in the classroom but who forget that knowledge in practice, particularly in 'difficult and threatening' situations. When the instructor is feeling victimized in a classroom with disruptive, inattentive students, the knowledge that he or she may have created the environment is not a welcome one. There are also many elements of the environment that have definitely *not* been created by the practitioner: time-tables, class size, articulated curricula, externally imposed goals and objectives, etc. Many realities exist in the classroom beside the one created by the teacher.

The original studies on which Argyris and Schön based their conclusions were derived from 195 professional practitioners, of whom 40 were women and 18 were "minorities" (Argyris

& Schön, 1974, p. 66). The problematics of race, gender and class are not acknowledged, in spite of the fact that for a person to achieve professional status in technically-oriented specialities in the early 70s in the United States certainly entailed race, gender and class privilege. The early 70s and the preceding generation of educators did not evince much sensitivity to difference, and it could be speculated how much the women and minorities[5] had learned 'to think like men,' which is to say white, middle or upper middle class, heterosexual, anglo-european men. The technique is based on what successful adults do, adults who are in the mainstream of American business culture.

The gender bias in Model I behaviour, a model that claimed to be universal, has not been adequately explored, and the possible bias in the study group's preferred methods is not usually noted. The reliance on confrontation (Argyris,1990) reifies power as a given in truth-seeking, and proposes conflict as an unexamined virtue. The methodology seems self-fulfilling. The case description begins with words like "intervention," which requires the reflective practitioner to note negative stimuli.[6] Many instances of quiet incongruence can be detected in diffuse anxiety, eating disorders, drinking problems and similar unfocused manifestations of unease, none of which may ever be perceived as negative stimuli. Capturing a dialogue with a supervisor in a hall-way confrontation is certainly valuable data. But what remains unseen and unexamined, particularly in the classroom? Within the model advocated by Argyris and Schön, there is a tendency to encourage the reduction of a perceived dilemma to a mechanistic division of negative

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[5]According to the text, the women and the minorities are separate categories.

[6]The model focuses on teaching problems and puzzles. This excludes investigating with a practitioner teaching situations that went well, to discover personal, practical knowledge as Elbaz (1983) advocates. It would be interesting to use this method with successful teaching experiences.

stimulus into categories of error, with no sense of the dilemma as much richer source of reflection, as advocated by Boyd (1988) and Cuban (1992).

> This technical process of identifying the problem, generating feasible solutions, choosing the one that best reaches the goal (that is, eliminates the problem), and putting the solution into practice works well when it comes to fixing stalled cars, mending broken limbs, winning chess matches, and getting classes started on time. ... Like a jigsaw puzzle in which all the pieces fit together, the problem goes away .... When the template of technical rationality is laid over a messy social or educational problem, it seldom fits. The entangled issues and their ambiguity spill over. There are no procedures to follow, no scientific rules for making decisions. Worse yet, the template hides value conflicts. These so-called "problems" are complex, untidy, and insoluble. They are, I argue, dilemmas ... conflict-filled situations that require choices because competing, highly prized values cannot be fully satisfied. (Cuban, 1992, p. 6)

The contribution of Argyris and Schön, separately and jointly, is considerable in the field of teacher knowledge. In the past twenty years, the concepts of theory-in-use, theories-of-action and single- and double-loop learning have been taken up by postsecondary teachers, many of whom do not explicitly cite Argyris and Schön. I detect echoes of their work in pre-service teacher educators, postsecondary faculty development officers and critical pedagogues.

Schön's work (1983, 1995), in particular, finds a place in the emancipatory project of getting teacher's voices into the debates about improving teacher practice and reforming education, particularly in the United States (Berkey, *et al,* 1990; Berliner, 1987; Grimmett & Erickson, 1988; Liston & Zeichner, 1990; Tremmel, 1993, Winter; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1991). The concept of the reflective practitioner, furthermore, has taken on a much wider, less specific meaning, and is now generally taken as any practice that a teacher or other professional uses to refine his or her practice and to examine their practice critically (Britzman, 1991; Britzman *et al*, 1991; Greene, 1986 a and b; Lewis 1992). The practice Argyris and Schön developed has taken its place in the work of faculty members who work with colleagues to

develop teacher knowledge. It is successful with faculty who have not thought systematically about their teaching practice, and it is very useful for solving those teaching puzzles that may occur when what was intended and what actually happen are so unexpectedly dissimilar that no amount of replaying the lesson on the 'video-cassette recorder of the mind' will discover what went wrong.

The practice is a topical technique, however; one that grants power not only to the classroom teacher but also to the coach or facilitator (two terms commonly used in this method of faculty development) who helps him or her to discover any collisions between theories of action and theories in action. The coach/facilitator, in fact, takes on what could be dangerously close to a therapeutic role, as the instructor sorts through the implications of the intervention. Within this model, there is a risk that what is deemed 'the good' is the congruence between one's espoused theory and one's theory in action. What justifies knowledge claims is a thorough examination of interventions, successful confrontation with the resisting instructor and a pleasing congruence between what was intended and what happens. This may be satisfactory when what was intended was a viable bridge; problems arise when what was intended was the indoctrination of social services students into child-care policies that advocate apprehending First Nations children and placing them in "safe", that is, non-Native, homes. Brent Kilbourn reminds us that Jim Keegstra was considered "sympathetic and understanding," "effective," and that a "a significant number of [the students] had indeed learned what they had been taught" (1987, p.377). If Keegstra were to reflect on his practice, what would he discover?

Britzman (1991), for example, poses a common description of situations that cause the teacher to reflect on her practice, and this description eloquently restates what Argyris and

Schön's professionals experienced:

> Despite our best authorial intentions, no guarantees mediate our private lesson plans or the public effects of the pedagogical encounter. More often than not, things do not go according to plan: objectives reappear as too simple, too complicated, or get lost; concepts become glossed over, require long detours, or go awry; and evaluation rarely delivers on its promise of closure. In fact, what seems most certain is that after the pedagogical encounter we must return to our plans, rethink our expectations, and theorize the tensions of multiple performances that compete for our attention. In short, pedagogy is filled with surprises, involuntary returns, and unanticipated twists. For this reason, we can conclude that pedagogy ushers in an intangibility that we can identify as "the uncanny." Enlightenment may well be our destination but the journey is fraught with creepy detours. (Britzman, 1991, p. 60)

Britzman goes on to deconstruct a grade 10 literature class in which the students experience and create for the teachers a return to involuntary places. What Britzman does not provide is a systematic detailed account of how what happened becomes part of her own teacher knowledge: she poses pedagogical unpredictability and theorizes on it. Britzman facilitates the reflection of two student teachers, and this reflection is not undertaken in the mechanical way advocated by Argyris and Schön. Consequently, some gaps in her discussion of the classroom experiences appear. She begins with a discussion of the theory underlying the practice which she and her colleagues proceed to describe (Britzman, 1991; Britzman *et al* 1991), beginning with her description of "postmodern theory ... notions of the uncanny, of parody, of the play of meanings, and of the contradictory effects of discourse" (1991, p. 61) as the ground on which her pedagogy plays. Where did this theory of action come from? How does Britzman know this theory of action is the right ground from which the student teachers' practice arises? When things don't go as planned in the classroom informed by critical pedagogy (Britzman, 1991; Britzman, *et al* 1991; Ellsworth, 1989; Eichhorn, *et al*, 1992; Lather, 1991b), the trend seems to be toward re-examining the theory of action as opposed to examining the theory in action.

Some insight into this particular classroom is provided, as Britzman describes how the students entered their classroom to discover their desks had been re-arranged. The presence of a video camera and camera operator, as well as the desk arrangement, appeared to silence the students when they entered the suddenly unfamiliar classroom setting (Britzman, 1991, pp. 67-68). My questions have to do with to what extent did these changes affect the experience described? To what extent was the startling behaviour of the student reported by Britzman a performance provoked by the stage-like setting of the re-organised classroom? What *really* happened in the classroom; what did the theorist *do*?

The research of Gary Fenstermacher and his colleagues (Fenstermacher, 1986; Pendlebury, 1990; Fenstermacher & Richardson, 1993; Pendlebury, 1995; Fenstermacher, 1997) complements the work of the reflective practitioner by elaborating the notion of practical arguments. Fenstermacher's model of practical arguments emphasises the link between research and practice, authorises the teacher as "purposive, thinking agent," and creates a device for understanding how teachers think when they decide what to do (Pendlebury, 1990, p. 172). To this model Pendlebury adds "situational appreciation," (1990, 171). This model of practical argument is based explicitly on "Aristotle's view of practice, 'characterized by three central, related features: *mutability, indeterminacy,* and *particularity* ... [which] present the practitioner ... with a range of cognitive uncertainties' " (Nussbaum's interpretation of Aristotle in Pendlebury, 1990, pp. 175-176). The model consists of processes to illuminate a piece of reasoning, which can be done by the teacher or a careful observer. The object of the observation is the teacher.

Fenstermacher and Richardson extend this model by asking, "[H]ow, *precisely*, does a teacher use research or practice reflectively" (1993, p. 101, my emphasis). One way they answer

this question is to make a distinction between eliciting practical argument and reconstructing one. Eliciting practical argument yields a teacher's description of a teaching situation, and reconstructing a practical argument yields an assessment of the teacher's description. Fenstermacher and Richardson explicitly invoke the Other, as in "the other begins to analyse the elicited argument along normative dimensions, working closely with the teacher in the course of probing, analysing, checking and reframing ... The practical argument that emerges from this engagement is the 'property' ... of both the other *and* the teacher" (1993, p. 106). The concept of the Other is very similar to the intervention of the 'skilled facilitator' in the work of Argyris and Schön. Fenstermacher and Richardson emphasise Kroath's notion of critical friend (1993, p. 111) as the appropriate stance for the other (presumably the researcher).

Fenstermacher, in a recent article summarising the work of several colleagues, challenges the core notion of narrative itself, claiming in his opening anecdote to have finally written a narrative: "As I looked over what I had written, I heard myself asking, is this a narrative? Have I written something that so many of my good colleagues are making such a fuss about? Have I done one of those?" (Fenstermacher, 1997, p. 119-120). His professed confusion over what constitutes a narrative leads him to conclude that a taxonomy of narratives is required, complete with some model of analytical critique (p. 123). He also suggests the utility for such a taxonomy, since "[t]hrough narrative, we begin to understand the actor's reasons for action, and are thereby encouraged to make sense of these actions through the eyes of the actor. This understanding constitutes an enormous contribution to learning about and getting better at teaching [because] in story we have one of the most truly useful ways of helping other teachers" (pp. 123-124). Fenstermacher's discussion of narrative suggests that "[t]here must, I think, be some way to hold

the narrator accountable for his or her claims, so that the narrator and the readers of or listeners to the narrative might guard against deception, illusion, or falsehood" (p. 121).

Fenstermacher's model is useful for the practitioner who is left to decide what to do in the moment in the classroom when a dilemma presents itself. Practical reasoning occurs in the moment. What ought one to do, for example, when a First Nations elder announces he will not do a smudge[7] for any woman 'on her time' (a common expression in First Nations communities signifying menses)? In practice, in a classroom with twenty women and ten men, several women are faced with a decision to stay and perhaps violate a deeply held personal and cultural belief or leave and violate an equally strong cultural taboo against publicly acknowledging menses. The teacher *does* something; what does she learn from her action? What does she come to know and how is that knowledge constructed *by her* before, during and after the moment?

Narrative Discourse and Teacher Research

Reading Argyris and Schön, and Fenstermacher and his colleagues led me to more questions and more experts in the field of teacher research. I became intrigued by the way biographical forms were used to discover and explain teacher knowledge. I also discovered university-based researchers interpreting the words and stories of teachers. The stories were often personal revelations revealed by researchers who did not step away from their role as a neutral, invisible recorder and interpreter. I have chosen these articles discussed here as representatives of articles that come close to espousing a storied epistemology that I am advocating in this study. I

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[7] A "smudge" is a ceremony of cleansing, performed with sweetgrasses, sage, and cedar.

appreciate the complexity of engaging in a collaborative study where the goal is to honour the teacher's voice.

What I discovered in my search of the literature on biographical forms and teacher research is that the forms themselves are often used without due attention to the effect of the form itself on the information presented, as I discussed in Chapter Two. This discovery does not invalidate those research studies, but does reveal a significant gap, a gap that would allow postsecondary teachers to include their own voices into the creation of teacher knowledge.

Michael Connelly and Jean Clandinin, Canadian scholars and researchers, have moved the theories of Argyris and Schön forward, with their emphasis on the storied lives that elementary school teachers live. Concerned specifically with personal practical knowledge and its relationship to theoretical knowledge enacted in the classroom, Connelly and Clandinin have been involved in extensive research projects at "Bay Street School." With an important review of narrative forms in teacher knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988), they have formed much of the research at present conducted on and with teachers in elementary and secondary schools in Canada. They are both teacher educators, and their work focuses on the knowledge acquisition of in-service and pre-service teachers. The intention of these researchers is to step into the research picture by making explicit, where necessary, their own presence in the stories told by teachers about their practice. Their work is influential, partly because of the location of the research and partly because of the persuasive nature of their writing about their research. It is an admirable mix of the practical and the theoretical, and provides models for using narrative forms in teacher research.

Connelly and Clandinin have helped to sharpen the awareness of narratives in teacher

research by distinguishing between stories (those phenomena experienced by the teacher) and the narrative ("the structured quality of experience to be studied") (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). The inquiry, then, is that of narrative, and the object of the inquiry is story, represented through field notes, journal records, interviews, story telling, letter writing, autobiographical and biographical writing, and other texts from teaching life (1990 and 1988). This idiosyncratic distinction is helpful to their next move, which is to introduce criteria for evaluating the narrative. Connelly and Clandinin also make this move in order to address a familiar criticism of narrative, that it "unduly stresses the individual over the social context" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2).

Connelly and Clandinin are specifically concerned with how the individual makes sense of the social context in which the story is located, and also with the process of negotiation that occurs between the teacher and the context, between the teacher and her social world, and between the teacher and the researchers. Responding to Nel Noddings' (1984) concern for community and collegiality, and aware of the hierarchy of interpretive power that exists in this particular form of teacher research, Connelly and Clandinin identify several points where the researcher needs to be aware of what is going on between the teacher and the researcher and between the teacher and her world. Connelly and Clandinin are concerned with issues of validity in their espoused theories of research, and present criteria for considering such issues.

First, the narrative, and the story it inquires into, can be evaluated for a sense of time, place, plot and scene, as well as "three critical dimensions of human experience -- significance, value and intention -- and, therefore, of narrative writing" (Carr in Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 9). There is also a need to address the multiple "I" in such narratives:

> In narrative inquiry we see that the practices drawn out in the research situation are lodged in our personal knowledge of the world. One of our tasks in writing narrative accounts is to convey a sense of the complexity of all of the "Ts"-- all of the ways each of us have of knowing (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 10).

They also draw from Max Van Manen's observation that beyond reliability, validity, and generalizability, which may be useful for narrative inquiry, there are three other criteria: verisimilitude, apparency, and transferability (Van Manen, 1990).

Further criteria concern the illusion of causality and the distinction between the whole and the detail, which invokes considerations of economy, selectivity, and familiarity. The quality of invitation, that is, the offer to participate in the life-world of the subject, is important. Once the stories have been collected, the criteria focus on the researcher, who must select and organise once more. Connelly and Clandinin advocate broadening (generalizing), and burrowing (focusing on the event's emotional, moral, and aesthetic qualities [1990, p. 11]).

Clandinin and Connelly are explicit about the collaborative nature of their narrative inquiry (Clandinin et al, 1993; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) . While the story may reside with the teacher, the narrative becomes something else.

> We found that merely listening, recording, and fostering participant story telling was both impossible (we are, all of us, continually telling stories of our experience, whether or not we speak and write them) and unsatisfying. We learned that we, too, needed to tell our stories. Scribes we were not; story tellers and story livers we were. And in our story telling, the stories of our participants merged with our own to create new stories, ones that we have labelled *collaborative stories*. (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 12)

Implicit in the work of Connelly and Clandinin, then, are several assumptions about those of us who teach. We lead storied lives. We organize our knowledge about our lives in stories. We tell our lives in stories. These stories are accessible not only to us but also to attentive listeners and inquirers. Collaboration is necessary to help us to understand that we live storied lives and to

create the stories. Our personal practical knowledge can be available to us and others through "narratively constructed knowledge" (Clandinin, 1992, p. 125).

Stories thus become a heuristic for knowing. Variously developed and defended criteria for evaluating stories become a heuristic for knowing about knowing (Carter, 1993; Freeman, 1996; Martin, 1994; Phelan, 1996; Rosen, 1996; Witherell & Noddings, 1991). Central to this knowing is the role of the researcher, who somehow unlocks the stories of the knower, as Kathy Carter advises: "As researchers and teacher educators, we can only serve ... perhaps, by helping teachers to come to know their own stories" (Carter, 1993, p. 8). This emphasis on the role of the researcher creates an imbalance that is set unproblematically upon another imbalance, the relationship between student teachers, cooperating teachers, university teachers and university researchers. Clandinin's account of "Julie," which I describe below, is an example of a mode of knowing teacher's knowledge that highlights some dangers inherent in the method.

Clandinin (1992) offers an account of a narrative inquiry into teacher education. She intends to tell a story of student teachers, university teachers and cooperating teachers who worked together to discover an alternative approach to teacher education. What emerges is a story about "Julie" who is a student teacher in her first year (Clandinin, 1992, p. 133).

"Julie" undertakes for a short period of time to study child development in mathematics. She elects to follow a group of boys, working on an enrichment task. She is also taking a graduate seminar with Clandinin. Under the direction of a cooperating teacher, "Julie" works for several months with these students, while Clandinin "attempts to establish what [she] thought was a collaborative relationship" (p. 133). In November, "Julie" submits her first paper "... a mixture of transcribed notes from boys' conversations interspersed with various quotations from

learning theory texts and quotations from theoretical resources on mathematics learning" (p. 133) to Clandinin, who had expected "a paper that talked about the particular boys, the particular task and what she had learned from the experience" (p. 133).

What Clandinin refers to as her own (Jean's) story does not meet many of the criteria advocated by Connelly and Clandinin in related work. This is not, I suggest, an account of "one university teacher and one student teacher as we worked together ... as we both came to new ways of living our stories" (Clandinin, 1992, p. 126). This is an account of a student who produced an unsuccessful essay and then re-thought her assignment in light of feedback from her professor. That Clandinin refers to the process as "giving back a story" obscures what it is that she gave back to "Julie": "I gave back in my response to her paper a story of distance from the children, of lack of connection with the subject matter and a lack of her voice as she hid behind the various theoretical formulations displaying a kind of what Belenky *et al.* (1986) would call 'received knowing'" (133).

Clandinin uses "our" and "we" without identifying to whom these pronouns refer. At times, they are words to refer to her professional relationship with Connelly. At times, they refer to the wider "we", that is, those of her readers who are engaged in narrative inquiry as an educative process, and at times "we" refers to her relationship with "Julie" and an unnamed cooperating teacher. (The children, by the way, are not named in any way.) I submit that this is not just linguistic nit-picking. Attention to structural and rhetorical detail in stories leads to a fuller understanding of the response the reader might have to them. If stories operate as ways to encourage the act of "trying to respond from the perspective of the other" (Belenky in Clandinin, 1992, p. 130), then it is essential to understand which "other" I as a reader am being invited to

engage with. Clandinin's language includes those in her epistemic community who are not "Julie," when she states, "We have called it Julie's story" (p. 134). She does not mean that she and Julie have called it Julie's story. She means that she and some unnamed colleague have called it Julie's story. This is an ethical distinction. We are encouraged to look at Julie as an object of research, and we have no access to her experience after her essay is deemed to be unsatisfactory and Clandinin writes, "Julie was angry with me and with herself ..." (p. 134). We, or at least I, do not have any insight into how it was that Julie apparently misunderstood Clandinin's requirements for an essay. There is no description of the classroom in which Clandinin and "Julie" participated as professor and student.[8] What struck me, however, more forcefully than this objectifying of "Julie" was the allusive quality of Clandinin's description of her successful intervention in the essay. "I gave back in my response to her paper a story of distance ... of lack of connection ... and a lack of her voice" (p. 134).

First, what am I to make of "giving back a story"? What did Jean write? A page of commentary, a personal anecdote of a similar 'error' in her own life, a folk tale, a 'this reminds me of' fable? Did she support her story with a reference to Belenky, a move which would offer a significant incongruence between her theory of action and her theory in action? Clandinin's reference to Belenky implies that received knowing is a less adequate stage of response, whereas Belenky and her colleagues make it clear that received knowing (that is, knowing that relies explicitly on the words of 'experts') is a standard and accepted response at a certain point in

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[8]Julie's essay sounds very like the kind of essay that is encouraged in the academy: "a mixture of transcribed notes from the boys' conversations interspersed with various quotations from learning theory texts and quotations from theoretical resources on mathematics learning" (Clandinin, 1992, p. 134). Compare this description to Lewis, 1993.

learning and development. It is not, that is, an insufficient response (Belenky *et al.* 1986, pp. 15-16). There is, however, no way for me to give back to Jean a story about her intervention with "Julie" because I do not have enough detailed information from Jean. I know more about "Julie" and her development than I do about Jean and hers. This creates a power-over situation that the method of inquiry is supposed to prevent. If, on the other hand, my response in this paragraph would be considered "giving a story back" to Jean, then I do not see the difference between antagonistic commentary and 'giving back a story."

Clandinin, therefore, tells "Julie's" story; as well, she tells us that she also has stories about this story. We don't hear them. This absence reifies the university-based researcher and teacher educator in relationship to the student teacher. What, one wonders, is the story of the student teacher? If the article was intended to describe a failure on the part of the professor, who somehow failed the student teacher, then Clandinin's story remains untold and we can learn little from it. I cannot decide what actions lead to the failed first essay or what actions aided "Julie" with her transformative revisions.

I have dwelt on these researchers because they, with others (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990; Grumet, 1976a, b, c, 1987, 1988, 1990a, b; Janet Miller, 1990; Pinar, 1976; Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996)), have shaped the ways that stories are used to reflect teacher knowledge. A brief review of significant examples of collaborative inquiry using teaching stories forms follows below. These are not exempla, that is, not paradigmatic examples; they are valuable contributions to the use of biographical forms. What I hope to show, while reading these pieces, are places where the espoused theory of the researcher -- teacher knowledge is at times best expressed through stories -- was incongruent with the theory in action.

Collaborative Inquiry

Most articles that concern themselves with collaboration engage the question of who is telling whose story. The stories tend to be narratives created by the researcher from stories produced by the participants. For example, Nespor and Barylske (1991) claim the term "narrative discourse" as one that best describes stories about teaching told by researchers who collect stories from teachers. Nespor and Barylske observe that "[t]o represent others is to reduce them and to constitute relations of power that favor the representers (say, us, Jan and Judy) over the represented (the teachers we write about)" (p. 806). These researchers are interested "in how teachers represent themselves in discourse, how we as researchers represent the teachers, and how our various practices of representation situate us vis-a-vis each other and the larger networks of knowledge and power" (p. 806). They intend, therefore, to investigate the research interaction, the building of the text in which that interaction is represented, and the networking of the research text into the broader discipline" (p. 806). Nespor and Barylske theorise teachers as naïve, possessing personal practical knowledge but not knowing it. This invocation of the naïve or unknowing teacher privileges theoretical knowledge and the power of the observer, a privileging that is consistent through much of the literature on teaching stories.

Nespor and Barylske intend to "make sense of what people *do* when they tell stories and of what their *stories* do" (1991, p. 807, emphasis original). In order to do this, the researchers interviewed two teachers -- "Bob" and "Clara" -- in order to discover narrative strategies, as "*representational technologies* that partially shape how the speakers are situated within *knowledge-constitutive networks*" (Nespor & Baryslke, 1991, p. 806, emphasis original). These

two research subjects were asked to consider connections between biography and career structure, and "to focus on key events ... they felt had strongly shaped the way they taught" (p. 810). Nespor and Barylske then summarise what they collected, observing, for example, that "Bob talked about his work, Clara about herself" (p. 811). Nespor and Barylske conclude: "For Bob, we were scholarly people from the university engaged in an unscholarly activity" (p. 811). They go on to report Clara's verbatim account of her husband's assessment of the research:

> But you should have heard my husband telling my daughter about this, that "your mother is going to talk about herself." He said, "she won't have any trouble; she writes about herself all the time and now she's going to talk about herself." ... Well, he always says that my writing is so subjective, which he doesn't (pause) he always thinks that it should be more objective and that it would be better if, if I would be, well, all -- any paper that I wrote while I was in school, he would always say, "This is not scholarly enough; you shouldn't be letting your feelings come into this so much; you should be -- you stand off from it and make it more objective , you know -- this is not the idea of what you are supposed to do." (p. 811)

Nespor and Barylske (1991) consider the eight hours of interviews and resulting 500 pages of transcripts as examples of "how the teachers *made themselves* in the interview" (p. 817) and then they contrast "Bob" and "Clara." The intention of the researchers was to make explicit the power structures that exist when a university-oriented researcher engages a classroom-based teacher in collaborative storying. Several categories of detail are left out of this analysis of power as it relates to narrative discourse. For example, I don't know who Jan and Judy are unless I look at the editorial note provided by the editor of *American Educational Research Journal* (p. 805). What I discover there -- information that should be ground for commentary in this article -- is that Jan Nespor is an associate professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, and Judith Barylske is an instructor and doctoral candidate. I also note the order of the names on the

article, and I do not learn whether Jan is a man or a woman until I discover the male pronoun in the editorial biographical note. This point is significant because the authors are arguing that the construction of the self as text can be influenced by the participants in the construction of the text. When "Clara" is discussing her early marriage and unplanned first pregnancy, she seems to be alone with Judith Barylske: "We got married senior year. I got married before I meant to, immediately got pregnant, I mean, this was not in my plan at all [Judy laughing]" (p. 815). Are the frequent references to scholarly behaviour and graduate level work in education a reflection of Judith Barylske's presence as a doctoral candidate? Was Bob's "cutting us down to size" (p. 811) a result of feeling threatened by his lack of authority? What was the real and/or perceived relationship between the two university-oriented researchers in the eyes of the interviewed? I also wonder what it was like for "Clara" to be interviewed by Nespor and Baryslke; and what it was like for "Bob" to be interviewed by Nespor and Baryslke. How do the interviewers interact with each other and with the subjects? Who sits where and to what effect? What do they all look like? These questions, which pertain to power and affect the narrative discourse, are not posed.

Being given the interviews for "review, elaboration, and clarification," as "Bob" and "Clara" were (Nespor & Baryslke, 1991, p. 810), does not authorise the conclusions expressed in this article. We need to know what occurred between the speaker and listener, who were self-conscious about trying "to situate each other in the discourse" (p. 811). How much correction to the manuscript was made?

Nespor and Barylkse "read" the narratives produced in the interviews using a simple analysis of 'all' narrative structure: the framing of a situation or main character, the emergence of

a complication, and a resolution (1991, p. 810). Although they warn the reader not to, they then proceed to write as if the 'self' the teachers create in their representations is stable and complete. Yet presumably neither "Bob" nor "Clara" (nor "Clara's" husband) would recognize their whole selves in the text thus created by Nespor and Barylske. This eclipsing of much of the "self" is dangerous, not only for the one knowing but also the one who would know. As found commonly, this quandary is acknowledged in the theoretical discussion but becomes lost to view as the narrative unfolds. What we get are partial, artificially abridged stories of "Bob" and "Clara".

While I recognize that all stories are to some extent partial, what is important about this article for my purposes is the distinct difference between the way "Bob" and "Clara" approached the task of talking about themselves. "Clara's" method of story-telling, that is, her response to interviews is to tell "long stories," "densely interwoven accounts that resist fragmentation and compartmentalization" (Nespor and Baryslke do provide fragments and examples). "Bob's" method was to present structured, short, pointed stories intended to fit into his own perception of the research paradigm the interviewers were using. Since the intention of the research was to investigate how teachers create themselves through the stories they tell about themselves, it would have been fruitful to investigate why these two teachers told such different styles of stories[9] to the same two researchers.

In order to further the analysis begun with Nespor and Barylske's article, I provide

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[9] In an endnote, the researchers acknowledge that the difference between the two texts could be examples of separate ("Bob's") and connected ("Clara's") knowing but sensibly admit that delving into that would be beyond the scope of their research and their article (p. 821).

examples of teaching stories specifically to discover how they are created, how they are used, who speaks them, and where the original lies. Doing so often reveals a gap between the story the teacher lives and the story the researcher tells.

Susan Noffke, for example, in published (1992) and unpublished (1991a, b) work, sketches out the terrain for stories in action research[10] (Stenhouse, 1975, 1983 in Noffke, 1992). She focuses on the influence of the workplace in the production of stories and subsequent issues of validity. Noffke also reviews the sources of teacher research: "The idea is that of an educational science in which each classroom is a laboratory, each teacher a member of the scientific community" (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 142 in Noffke, 1992, p. 20). Whether the researchers will it or no, the notion of being part of a scientific community will influence what the teacher says. Conducting interviews and observations also confirms the belief that all the activities are part of a scientific research project. The researcher who considers the emancipatory nature of the project needs to be aware of the grip the scientific method has on the academy, including the laboratory, also known as the classroom. Noffke notes that in the early 70s collaborative research using Stenhouse's methods were pragmatic, using experimentation as a meta-model, "intended to resolve their problems" and reduce the time lapse "between the initiation of research and the use of its findings" (Noffke, 1992, p. 23) in the classroom. Using the teacher's voice in

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[10] Action research is identified with Lawrence Stenhouse in the 1960s. It is a methodology intended to integrate the results of university-oriented research and the daily efforts of the classroom teacher, especially the elementary classroom teacher, by bringing the classroom teacher into the research as a participant rather than a subject/object. This methodology was developed as a consequence of the recognition in the United States, Great Britain, Canada, and Australia/New Zealand that, although money was being spent on research to improve teaching, there seemed to be little correlation between the discoveries of university-oriented research and the practice of teachers. See also Patricia Wood (1988).

the research project was specifically intended to facilitate the integration of the research findings and presumably to reduce the classroom teacher's resistance to the results of university-based research.

This acknowledged "classroom teacher's resistance" is connected by Noffke to the consequences of becoming the object of a university-based research project (Noffke, 1991a). Noffke also explicitly provides the "autobiography of the question" (J. Miller, 1995):

> Fifteen years ago, as a middle school teacher, I was a "subject" in a university-based research project. I enjoyed the presence of the researchers in my classroom, at staff meetings, and at social events. I wasn't completely sure what they were studying, but it seemed interesting. At the end of the project, we were not officially informed of the findings, but did acquire and read a copy of a paper. I remember the anger people felt -- over the conclusions, yes, but even stronger was the feeling that our reality was being interpreted by those outside ourselves, without any voice from us. My interest in action research and in feminist writings on research, while not a result of this experience, is clearly related to it. (Noffke, 1991a, p. 3)

Noffke reminds us that at the same time that there is a call for the teacher's voice in research there are increasing calls for control and justification of teachers' work. Consequently, the teacher may find herself a participant in more than an exploration of her personal, practical knowledge; she may find herself implicated in providing inside information that assists education administrators and teacher educators in making changes in teaching work. Noffke addresses this in an article which concludes with examples of "Chris" and "Linda" and "vignettes of wise practice" and explores "ways in which teachers can be the *subjects*, not the *objects* of educational research" (1991a, p. 3). She also poses the rhetorical question: "How could we learn so much about the participants in a social situation and so little about the participant-observer?" (p. 4). In order not to privilege the knowledge of the researcher, Noffke believes "that knowledge of a particular social situation can be collectively constructed, using both the views of the insider and

outsider, in writing and in dialogue" (p. 11). She acknowledges that her ten years of public school experience allows her to create a collaborative relationship with "Linda" and "Chris." Noffke also intended that the teachers would provide, in their responses to her transcripts, further data for analysis. She does this not only for ethical reasons but also as the recognition of "an epistemological position -- that knowledge of a particular social situation can be collectively constructed, using both the views of the insider and outsider, in writing and in dialogue" (pp. 10-11) Noffke questions her own ability to "[m]aintain a "critical" perspective (I don't like that word)" (p. 11). She reports that "Linda" observed that "you get a truer picture when you get closer, but it makes it harder. It takes time to build a relationship ... It's much easier to do research if people are not consulted or cared about " (pp. 14-15).

Noffke realises that, although her intention was not to change the practice of the teachers but to change research practices, the teachers made changes to their practice based on the process of being interviewed and observed. She also asks another rhetorical question: "Most of us who are university researchers are also teachers. Do we ask ourselves the same questions we would have others answer?" (Noffke, 1991a, p. 19). In spite of her stated intentions, "the pressure for university researchers to publish, to 'singly author', and to move on" (p. 21) yields an article where the two teachers remain "Chris" and "Linda," despite the long-standing collaborative relationship discussed in her essay.

Jones (1991), in an unpublished paper, uses stories in a way that suggests the technique I found most useful. She tells her own story as she sets herself consciously within the process of collaborating with "[her] four co-participants in this study," who are not named but whose ethnicity is identified, something quite often missing from most collaborative research using

biographical forms. Jones was striving for "[t]he ideal [...] a collaborative process in which the voices of the participants would create the context for communication" (1991, p. 3). What Jones produces, however, is a document that sounds a great deal like "Julie's" essay described above; that is, after setting out her theoretical foundation and her methodology, she provides extracts from the interviews, supported by "collaboration through discussion ... as schedules permitted" (p. 3). Jones's story is loud and clear, and her question, "Can the life history process be collaborative?" (p. 9) is answered in part by the absence of the co-participant's stories in Jones's account.

Jones does, however, provide a space for two of her co-participants (as she refers to them) to 'speak' of their experiences in the elementary school classroom in the United States in the late 1980s. She tells us Moriah's story about being invited into a grade six classroom in December to teach the children about her faith and her celebration of Chanukkah. Jones's story has a strong narrative thread that uses different type faces to indicate Moriah's words, Jones's words and Jones's thoughts. We are told that Moriah is a guest teacher, "the Rabbi's wife, fluent in five languages, from an extremely poor, extraordinarily distinguished line of scholars, and poets from a region near Morocco," who has been brought into the elementary school as "an appropriate model for this time of the year" (Jones, 1991, p. 12). Moriah's increasing frustration with the futility of trying to be inclusive in expressing the celebrations of the winter holidays is expressed by Jones through transcriptions of their conversation after Jones had observed Moriah in class. Moriah's frustration with the false incorporation of several faiths into a kind of "Christian Colonialism," using "certain kinds of words makes it as close to Christmas as much as possible, so the Christians won't be frightened and Jews will be absorbed" (p. 13), is mirrored by Jones's

observation that there is "no evidence of winter celebrations, Samhain, Chrismas, Hanukkah" in the classroom where she is observing Moriah. (See Willinsky, 1989, for a similar commentary on Clandinin and Connelly's research).

Regardless, however, of the use of the word co-participant, Jones ends up telling us *about* her teachers, including Moriah, who participates in the research because she is seeking allies, a fact of which Jones is acutely aware:

> I worry that these life history narratives are actually portraits riddled with such bullets; context and collaboration fragmented by agendas, motives, subjective and unacknowledged realities -- another study destined to gather dust. Have I provided an opportunity for dialogue, a chance to really hear reactions, responses, Voices, framed but not portrayed by my textual interpretation? Does the fact that my name is on the project, while each of my co-participants have chosen pseudonyms, reflect the illusionary nature of this work? Whose truths do these stories contain? (Jones, 1991, p. 17)

The "truth" the article reports is Jones's truth, in the story Jones tells about herself, as she struggles to understand collaborative research within the context of a decision to eliminate the Division of Teacher Education from the University of Oregon. She quotes from her journal about the personal consequences of such a decision, interrupting as she does so the 'story' of her co-participants:

> It is 10 a.m., February 1, 1991. Four days ago faculty and students were informed that the Division of Teacher Education was going to be eliminated from the University of Oregon. After twenty-four hours of shock, denial, anger, frustration and lack of sleep, a student-faculty group galvanized into "hard ball" political action. I have not slept in four days, and it is beginning to show. My days and nights are filled with nightmarish visions; dis-ease and distress are hounding me. I'm physically where I'm suppose to be, most of the time, and rarely there in any other sense. ... I feel as though I'm collecting data without observing, taking notes on the externals and missing the context. (Jones, 1991, p. 14)

What is valuable to me about Jones's article is her ability to integrate the theoretical introduction and the teachers' words into a story of her own. She locates herself as the researcher in a way I

find convincing. Her many unanswered questions about her role as researcher *vis-a-vis* her "co-participants'" teaching lives is a model for situated knowing such as Lorraine Code advocates (see Chapter Four).

What becomes evident in the literature is the emergence of a "kind" of biographical form, as well as a "mode" of displaying these, which, on the one hand, emphasises the voice of the teacher and, on the other, diminishes that voice to a chorus that supports the conclusions of the researcher. The possibility of dialogue lies not with the teacher and the reader but with the researcher and the reader. The teachers are always unnamed; that is, they have pseudonyms, and usually these names are reduced to common anglo first names. This practice leads to situations where academics debate the relative merits of "Nancy" (Shulman, 1987), "Sarah" (Elbaz, 1983), "Anne" (Beattie, 1991), "May" (Kilbourn & Roberts, 1991), or "Stephanie" (Connelly and Clandinin, 1985) and their teaching. Even the conclusions reached by "Nancy" are mediated by the researcher, who has usually had a distinct, insufficiently examined role in creating that knowledge. The symbolism of the unnamed teacher becoming "Ann" in a seminar discussion with Dr. X and Dr. Y is unavoidable. It takes a skilled facilitator to avoid completely objectifying the anonymous teacher.

Where, one might be tempted to ask, are the stories of these researchers teaching their classes in the university? There are stories about university classes, usually stories that lead to a refinement of a theory, not to an examination of a practice (Griffin, 1992; Grumet, 1987, Spring; Lewis, 1993; Middleton, 1993). Most of the university teacher educators I have encountered have not been interested in reflecting on their teaching practice, at least not in public writing. This creates a potential for a power imbalance between university-oriented researchers and the

objects of their research that enforces a hierarchy of evaluation. What would most university teachers make of the persistent investigation of practice that is daily expected of a primary, and to some extent, secondary school teacher?

A second conclusion is that the specific, concrete details of the teaching life are necessarily stripped away to protect the identity not only of the teacher but also the institution and the co-workers who create the context in which the teacher comes to know. This necessarily places a barrier between the reader and the teacher, because often the complete story contains some possibly libellous and certainly embarrassing details that inform the knowledge claim. I am not advocating turning teachers' stories into investigative exposés, but I am pointing out that this method of telling teachers' stories leaves large gaps in the knowledge that are ignored when discussions ensue about what happened and what what happened means. The rigour advocated in teacher research in order to meet the requirements of reliability becomes problematic when important details have to be left out for reasons of confidentiality. Like Connelly and Clandinin's tantalizing story of "Charles," who jeopardized the site of a major research project (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988), much is unsaid (but not unknown) in the texts. What, for example, was riding on the failing negotiation at the "Bay Street School" for the principal investigators, presumably Clandinin and Connelly? The conclusions about "Charles" and the importance of negotiating entry to a research site can be interrupted with questions about "Charles" and his attitudes to women teachers, to the role of the supervisor of "Charles's" research, etc.

If as teachers we do not have practice integrating personal or private elements of our experience into our stories, and hence our knowledge claims, we are in a limited position to adjudicate others doing so. Teachers have an established set of competencies, arising from their

traditional methods of training, and one of the competencies is research skills, by which most teachers understand standard, scientifically-oriented techniques. Teachers are often cast as consumers of research, not producers of research, and the current collaborative model indicated in some literature in the field enforces that position. Some of the literature arises quite naturally from various traditions of qualitative research, with all their attendant demands for validity.[11]

Critical and Feminist Pedagogies

It is not my intention to perform an exhaustive review of the three immense and complex fields of feminist pedagogy, critical pedagogy and feminist literary criticism. In conducting my review of the literature, I undertook to find examples of stories about enacting feminist and critical pedagogy, or examples of advocating the use of stories in such teaching, particularly postsecondary teaching. What I was looking for were examples of postsecondary feminist scholars and teachers who discussed their classroom practices in the context of their theories. I find myself at the end of the search agreeing with Schilb:

> ...am I not confusing what people say about their teaching with that teaching itself? Is it possible that the theorists I have criticized teach as I would like them to teach, and my criticisms merely apply to some unfortunate signals given off by their description of their ideal classroom? I suppose so, but when they keep gliding past issues that feminist pedagogy has raised, I grow less inclined to dismiss their evasion as oversight. At any rate, whatever the realities of the classroom practices from which their texts have emerged, readers have only the descriptions to attend to and be influenced by. (Schilb, 1992, 64)

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[11]This conclusion has been made by many researchers: Eisner & Peshkin, 1990; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990; Gitlin, Siegel & Boru, 1989; Guba, 1990; Maxwell, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1990; Phillips, 1990; Prawat, 1991: Schön, 1995; Van Manen, 1990, Wolcott, 1990; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1991.

Schilb suggests here that 'readers have only the descriptions to attend to and be influenced by,' but from my point of view, at least these descriptions of classroom practice are provided by the teacher to me, without an (obvious) intervening voice. Schilb also points out the frequent outcome that the classroom performance may undercut or directly contradict the teacher's intention. This possibility of the undercut returns me to the theories of Argyris and Schön, who encourage the professional to make the site of investigation the place where things went wrong. When teachers tell their own stories, I can read the text to learn more, see more deeply into the teacher knowledge thus expressed. I can interrogate the theory and the practice thus described.

Peter McLaren theorises about the pedagogy that arises from the critical interaction of the student and "conflictual social relations" (McLaren, 1988, p. 66), and quotes Giroux on the place of the personal in the classroom:

> The task of critical pedagogy is to increase our self-consciousness, to strip away distortion, to discover modes of subjectivity which cohere in the capitalist body-subject, and to assist the subject in its historical remaking. The project of placing desire into critical and self-conscious circulation necessitates a language that speaks to the lived experiences and felt needs of students but also a critical language that can problematize social relations which we often take for granted. It needs a non-totalizing language that refuses to strip experience from its contingency and open-endedness, that refuses to textualize oppression, and that refuses to dehistoricize or desexualize or degender the body or to smooth over difference in the name of justice or equality (Giroux, 1988). (McLaren, 1988, 67)

McLaren and Giroux, among many others, continue to theorise this position (Giroux et al, 1996; Kampol & McLaren, 1995; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993). Searching for classroom enactment of this theorising yields few examples from the perspective of the teacher or from the student. Many theorists advocate self-knowledge as a way of centring the teacher in the classroom where the

student will use personal experiences to locate herself in knowledge acquisition and production (e.g. Das Gupta, 1993, p.7). These theorists advocate valuing the experience and knowledge of the participants. The teacher ought to be an expert and authority in the process but not assume knowledge of the individual student's epistemic privilege (Narayan, 1988, Summer) as they "reflect on their experiences to identify patterns in them" (Das Gupta, 1993, p. 10). Das Gupta advocates theory and practice, action and reflection (p. 10) and calls for concrete case studies. But, like many theorists in this category, she offers no specific guidelines for producing the case studies nor does she intend to.

Lather (1986b) provides solid theoretical defence for emancipatory research that encourages self-reflection and deeper understanding in the classroom: "we must develop criteria/theories to distinguish between people's reasoned rejections of interpretations and theoretical arguments and false consciousness" (p. 265). She proposes critical inquiry. The first step of this critical inquiry is to develop an understanding of the world view of participants. Such an understanding requires a dialogic research design where respondents are involved in the construction and validation of meaning. This dialogic research design will provide useful accounts and will operate as an immediate corrective to the investigator's preconceptions regarding the subjects' life-world and experiences. Lather's language, slightly paraphrased here, locates her as a university-researcher, and she is explicitly advocating that her critical inquirer be in the same place. There is no sense, in Lather's work, therefore, that the researched can conduct this inquiry alone. Indeed, according to Lather, the researched, by falling into the category of oppressed and dispossessed, needs to be guided to a cultural transformation by the reciprocal and dialogic relationship between the researcher and the researched (or the teacher and the student).

The teacher is urged to focus on "fundamental contradictions which help dispossessed people see how poorly their 'ideologically frozen understandings' serve their interests" (p. 268). These frozen understandings are to be pierced, although incompletely, to provide entry points for the process of ideology critique. Presumably the researcher can see the sites for "partial penetration" (p. 268). The research product is then given back to the participants in environments where rejection of the account is possible. "The point is to provide an environment that invites participants' critical reaction to researcher accounts of their worlds" (p. 268). Finally, in Lather's project, the participants and the researcher create a self-sustaining process of action, guided by theory, over a lengthy period.

I expect that Lather would reject the method of my inquiry, which is specifically to provide accounts of my life-world independent of a researcher, in order to answer the question "How do I know what I ought to do?". For, as she writes in "Research as Praxis":

> A strictly interpretive, phenomenological paradigm is inadequate insofar as it is based on an assumption of fully rational action.[10] Sole reliance on the participants' perceptions of their situation is misguided because, as neo-Marxists point out, false consciousness and ideological mystification may be present. A central challenge to the interpretive paradigm is to recognize that reality is more than negotiated accounts -- that we are both shaped by and shapers of our world. ... a key issue ... how to maximize the researcher's mediation between people's self-understandings ... and transformative social action *without becoming impositional* " (Lather, 1986, p. 269, emphasis in original).

Here, Lather argues against "[s]ole reliance on the participants' perceptions of their situation" in order to avoid "false consciousness and ideological mystification." She concerns herself with "maximi[zing] the researcher's mediation between people's self-understandings" without indicating how a researcher escapes the apparently unavoidable trap of "false consciousness and ideological mystification." It seems to me if the researcher can learn to do this, so can the

researched.

Lather writes within and critiques the tradition of empirical studies as a way of empowering classroom teachers. Considering her espoused value of dialogue and clarity, I find her writing extremely difficult to read[12]. As Fay writes, "For theory to explain the structural contradictions at the heart of discontent, it must speak to the felt needs of a particular group in ordinary language" (In Lather, 1986b, p. 269). This quotation has two implications for my inquiry. One, Lather is not, in this article, addressing the oppressed and dispossessed; this means that those reading this article are "us" and not "them." Second, she is addressing those who would conduct this inquiry -- also "us" and not "them" -- in language I consider to be difficult to understand, so am I to conclude that only "the dispossessed" require "ordinary language"? This assumption, subtle and powerful, sets up an imposition that is not easily resisted or reversed.

Elizabeth Ellsworth (1989), whose method contains echoes of the reflective practitioner I discuss earlier in this chapter, recounts her experience teaching Media and Anti-Racist Pedagogies, Curriculum and Instruction 607, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She recalls teaching experiences where what was planned and expected -- based on theories of critical pedagogy -- is far from what happened. Describing her method in a footnote on the second page of her essay, she writes:

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[12]In a recent article in *Harvard Educational Review*, Lather (1996) addresses this question of language, acknowledging the "troubling terminology of ... feminist poststructuralism" (p. 525) and undertakes "a double reading, to think opposites together in some way that is outside any Hegelian reconciliation that neutralizes differences." She does so by performing "an oppositional reading within the confines of a binary system, by reversing the binary accessible/inaccessible." and by performing "a reflexive reading that questions inclusions/exclusions, orderings/disorderings, and valuations/revaluations of the first move of reversal, as some effort to reframe the either/or logic that is typical of thinking about the issue at hand"(p. 525).

> I have chosen to ground the following critique in my interpretation of my experiences in C&I 607. That is, I have attempted to place key discourses in the literature on critical pedagogy *in relation to* my interpretation of my experience in C&I 607 -- by asking which interpretations and "sense making" do those discourses facilitate, which do they silence and marginalize, and what interests do they appear to serve? (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 298)

This method is similar to the method advocated in *Theory in Practice* (Argyris & Schön, 1974); in particular, Ellsworth is looking at unintended consequences of her theory-of-action: critical pedagogy. What Ellsworth actually did in the classroom is not foregrounded; she leaves unanswered specific questions related to "the 'radical' educator who recognizes and helps students to recognize and name injustice, who empowers students to act against their own and others' oppressions (including oppressive school structures), who criticizes and transforms her or his own understanding in response to the understandings of the students" (paraphrasing Giroux and Freire in Ellsworth, 1989, p. 300).

Although Ellsworth wants to recover specific, contextualised practice, only the dilemma is finely developed, not any "solution" she has as a result of the experience thus recounted. Ellsworth herself criticizes

> educational researchers who invoke concepts of critical pedagogy [and] consistently strip discussions of classroom practices of historical context and political position. What remains are the definitions cited above, which operate at a high level of abstraction. I found this language more appropriate (yet hardly more helpful) for philosophical debates about the highly problematic concepts of freedom, justice, democracy, and 'universal' values than for thinking through and planning classroom practices to support the political agenda of C&I 607. (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 300)

Ellsworth's is a valuable, conclusive account, providing a great deal of discussion of the theoretical underpinnings (Giroux, 1988; McLaren, 1988; Lather, 1991b) of her classroom experience, but it nonetheless does not allow for dialogue about the teaching experience because

of the lack of detail about what specifically happened in the classroom

Although Ellsworth's essay is often cited in feminist and critical pedagogy, it also appears to invite the sort of commentary that might make a teacher re-consider using her own classroom as the site of knowledge claims. I discuss these commentaries below as an illustration of the form of dialogue I am not advocating when I refer to responsible knowing within an epistemic community (see Chapter Four).

Before Ellsworth's essay was published in *Harvard Educational Review*, both Peter McLaren and Henry Giroux make reference to it in an issue of *Journal of Education* (1988) they co-edited. In her essay, Ellsworth poses questions about the applicability of critical pedagogy to actual classrooms, which provokes this response from McLaren:

> A recent paper written by Elizabeth Ellsworth (1988) is a case in point. Ellsworth attempts to discredit a select group of critical educational theorists by showing how their work actually undermines the process of liberation. The proof she offers is an account of her own attempt at using critical pedagogy in one of the graduate classes she teaches at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Given the selection of decontextualized quotes and theoretical samples she advances as representative of a certain position taken by these theorists, it is hard to resist reading her paper as an attempt at setting critical pedagogy to fail from the very beginning. Of course, whether this was conscious or not on the part of Ellsworth should not be the pressing issue. Even granting her the best of intentions does not excuse her woeful misreading of the tradition she so cavalierly indicts. Consequently, the important issue with which she struggles -- Is there a better pedagogical approach that can speak to the realities of race and gender? -- collapses under the weight of her own distortions, mystifications, and despair. Ellsworth's self-professed lack of pedagogical success can hardly be blamed on a failed critical tradition but is rather attributable, at least in part, to her inability to move beyond her own self-doubt. While the act of doubting can often serve as a vehicle for achieving a critical perspective, in Ellsworth's case it served to hold her voice hostage. In this instance, critical pedagogy becomes a case for using theory as a scapegoat for failed practice. (1988, 72)

McLaren has misread Ellsworth's intention; she was openly questioning not only the theories but also the practices she uses. He condemns her apparent failure in the classroom: "Ellsworth's

self-professed lack of pedagogical success can hardly be blamed on a failed critical tradition but is rather attributable, at least in part, to her inability to move beyond her own self-doubt" without giving her any credit for exposing herself to such an unfriendly conclusion about her own teaching. He also accuses her of weak scholarship, referring to her "woeful misreading of the tradition she so cavalierly indicts" He also does not indicate that "these theorists" are himself and Giroux, who, in the same article of *Journal of Education,* offers an equally unfriendly analysis not only of Ellsworth's conclusions but also her teaching practice:

> The different stories that students from all groups bring to class need to be interrogated for their absences as well as their contradictions, but they also need to be understood as more than simply a myriad of different stories. They have to be recognized as being forged in relations of opposition to the dominant structures of power. At the same time, differences among students are not merely antagonistic as Liz Ellsworth (1988) has argued. She suggests not only that there is little common ground for addressing these differences, but that separatism is the only valid political option for any kind of pedagogical and political action. Regrettably, this represents less an insight than a crippling form of political disengagement. ... Moreover, Ellsworth's attempt to delegitimate the work of other critical educators by claiming rather self-righteously the primacy and singularity of her own ideological reading of what constitutes a political project appears to ignore both the multiplicity of contexts and projects that characterize critical educational work and the tension that haunts all forms of teacher authority, a tension marked by the potential contradiction between being theoretically or ideologically correct and pedagogically wrong. By ignoring the dynamics of such tension and the variety of struggles being waged under historically specific education conditions, she degrades the rich complexity of theoretical and pedagogical processes that characterize the diverse discourses in the field of critical pedagogy. In doing so, she succumbs to the familiar academic strategy of dismissing others through the use of strawman tactics and excessive simplifications which undermine not only the strengths of her own work, but also the very nature of social criticism itself. This is "theorizing" as a form of "bad faith," a discourse imbued with the type of careerism that has become all too characteristic of many left academics. (Giroux, 1988, p. 178)

Once again, I have quoted this response at length to contextualise Giroux's response to Ellsworth, the only author he characterizes -- and thus derogates -- by the use of a familiar first name (Liz). He characterises Ellsworth's attempt to put into practice some central tenets of critical pedagogy

as an attack on "the work of other critical educators," not once mentioning that one of those is himself. This omission obscures what could be read as a personal response to her article. As Lather (1991b) has pointed out, Ellsworth calls into question some of the assumptions in critical pedagogy that do not translate easily into classroom practice (Lather, 1991b). It is Ellsworth's students who claim to be unable to find common ground, *at times* during the course she describes. She does not suggest separatism; some of her students do. She poses the question about working together across difference as it can be experienced as opposed to theorised. Giroux's response, like McLaren's, indicates a swiftness and vigour of rebuttal that call into question not only Ellsworth's interpretations of the theory but her practice, and implicit in the criticism of her practice, which cannot be warranted based on what she disclosed, and her motives (careerism). Indeed, 'Liz' finds herself cast in the role of bad, and incompetent, daughter.

As I have indicated, Ellsworth's essay is often quoted. It is not, however, a model of the kind of teacher-story I am advocating in this thesis. Ellsworth provides theory (which can be disputed) but not enough specific detail of her classroom practices for me to be able to respond adequately to her knowledge claims. The responses of McLaren and Giroux do not represent adequate responses to her knowledge claims either, because both writers read into her essay details not found in the original essay. For me, it would have been more instructive for both men to situate their responses and to be specific about the evidence they found in her essay that led them to the conclusions they made.

Madeleine Grumet justifies autobiographical studies that support a teacher's claim to knowledge (1976a, b, c; 1987; 1987, Spring; 1988; 1990a, b; 1995, Winter). She has written extensively about using autobiography as a tool to develop teacher knowledge, acknowledging as

she does so some of the dangers inherent in such a method:

> And yet, even telling a story to a friend, is risky business, the better the friend, the riskier the business. How many of you would like to get your own story back from a certain person? ... Do you remember how she asked the wrong questions, appropriating only those parts of the story that she could use, ignoring the part that really mattered to you? ... Do you remember how she finished that story when you tried to tell it again, forgetting whose it was in the first place? (Grumet, 1987, p. 321)

Grumet advises using the autobiographical approach, specifically grounded in the way 'we' tell stories to each other about our lives. She also insists on investigating the relationship between the object of the inquiry and subject:

> If it is as a teacher that I engage in inquiry into teaching, then I do not deny or disguise my relation to the object of that inquiry but make that relation the object of the inquiry itself. If teaching requires that we bring to consciousness our relation to the object both so that the relation may be extended to the student through mimesis and so that the relationship of both student and teacher to the object may be reconsidered and perhaps transformed, then research into teaching demands the most rigorous attention to these relations. (1990b, p. 105)

In "The Politics of Personal Knowledge," Grumet (1987), writing from the position of researcher who conducts research on elementary and secondary school teachers, explores the use of narrative, focusing on the political implications of developing knowledge claims based on teacher-centred research. In later articles, she foregrounds her own stories as illustrations of her knowledge claims in ways I find invigorating and aesthetically pleasing. In "Show-and-Tell," she (1990a) expresses a critique of the abstract nature of the conference she is addressing, partly by "emptying her purse" in a narrative recounting the events that led to her arrival at the conference. Insisting that if what educational researchers do is to have value, then it must be rooted in everyday life, Grumet points out that many researchers articulate this stance but rarely actually do this situating. She urges the reader to discover the significance of emerging theories

with the realities of every day life: "If our work will have value, it will acknowledge the coherence of our lives rather than displaying the coherence of our theories. It will reveal our primary, constant, and compulsory attachment to the world" (Grumet 1990a, pp. 341-342). In making these claims, she situates her knowledge in a manner I find persuasive and valuable in my search for an ethics of situated personal practical knowledge.

Grumet finds herself, in the collection of essays edited by Eisner and Peshkin (Grumet, 1990b), in the company of Wolcott (1990), who provides the fullest version of the "Sneaky Kid" story I have read. Wolcott's "Sneaky Kid" story continues to perplex me, because of the ethical and political implications it raises; for me a more rather than less complete story helps me to understand the knowledge claims Wolcott makes about the relationship between the researcher and the object of research.[13] Grumet's essay is a forceful examination of Virginia Woolf's statement that "[a]rt is being rid of all preaching: things in themselves: the sentence in itself beautiful: multitudinous seas; daffodils that come before the swallow dares" (Woolf, 1953, p. 183 in Grumet, 1990b, p. 101). Here Grumet is advising of the exhilarating possibilities of

> tracing of the other's relation to the world and then the negotiation, once we have arrived, of a new itinerary that will bring us back to ourselves. Male or female, wistful, yearning, repudiating, or celebrating, we repeat the histories of our own identifications and differentiation throughout our lives. The classroom, the class period, provide the stage for transference of the relations within which we came to form; teachers and students, the cast of characters with whom we endlessly repeat, or perhaps transform, those relations. (Grumet, 1990b, p. 103)

Useful as Grumet's work is, however, the classroom I am most interested in is the

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[13]It is not possible here to go into the details of Wolcott's story. Simply put, Wolcott develops a friendship and sexual relationship with a young man who then becomes the subject of an ethnography. As the friendship/sexual relationship waxes and wanes, the validity of the research is increasingly called into question. Wolcott's 'story' is challenging, disturbing, and interminable.

postsecondary literature and composition classrooms. "A Symposium on feminist experiences in the composition classroom" (Eichhorn, *et al.*,1992) is the collaborative effort of several women describing their experiences in first year composition classes at Miami University. These are teaching narratives that follow a similar pattern; that is, each writer describes the experience with some specific event illuminated. In this article, the final voice belongs to Adriana Hernández, who is a student in the area of Educational Leadership. She interprets the narratives, which have been framed in the concepts of difference and authority. As a result, I do not know what process the writers followed to know what they come to tell me. The stories are examples provided about conclusions. The questions that remain for me are how and where were these conclusions rooted in the daily experiences of these classrooms? This is not a criticism of this article; Eichhorn and her colleagues do not intend to provide detailed accounts of how they come to know the conclusions offered in this article.

Similarly, Janet Woolf provides a auto/biographical account of her students' responses to feminist theory in the postsecondary composition classroom (1991). She provides examples from four student reaction pieces and indicates her marginal responses to their resistance. Writing as a composition teacher in a postsecondary setting, which she describes as "a largely blue-collar student body where white suburban students meet inner-urban ethnic diversity, sometimes for the first time" (p. 484), she has determined that her students require a curriculum "designed to sensitize students to some of the larger problems in our culture" (p. 484). Her essay is partly autobiographical; she tells a story. She theorises from this story, and by providing full examples she offers an account I would characterise as responsible knowing (See Chapter Four).

Jane Tompkins, in "Pedagogy of the Distressed," locates her practice in the experience of

being unable to prepare adequately for a graduate course (1990), so she borrows a technique from a colleague and takes it into a classroom, where she encounters success. This memoir does not provide many specific references to what Tompkins actually did, how she removed herself from the position of power in the traditional, teacher-centred graduate classroom, so her essay is really praise for the practice as opposed to an examination of the practice. She also sketches out how "we" teach in a traditional university classroom, emphasizing the performative, fearful stance "we" adopt, which is an unwarranted generalisation (Tompkins, 1990, p. 654). This essay, which is overtly and self-consciously autobiographical, prompted several responses, which have been grouped in subsequent issues of *College English* (March and April, 1991), and many of these responses are also expressed in biographical forms, as if her essay had opened a "rhetorical space" for such apparently non-academic discourse.

Nancy Miller (1991), Jane Tompkins (1989), and Gerald MacLean (1989) address each other, explicitly using autobiography in their theorising about "The Philosophical Bases of Feminist Criticisms" (Messer-Davidow, 1987). Nancy Miller provides "an explicitly autobiographical performance within the act of criticism" (1991, p. 1), as she responds to Jane Tompkins' "Me and my shadow" (1989) and Gerald MacLean (1989). This circular critique and exploration of using the personal and private in the academy seems to lead here to a form of one-upmanship in personal disclosure and discussion about whether it is or is not appropriate for a female academic (Tompkins) to discuss going to the bathroom during the composition of her essay, topped by the disclosure made by MacLean, who admits he struck his wife during an argument "about nothing at all" (1989, p. 156), followed by Nancy Miller (1991), who declares that she will interrupt traditional literary criticism with a personal reflection in her essay "My

Father's Penis." As I read these autobiographical essays, I find myself understanding Fenstermacher's bemusement about the value of "one of those." Altogether, however, although these essays are fascinating examples of biographical forms, they represent the 'untouchable personal' that forbids the kind of investigation I would expect from a listener who hears "The Trickster Brought Them." The stories in these essays seem like performances that may obscure the use of stories in discussions of teaching or theory.

Patricia Clark Smith, on the other hand, in her response to Messer-Davidow, begins with a story about a dinner meeting where the "daily, lived experience" of a Navajo student talking to her about skinwalkers is discounted or rather interpreted by a white male academic. This story is used as the centre for a response to Messer-Davidow's essay, a response that focuses on the way mainstream literary critics often read Native American texts. Smith calls for a gendered, culturally aware reading of American Indian literatures that departs from "a white and patriarchal viewpoint" (1987, p. 143), a viewpoint represented by the behaviour of her dinner partner related at the beginning of the essay. Smith points out the tendency to ignore or misunderstand a particular tribe's culture, the value it places on women, and the validity of the supernatural, providing a re-reading of Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* and Silko's *Ceremony*. She also hopes her friend Paula Gunn Allen finds a reader sensitive to the fact that the first two chapters of Allen's work-in-progress novel "is not the beginning of the latest John Updike. And yet [she] fear[s] critics approaching Allie and Raven with the same set of expectations and standards they would bring to *The Witches of Eastwick*" (p. 148). Smith's essay is exceptional, partly because of her use of language and her apparently seamless blend of personal, political, philosophical, and pedagogical tensions about difference in the classroom. It is a model of the storied epistemology

I espouse.

Laurie Finke (1992) and Jane Miller (1991; 1995) integrate the personal into their theory in ways that support theory and provide stories as examples in an open conversational way. By that I mean that I feel I have learned some things of value from each personal account, and I see how these are integrated into the resulting knowledge claims. Jane Miller's account (1991) of her sense of exclusion from the academy of Cambridge in the fifties is central to her developing theory about reader response and the canon, and the story she tells is illuminative and firmly attached to the theory it supports. She reminds us "[t]o confront the intolerable difficulty of embarking on any kind of serious investigation of education which engages with the dilemmas of teaching at any level *beyond* what works" (Miller, 1995, p. 24 quoted in Bogdan, Davis & Robertson, 1997). Often, discussions of what did not work invoke the personal reactions we are often bidden to excise from our accounts. It seems, sometimes, that our visceral reactions provide clues to what did not work and what might be done differently. Failing to confront the difficult and dangerous, as Argyris and Schön advise, is Model I behaviour -- behaviour that precludes change. Failing *to write* about difficult and threatening situations is also Model I behaviour.

Janet Woolf (1991) suggests that we "need to know our own cultural baggage; we need to know what might trigger our own passions, that we understand what we believe in" (Woolf, 1991, p. 485). Bogdan, Davis & Robertson's (1997) 'reading'[14] of Jane Campion's film *The*

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[14]A note tells us "the term 'reading' refers to any process in which individuals concern themselves with the social or psychological determinants, reception and meanings of writing and culture. Our analysis focuses on one form or object of mass culture (i.e. film). Accordingly, we treat 'viewing' experience as coterminous with 'reading' in the sense that both activities involve the active production of meaning through encounters with discourse"

Piano, "provides an inducement for putting [me] in touch with the implications of [my] desires, projections and conflicts in literature education" (p. 81). In particular, it is their invocation of the community in which "each of us was able to accept one another's interpretation, even though some seemed antithetical to each other" (p. 94). The article is also a discussion of how awareness of multiple readings can inform individual responses, which, if 'read' with an open heart permit deeper understanding, better 'reading.' I am left with their challenge, the challenge that still runs through "The Trickster Brought Them":

> a responsible English Studies pedagogy must recognize and act with self-knowledge in the face of [among other dynamics] *the unruliness of others*. As English Studies teachers, we learn to recognize the necessity and authority of student intrusions. If in the literature classroom we conceal ourselves as teachers, consciously or unconsciously, behind our beloved readings, barring the way to the unruly other, where has our own learning been? (Bogdan, Davis & Robertson, 1997, p. 100).

This last sentence, fourteen years later, authorises my attending to A.'s unruly response. I did not know, at that time, that it was acceptable to "recognize the necessity and authority of student intrusions." I teach with English Studies teachers who still do not accept that "our beloved readings" are not the only readings of the texts in the classroom.

Jo Anne Pagano writes about teaching in the way I am advocating. This passage teaches me several things about teaching. She provides a brief anecdote and then explains what it means. The anecdote stays in my memory, and the interpretations of the anecdotes stay with me when I experience "Kevin" speaking unexpectedly in my classroom:

> I began this essay after the following incident which occurred about ten weeks into the semester the first time that I taught my seminar in curriculum and teaching. A student, unable any longer to suppress his exasperation, burst out, "I still don't see what all the

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(Bogdan, Davis, & Robertson, 1997, p. 101).

> fuss is about -- all you have to do is go in and tell kids some things, and then they know them too. That's all you've been doing -- talking." Silence. The other students in the seminar try to make themselves invisible. Nothing happens for what seems a very long time while night presses up against the window. The snow hits the glass with its distinctive November sharpness. Finally I managed to say, "Kevin, haven't you heard a word I've been saying? I've just spent ten weeks talking about why that's not true." To which the indomitable and very certain Kevin replied, "Oh, I heard you all right; I just don't believe you." Does there come a time when you admit that you're trying to teach a pig to sing? Does a teacher have any business to admit such a thought? It is hardly an open-minded one.
>
> Kevin was right about something so obvious about teaching, that we never notice it, something so obvious and so important. There it is, the purloined letter, and here we are, rushing about turning out the drawers of our consciousness examining the problems of teaching.
>
> When we teach we talk. (Pagano, 1990, pp. 85-86)

Pagano goes on to unpack her story about "Kevin." She acknowledges that "[her] story about Kevin discloses [her] need to be understood, and [her] sense that to be understood is to be believed" (p. 88). She provides abundant details, including what I take to be verbatim recollections of her classrooms, so that I am in a position to adjudicate her knowledge claims, as Lorraine Code advocates (see Chapter Four).

Magda Lewis, in a story set in the weeks and months of unrest following what has come to be known as the Montreal massacre in 1989, also situates her knowledge claims within a specific classroom during what she characterises as "increasing backlash to a feminist presence inside the academy" (Lewis, 1993, p. 167). She uses her experiences as a feminist teacher in a specific course at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, to determine "the basis from which I might fashion a viable feminist pedagogy of transformation out of student resistance ... to feminist politics" (p. 168). Making reference to "caretaking" on the part of some women, who may seek to "protect" the men present from implicit or explicit implication in the subject being discussed, Lewis notes, "In the mixed-gender classroom, much of the caretaking takes the form

of hard-to-describe body language displayed as a barely perceptible 'moving toward'; a not-quite-visible extending of the hand; a protective stance accomplished through eye contact" (p. 175). This "hard-to-describe" language permits discussion of what cannot often be seen empirically, aspects of interactions in the classroom that escape the perceptions. These subtle cues are often lost in the recounting of the experience. I know I have seen what Lewis describes in recent adult education classroom when I was discussing White-skinned privilege. Lewis goes on to point out the following:

> Following the young woman's comments, many of the men seemed to feel that what she said vindicated their feelings of discomfort with the way in which I was formulating the issues .... The men attempted to reappropriate a speaking space for themselves, which they saw to be threatened by my analysis ... the more subtle forms of pleasure-taking are difficult to describe. We do not have language that can adequately express the social meaning of the practice of relaxing back into one's chair, with a barely there smile on one's face while eyes are fixed on the object of negation. ... Yet such practices are unmistakable in their intent. The non-verbal is a social language that women -- and all culturally marginal groups -- have learned to read well and that does its sad work on women's emotions. (Lewis, 1992, p. 175)

I hear in Lewis's description of a class about to go terribly wrong echoes of similar situations I, and those with whom I tell teaching stories, have encountered. I read the description with a sense of "been there" that sets me, if temporarily, within Lewis's epistemic community. I learn from her detailed practical account and theoretical analysis.

An essay that has a particularly dramatic impact on me is "Anorexia: A cheating disorder" the story of Richard Murphy catching yet another of his students with a plagiarised essay (1990). He admits his glee -- and his pride -- at catching students who cheat. He recounts the story of a young female student who writes an autobiographical essay about anorexia nervosa in a manner that seems contrived. When confronted by Murphy, she refused to defend herself

against his oblique charges of cheating, acknowledging finally that 'it happened to a friend,' which he took to be her confession of plagiarism. The student subsided into a nameless, voiceless presence in his classroom for the rest of the semester. Too late, Murphy discovers in the final submissions of her writing journal that the student did indeed write her own life. Murphy concludes his essay with a poignant warning:

> What must she have been thinking as I began to ask her those strange questions, in our conference? At what point did she catch a glimmer of what I was really doing there? And when she saw it -- if she saw it -- what must she then have thought about it all -- the course, me, the whole project of learning in school? What calculation, what weariness with it all, must have led her to deny her own paper? "Is this paper about you?" I asked her.
>
> "No," she said.
>
> I did not mean for it to come to this. (p. 903)

As well, Murphy's article is a story. He does not bracket his story with theory and learned references. He 'just' tells a story, from which I learn a great deal about teaching and learning and catching students. He also practises responsible knowing by telling a story as a knowledge claim, a claim about failing students in the pursuit of the few, the very few, who cheat. Murphy's story is an example of the storied epistemology I advocate in this inquiry.

In a similar vein, Gloria Ladson-Billings (1996) reflects "on the many classes [she has] taught to White students" (p. 79) and wonders "what the students have withheld from their encounter with issues of race, class, and gender brought to them from the perspective of a person whose race, class, and gender placed her in the lower levels of a hierarchical social structure" (p. 80). She reflects on specific actions in the course "Introduction to Teaching in a Multicultural Society," focussing specifically on ways she may have participated in creating silences in her classrooms. Using descriptions of classroom practice and excerpts from students' writing,

Ladson-Billings investigates the qualities and multitude of meanings silences may have in her (and by implication my) classrooms. Her account, her reflections on her account, and her conclusions based on both are valuable for those of us who may find ourselves similarly impressed by the quality of what our students are not telling us.

Roberta Lamb executes a similar move, attempting to answer for herself "What ... it mean[s] to be situated in music as a feminist teacher and scholar? ... What happens in those music classrooms -- to me, to my students, to our lives in that classroom and beyond?... I encounter disjuncture/discord between what is portrayed in music education as 'real' and the actualities of my music classrooms" (Lamb, 1996, p. 124). Lamb speaks more generally about her experiences, although she describes a "climate of chilling isolation" (p. 124) in which she must identify discords not only within herself thus situated in her particular academy but also with students who believe that music does, and ought to, transcend life (p. 125), making Lamb's emancipatory project in the classroom unnecessary and unwelcome by many. She situates herself, through reflection, in her classrooms; this situating I find very helpful, positioned as I often am myself in classrooms where the problematics of gender seem far less important than the other problematics with which the students are coping (domestic violence, poverty, suicide, racism, oppressive educational structures).

Finally, in order to close this review, I wish to acknowledge an article that had a profound affect on my professional life. "From the Inside Out" is Deanne Bogdan's account of her first experience teaching women's literature and feminist criticism. The essay begins with an account of Bogdan's location within the academy and then turns to a story about "knowing through the body" (Bogdan, 1989, p. 4). She then proceeds to discuss the vehemence with which her

students rejected John Updike's "A & P," a short story I had always found distasteful, encountering it as I had in a collection of short stories (Updike, 1962) in the late 60s, long before it was canonized.

Bogdan attempts "some sort of *systematic* understanding of [her] own complex discovery" (Bogdan, 1989, p. 5). Her story reminds me of the stinging moment when A. pronounced "the Trickster brought them" and the ground beneath my feet shifted to disclose a gap -- a chasm -- I'm still trying to negotiate. No essay had so engaged me professionally, by saying what I had long perceived but had no words or theory to express, and personally, as I struggled to integrate what I knew of conservative literary theory into the daily experiences of my students and me.

Bogdan describes her pain at encountering a dilemma and provides abundant conjecture about "what next" when we encounter those moments when nothing is working either the way we expect or at all. I encountered in her essay feelings I had in the classroom: "things got a little fuzzy," "I was paralysed," "I had hoped to demonstrate," "what I got was something else," "I apologized," "Anger, frustration, solipsism."

When I read this essay for the first time in 1989, I encountered three things that I had not encountered before in the literature: a discussion of "what went wrong," references to Marion Woodman's writing (1985), and a recognition that perhaps I was not the only reader in the world who did not "like" John Updike's much anthologised "A&P." Bogdan asks the question I had been grappling with in my teaching, and it was my "wrong" answers that had apparently cost the First Nations community of knowers a college-preparatory program: "To what degree should a course in feminism encourage self-emotive, expressive, autobiographical and therapeutic forms

of discourse? ... how do the old and new knowledges merge?" (Bogdan, 1989, p. 9). Bogdan's answers to these questions in this article and subsequent work (Bogdan, 1992; 1994; Bogdan, Davis, & Robertson, 1997) has informed much of my classroom practice and my reflection on my teacher knowledge.

The teachers discussed above provide accounts that enable a 'reading' advocated by Argyris and Schön, permit a text that captures "discourses of radical pedagogy and consider why my own efforts to teach in ways framed by those discourses so often felt like failures" (Gore, 1993, p. xi). In spite of this apparent fixation on failure, I believe, as Joan Hartman does, that "academic feminists now possess both theories and practices to create new plots for women"[15] (Hartmann, 1991, p. 14).

What becomes evident in this literature is that, while telling stories about teaching is an accepted method of illuminating the theory, making the story central to the theory, making the story the articulation of the theory, is rarely done. The researcher continues to maintain the distance required of the good researcher, even while advocating that those researched abandon this stance. This creates a dissonance. Even writers who are telling their own stories seem at times to maintain this distance, or at least a sense of detachment. Stories told as if they happened to someone else make them somehow closed to interrogation. They can be seen to be untouchable artifacts of experience. As a consequence, the stories often seem to be inadequate. What is not being told, what has been left out or altered in the construction of the story, and the re-construction of the story through editing, may have affected the consequent knowledge claims.

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[15]And, of course, any men so inclined to join us "by transforming disciplines, professions, and academic institutions and by using them to make feminist social change" (Hartman, 1991, p. 14).

Details of classroom experiences may seem too trivial to be included in the first draft, the recounting of the story, let alone survive through subsequent drafts aimed at "the point" of the inquiry. So details may be left out, details that could have been central to a less "separate knowing" (Belenky, et al, 1986).

Teachers who are the subject of research, even if the subject of their own research, have to be prepared for the dismissal by others of such personal stories or the interpretation of them that will do violence to us. In other words, we grow vulnerable to the listener because of such stories.[16] Consequently, fragile details may get abridged, for safety's sake. What gets left out, I contend, is not then considered in the adjudication of the subsequent knowledge claims. The teacher could be aware of what has been withheld, but in the deep and detailed discussion of the classroom, how many of the withheld details contain the "truth"[17] of the matter? However detailed, the stories of teachers teaching are at times knowledge claims. "The Trickster Brought Them" is a knowledge claim. In the next chapter, I explain the elements of Lorraine Code's work that guide my continuing efforts to articulate and adjudicate my knowledge claims in "The Trickster Brought Them."

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[16]I wish to honour the origin of this line. Its mother was produced by a student in a pre-college composition class at Canadian Forces Base in the spring of 1990. A franco-phone student struggling with English, he produced the following sentence in his description of a classmate, a description that arose after a playful exercise that had us turning in place with our eyes closed: "Unaware of my gaze, he grows vulnerable to my pen."

[17]Whenever I find myself writing this word, I remind myself that all recollections, even those on video-tape, are partial. The notion of "truth" does not imply, at least to me, an absolute. Hence my use of quotation marks.

CHAPTER FOUR

EPISTEMIC RESPONSIBILITY, EPISTEMIC COMMUNITY, AND STORIED EPISTEMOLOGY

I missed kindergarten because my mother needed my help with my younger brother. I realise now she was pregnant with my sister, my mother's fourth child, who was born the October the year I did not attend kindergarten. So when I went into grade one, I had missed all the experiences of kindergarten, had not learned how or when (and especially why) to line up, which bathroom is the right one, how to respond to the recess bell, and most important, I had missed the friendship making that seemed to have occurred months before I arrived. My older sister, safely ensconced in grade three, was absolutely no help with my friendless state in grade one, because -- well, because she was nine and I was seven.

I endured the first days (or maybe weeks) of grade one in a state of confusion. Everyone else seemed to know something I did not know. The teacher was given to standing still and looking intently at the offending child, who was expected somehow to comply with the unspoken command. This practice terrified me, and so I tried very hard to second guess her, so I wouldn't get trapped by the unspoken commands. I was not a very good student, as my first report card reported, claiming I was slow in my academics and I had the tendency to hurry through the seat work. I remember my father talking to me about this report card, and I did not understand how I could be too slow and too fast and how both could be bad things. I was also struggling with the letters on flash cards and readers that danced and moved and never faced the same way twice. I was always scared.

One day, late in the fall, just before the Vancouver rains descended, I was playing at recess at the back of the school. I could see my house from the school yard, but I had learned that I was never to go home before school was over. The hours seemed so long. I would play at the back of the school so I could watch my house, hoping my mother would appear in our front yard and call me home. There was a giant puddle in the school yard, and I would float wood and leaves in the puddle. I would play pirates and sailors; I would imagine myself setting forth on some adventure. On this day, I had designed an intricate boat, made of wood scraps from a newly made gate for the school yard. I was engrossed, utterly absorbed in my attempt to make the boat respond to my breath. And then I looked up and everyone was gone. I had never been in the school yard when it was empty. I didn't know what to do. I went to the corner and looked toward the asphalt play area where the girls skipped and played hop scotch. There was no one there. They had all vanished. Baffled and more frightened than I had ever been before, I stood at the corner looking toward the other play ground as if I could make the children re-appear with the desire of my eyes alone. They were gone. The school yard was silent, that silence that inhabits a place recently and noisily occupied. I decided to go home.

I was about twenty feet into my decision to go home when I heard Mrs. Frye, my teacher, calling me. I turned around and she was waving at me from an open window. "Come back," she demanded, and then she slammed the window shut. With the window shut, all I could see was the sky reflected in the window. I didn't know how to "Come back." I didn't know what "Come back" meant. I knew I was in trouble. I knew what happened when I made this kind of mistake at home. I knew I had to "Come back." I knew I had to figure out what to do.

I had never opened the school door. It was always open as we trooped in obedient lines through it. I had never seen the hallway as it was now, empty, dim, enormous. I did not know how to read "MRS FRYE GRADE ONE" or the number 9. I did not know which door was the correct door. They were all closed. I knew if I found the right room Mrs. Frye would be very angry at me. I knew if I found a wrong room, everyone would laugh at me. I knew I could not go home. My mother was there with her cherished only son and the most beautiful fairy blonde baby girl I had ever seen.

I stood still, willing my heart to calm. I closed my eyes and listened for the sound of our classroom. If I whimpered I would hear nothing. I stood still, tears rolling down my face, and I listened harder than I had ever listened before. I could hear my teacher's voice. I heard the small sounds of children working. I heard the squeak of Trevor's chair. I heard Vivian's cough. When I opened my eyes, I couldn't tell where they were, so I closed my eyes again, and stepped into that cavernous hallway.

Excerpt from "Teaching Autobiography"
Wendy Burton, Chilliwack, BC
February 7, 1997

As the literature review in Chapter Three indicates, teachers and researchers are claiming the necessity of integrating the personal into the professional, particularly when claiming to know well. What I need, as well as examples of how stories are used in the construction and articulation of teacher knowledge, is a sufficient explanation of how personal aspects supporting a knowledge claim, such as those contained in the story related above, are to be adequately integrated by whom and under what conditions. The work of feminist epistemologist, Lorraine Code, which I explicate in this chapter, helps me to accomplish this objective.

The students I teach teach me they have no choice but to tell their lives to save their lives (Christian, 1988); this I had learned in the early 1980s. Our classes were filled with "self-emotive, expressive, autobiographical and therapeutic forms of discourse" (Bogdan, 1989, p. 9), such as the excerpt from my teaching autobiography provided at the beginning of this chapter. This excerpt was written in 1997, captured when I was teaching a course in bridging to third year adult education students. I recalled this memory, but did not understand what it meant until I told it to the students as an example of "bridging." I did not understand how it fit with "The Trickster" until recently. This is an untidy bit that suddenly fits.

I read in this untidy bit a poignant reminder of my own need to belong, to understand how education works, to know what it is to be an outsider in a system where I was in race, if not in creed or gender, the "normal" student. The fact of my dyslexia, my sense of alienation from the system and indeed from my own family, my-now-understood-but-then-only-felt awareness that I was not a preferred child all continue to affect me in the classroom. I remember, even when I am not conscious of it, the moment in the hallway, where I realised if I continued to cry I would not be able to find my way. That child still stands in that hallway, still stands within the teacher in the classroom with First Nations adult learners. Still remembering. Because she is still there, when A. spoke I recognized her, and knew what I ought to have done.

I find myself shuttling between two edges of the loom, between autobiographical recollection that casts new light on my knowledge claims and theory about the role of experience in personal practical knowledge and ethics. A theoretical foundation for

adjudicating knowledge claims supported by auto/biographical forms can be found in Lorraine Code's work. Code, a Canadian philosopher, is engaged in the project of developing feminist interventions into mainstream epistemology (Code, 1991, pp. 314-324). Five central concepts of Code's work are explained in this chapter. First, Code maintains that the gender of the knower is epistemologically significant. Second, she advocates that the knower must assume and demonstrate epistemic responsibility. Third, this assumption and demonstration must be made publicly, that is, within epistemic community. Fourth, the heuristic for knowing is the practice of knowing a "second person." Fifth, Code calls for a "storied epistemology," a way of knowing that depends upon telling and listening to stories in a morally virtuous manner.

The gender of the knower as epistemologically significant

What is frequently recognized as one of the grounding principles of feminism is the belief that an analysis of women's lives has to begin with the daily lived experience of women's lives. Controversy over what constitutes 'woman" in the construct "women's lives" certainly exists. There remains, however, persistent acknowledgement that in order to understand fully the systemic oppression of women, whether it is in religion, science, medicine, education or law, the examination has to begin with re-instating the information that can only be provided by examining the details of women's lives. Kathryn Morgan (1989) states that "any adequate discussion must begin with direct, personal experience of women and stay close to that experience in the process of restoring agency and full moral subjectivity

to women *as women*" (p. 4) by rendering visible hidden moral domains and by exploring the moral double binds women experience. Lorraine Code suggests beginning to render visible what has been invisible by asking "how it is that actual, historically situated, gendered epistemological and moral subjects know and respond to actual, complex experiences" (1988, p, 187). "The Trickster Brought Them" is an example of how one woman, situated in a place and time, responded to an actual, complex experience. In this thesis, furthermore, I attempt to render visible the invisible elements of my knowledge claims that are imbricated into my gender. My perception of my institutional environment, my apprehension of the many perspectives of teaching in the British Columbia college system, and my own recollection of my teaching autobiography are often specifically about being gendered feminine.

Central to Code's work is the credibility of the knower as the producer of knowledge claims. Evaluating the credibility of the knower means calling for a disclosure of the knower as a gendered subject in a specific place and time, as one who *deliberately* acknowledges how those particularities inform the knowledge claim. This position calls into question mainstream notions of objectivity and neutrality, which Code identifies as masculinist/malestream ways of knowing (1987; 1991; 1995). She also calls for a responsibility to know well, explicitly by using examples taken from "commonplace occurrences in ordinary cognitive activity" (1987, pp. 2-3), especially those commonplace occurrences arising from the gender of the knower.

Code explicitly positions her theory of knowledge within feminist phenomenology by aligning herself with, and offering supportive critiques of, feminist philosophers. She asks

what it means that knowers are male and that the natural sciences, especially physics, continues to be the paradigm for all knowledge production. Code identifies science as *a way* of knowing that suppresses certain knowledge claims and excludes certain knowledge claimants.[1] Code does not advocate a feminine or masculine way of knowing based on essentialist interpretations of knowledge construction. She does, however, point to the issue of whose knowledge is privileged in which theory of knowledge. "The very possibility of knowledge depends on categories and systems of classification: a language comprised only of [sic] particulars could neither be spoken nor understood" (Code, 1991, p. 190). All this 'unruly particularity' (1991, p. 192) engages Code, and points to "...the necessity of developing a critical, self-reflexive 'history' of beliefs and practices ..." (1991, p. 197). This interpretive, dialogic, hermeneutic process is set, in *What can She Know?* (1991), against the scientific method, which is critiqued by Code for its cultural and gender bias. Memory, textual landscape of action, and personal history are considered data by Code. She calls for a re-instatement against the scientific method of "... no final, privileged point in the social construction of practices and actions," a conclusion that Lather (1993) and other feminist educators appreciate.

Code explicitly advocates a "successor epistemology" (1995). If 'all' knowledge is based on the heuristic *S* knows that *p*, where *p* is a tangible, observable, repeatable

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[1]In a recent commentary of Nancy Potter's essay (1996) on recovered memory, Code continues this discussion of who can claim what: "My professorial status would enhance the credibility of my testimony, but my sex and age (the 'natural' hysteria of a woman in her fifties) could as readily reduce my credibility rating, whereas his frank self-possession, should he achieve it under pressure, would accumulate points on his side of such a (stereotypically) adversarial contest" (1996, p. 257).

phenomenon, then what of knowledge claims arising from knowing people, such as teaching and mothering,[2] in situations where people cannot be objectified, that is, controlled, manipulated, and predicted.

It is persons who know, Code reminds us, not incidental and replaceable units in the production of knowledge but rather persons with experience, personal history preserved in memory and a particular mixture of communal, historical and cultural factors acquired through interaction and communication (Code, 1987, p. 101). Knowledge claims are made by these particular persons who know, and Code reminds us often that there is no standard knower, particularly if the standard knower bears a striking similarity to "an intelligent, forty-year-old Konigsberg bachelor" (p. 110). A crucial step in knowing well, therefore, is to ask, 'What does being a woman have to do with what I know?' When the gender of the knower becomes significant, so to do the knower's class, race, sexual orientation, age, body ability and so on. The knower may need practice identifying these beneath-the-skin, often invisible factors in knowing well, and Code aims to provide a justification for such practices.

These important details are not often included when teacher knowledge is discussed. It *becomes* a suitable subject when women I know get together to talk about teaching. We

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[2]Miriam Martin (1994) pointed out to me that my persistent connection of teaching to mothering was a form of exclusion of those who do not directly engage in mothering (personal communication). This presents a puzzle for me. I am a mother. I socialise with people who mother, some of whom are men. Much of my work as a community activist has to do with women who mother, often in difficult and threatening situations. I orient my construction of knowledge through the experience of being a mother. I do not mean that those who do not mother cannot have access to the knowledge claims I make. I do mean that being a mother is in many ways central to *my* experience of teaching.

trade stories about struggling to be heard, to be recognized in the institution, to have authority and credibility. We teach in a world where our femaleness cannot be negated. We talk about menses arriving unexpectedly, clothes conspiring to defeat us; we talk about trying to teach to a student who persists in leering at specific body parts; we talk about feeling sticky, uncomfortable -- female -- in a world that prefers not to notice such details and insists that we keep such details absolutely invisible. Many of us are women entering and emerging from menopause, and we begin to tell each other those stories. These are not the only stories told, nor is there a single, universal category of woman-telling-story. We begin, however, to break the silence of the classroom.

These stories we tell each other are about knowing how to teach, about managing dilemmas, about coming to know and to act well as teachers, all within the context of inhabiting a particular female body. These knowledge claims are willfully incorporating our embodied knowledge, our knowing from within, as women, in the academy.

Epistemic Responsibility

Epistemic responsibility is the dictate to know well, to take responsibility not only for what one knows but also for how such knowledge claims are justified. "The implicit view often seems to be that, if epistemologists could get clear about what justifies our claims that this is a hand and that is a doorknob, then all the rest would follow. ... [S]uch propositional claims, once explicated, would provide paradigms for the explanation and justification of all knowledge" (Code, 1987, p. 7).

Code proceeds from the premise that experience grounds knowledge. Knowing well means willfully connecting what the knower experiences to what the knower comes to know. Second, knowing well has a moral implication "... some varieties of epistemic proceedings are better, more responsible, than others" (Code, 1987, p. 10). Actual human practice is the proper and appropriate focus of responsible epistemological investigation; the consequences of our knowledge claims -- how we act and what then happens -- are as important as the validation of propositional claims. Code reminds us that distinctions among knowledge, belief and understanding are not constant and readily discernible, *and* that it is not essential to arrive at a correct characterization of these complex processes. Sometimes classifying (and quarrelling about these classifications) obscures the "wonder of them" (p. 12). What emerges from Code's theory of responsible knowing is tentative, mutable, and corrigible. What can be argued about, therefore, is not only the end product, which can always be corrected, but also the process of assuming epistemic responsibility.

The knower, in real time and in a real place, becomes multi-dimensional, the subject of endless returns for more contributory information. There is, consequently, "...no neutral standpoint from which the enquiry can be conducted, for a theorist's efforts to understand are part of the same knowing process that is often separated out as the object of special scrutiny" (Code, 1987, 12). Knowledge claimants must produce good reasons for what they claim to know; evidence, justification, and validity are terms much encountered in Code's work. But not definitive evidence -- final justification. We are, she acknowledges many times, a long way from knowing what it is to know, and we still need to make our way in the world. Our

knowledge claims are still made within an empirico-realist[3] orientation, partly because public claims to know are often adjudicated by those who are living and working within the socially accepted and taken-for-granted paradigm of logical-empiricism. This paradigm informs every aspect of our daily lives and has surely seeped into our collective professional stances. Code is not denouncing and rejecting evaluation, foundational knowledge claims or coherent explanations of the world. She does, however, also recognise the messy, untidy pieces within the knowledge claim, the pieces obscured by empirical research methods of neutral inquiry.

Code calls for "thickly descriptive accounts", narratives that proceed from a distinct point of view "...to fill in a textured context where there might otherwise have wrongly seemed to be simply a series of isolated actions" (1987, p. 28). She frequently uses literature as examples of thickly descriptive accounts, partly because fictional accounts provide a context-neutral venue. In *Epistemic Privilege* (1987), Code provides as example the account of Philip Gosse and his struggle with his fundamental Christianity and the new science of evolution being articulated at the end of the nineteenth century. Her description of this struggle is drawn from *Father and Son*, Edmund Gosse's biographical account of his father's struggle in 1857. Code considers this struggle to be the paradigmatic conflict of the late Victorian age.

What Code directs our attention to is the senior Gosse's apparent wilful determination not to know -- "to discount the findings of the new biology" (1987, p. 17), because those findings could not exist side by side with Gosse's Christianity. Code, therefore, finds him

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[3]This is a term Code uses to emphasise that her tradition of knowing relies upon data, evidence, and such material from the real world.

epistemically irresponsible. Gosse did not reject the new biology casually or as a result of blind faith in his religion, but he evinced no self-criticism or reflexivity; he failed to step outside to look at what he was doing. Quite unaware of his own dogmatism and how it shaped his incapacity to know in this critical situation, Gosse was victim of *akrasia*. He became, as Amélie Rorty would say, "a person [who] can akratically abridge an inquiry, being aware that it would lead to his having to reconsider a range of treasured beliefs" (qt in Code, 1987, p. 24). Through Code's dissection of the elder Gosse's failure to hold both his faith and his belief in the new biology (Gosse was a marine zoologist), I discover the characteristics of the epistemologically responsible person and see Code's use of literature for its potentially self-revealing experiences. Using her examples, I could 'read' "The Trickster Brought Them" to similar effect, which I do throughout this inquiry.

The community of knowers who supported Philip Gosse in what his son identifies as his inability to adjudicate the conflict between his religious beliefs and his scientific principles held the senior Gosse in such esteem as to fail to challenge his epistemic process sufficiently, allowing his lack of self-knowledge, which "...makes it difficult to deem the elder Gosse wholly responsible from an epistemic point of view" (Code, 1987, p. 19).

Such conflict that engaged the elder Gosse is not, usually, the stuff of daily life. Such monumental conflicts as experienced by Gosse are created piece by piece, day by day, until the unwitting comes to know something so painful it would be best not to know. This shock of cognition, of coming to know what has been there all along to know, is often the result of encountering dilemmas, especially in the classroom.

How, then, is one to be a responsible knower? Code calls on Sosa's work to confirm her own contention that, as well as looking at how beliefs are related in a given mind, we also look at knowledge or belief of a particular subject at a given time (Code, 1987, p. 38). This epistemic location is, however, still open to explanation and justification; it is not enough to claim epistemic privilege and let the knowledge claim rest on that unexamined privilege. The story has to be what Code would call a "thick description" of the event, in order to justify the knowledge claim. As suggested earlier, "communities of knowers are made up of *persons* who make knowledge claims" (Code, 1987, 38), and each person is responsible for her knowledge claims. Further, "... [Sosa's] proposal is that one look at *practices* in which a belief shows itself justified" (Code, 1987, p. 40, emphasis original), particularly the consequences, or at least how ethical judgments are connected to the consequences. These practices and subsequent knowledge claims have to be demonstrably connected and open to testing for conclusiveness, corrigibility and fallibility. When I tell stories such as "The Trickster Brought Them," I am connecting the memories of the experiences of the classroom with what I now know *and* with what I now know I ought to have done. I also assume these claims are open to testing, by me and by the listener, as Code advocates.

Code's language points to claims of evidence and justification, which support epistemic responsibility as a theory of knowledge within a particular paradigm. Code is painstaking in her elaboration of this position. "An adequate theory of knowledge requires a fundamental principle, akin to a generalized version of the utility principle, with the capacity to apply across a multitude of situations and would-be knowers" (Code, 1987, p. 43). Hence

it would be generalisable. "Just as a person's actions can, to a significant extent, be judged with reference to his/her moral reliability, so cognitive activity and its products might be able to be judged with reference to the epistemic reliability of would-be knowers" (p. 43). Hence it would have validity. Both generalisability and validity are mediated, however, by consideration of S at *t* (the subject in time), and this consideration is intended to facilitate the adjudication of the knower's knowledge claims. Code does not argue for an unchallenged claim of what I refer to as epistemic privilege, such as, "I was there and you weren't, and I just know x." She is most decidedly arguing for epistemic responsibility as a bedrock proposition, "a central virtue from which other virtues radiate" (p. 44). Knowing well and acting on that knowledge becomes an ethical imperative. It is not only how well I know what I know but what I then do. If I know I ought to use transformative curriculum but I don't, then I am not virtuous. If I fail to know, I am also not virtuous, according to Code. Knowing well, then, becomes a test of the intellectual character of the knowing subject, part of whose investigation is focused on the consequences of the action arising from the 'knowing well.' Code does not conflate these two, but proposes that we "structure our epistemological reasoning on an analogy with our moral reasoning" in order to "understand similarities and differences in the reasoning processes" (p. 48). She believes

> the concept 'responsibility' can allow emphasis upon the active nature of knowers/believers ... [who have] an important degree of choice with regard to modes of cognitive structuring, and [are] accountable for these choices. ... An evaluation of human knowledge-seeking in terms of responsibility is instructive precisely because of the active, creative nature of that endeavor. (p. 51)

Code goes on to determine what she deems are the intellectual virtues, drawing on

Sosa's essay "The Raft and the Pyramid" (Sosa, 1980) for her conclusions (Code, 1987). She focuses on wisdom, as the culmination of contemplation on the active life; intelligence, manifested in attempts to look at situations clearly and carefully; and prudence, judging which lines of enquiry it is fruitful to pursue. This third virtue points to being able to see the difficulty certain lines of enquiry bring about, "difficulties that, once raised, must be settled but that could be ignored without damage to the enquiry as such" (p. 55). This prudence speaks to a balance between catalysts of cognitive change and conservers of established practice, and to the value of knowing one's own competence (one's abilities in *t*). These virtues allow one to "maximize one's surplus of truth over error" (p. 56) and are employed in concert with other virtues Sosa identifies: intuitive reason, deductive reason, propositional memory, introspection, and perception (p. 56). These virtues require self-knowledge and practice at introspection, because "self tends to obtrude so insistently in all human activity, in all attempts to be 'objective,' that self-knowledge is crucial" (p. 57).

When I tell stories such as "The Trickster Brought Them," and connect these stories to my teaching autobiography, and provide a detailed description of the situation in which these stories take place, I am assuming epistemic responsibility, as Code advocates. Code insists that the *process* of assuming responsibility should be examined as carefully as the knowledge claim and the subsequent actions. For me, one aspect of the process is the method by which I come to tell stories, as I describe in Chapter One. The process needs to be open to revisions as surely as the resulting stories need to be open to revisions. By providing abundant information not only about the teaching experience recalled in "The Trickster

Brought Them" but also about the context in which these claims are made, I am enacting Code's injunction to provide thickly descriptive accounts. She advises that the connection, the way that beliefs are seen to be related in a given mind, also be apparent, and I do this connecting throughout this inquiry. Through constant returns to the story in this inquiry and in my life, I am practising introspection in order to gain self-knowledge, as Code advocates. Every time I tell a story about teaching, I learn again something about myself. Every time I tell a story about teaching, I am assuming epistemic responsibility.

For Code, one needs to know whether one's concept of one's self is valid or delusional in order to respond to communal challenges of knowledge claims. The self who values knowing and understanding how things "really" are, who resists the temptation to live with partial explanations where fuller ones are attainable is the self who lives in interdependence on others who are also responsible for knowledge claims. Assuming epistemic responsibility, for Code, is done within community, as I explain in the next section.

Epistemic Community

> Often it seems of no importance to anyone else how epistemically responsible one is, whether one lives with hearsay information or with the products of genuine efforts to know, whether one suspends belief until it seems the only reasonable course, or whether one cares about what one knows. This impression arises from a mistaken judgment about the significance of these virtues, particularly about the practical, social applications of what an intellectually virtuous knower might claim to know; but historical reasons for this judgment are quite readily discernible. There is a long epistemological tradition for which knowledge-seeking is essentially individualistic, for which isolated and fairly simple, perception-based examples are taken as paradigms of knowledge, and for which only what has been discovered by an enquirer's independent efforts is considered worthy of being called knowledge. Such a view grants too little significance to human cognitive interdependence, to the fact that, in most of the more complex and interesting things one

> might claim to know, even within one's own field of expertise, one is dependent upon the cognitive authority of others, better informed, and/or differently specialized knowers whose intellectual virtue clearly *matters*. (Code, 1987, p. 60)

Epistemic communities become rhetorical spaces (Code, 1995) where knowers can make, elaborate, defend and refine knowledge claims. If, as Code contends, "[k]nowledge is an intersubjective product constructed within communal practices of acknowledgment, correction and critique" (1991, p. 224), it follows then that people are epistemically interdependent, and that the community is necessary because this is where interpretive, knowledge-producing activities are shaped and nurtured. It is within such communities that story-telling, as a method of making a knowledge claim, can take place. If there is no community, there is no rhetorical space (Code, 1995), and, Code would argue, no assumption of epistemic responsibility.

As I describe in Chapter Two, when I began to teach I had no pre-service training, no received wisdom about postsecondary instructional techniques, no community of knowers with whom I could share knowledge claims. One of my first tasks, therefore, was to discover those who had the cognitive authority upon which I could depend. In the community of knowers in which I found myself in 1983, I could have used Orwell's "Shooting the Elephant" (1965), a stock text in first year composition courses. Every teacher of English 100 I knew at that time (1983-84) agreed that it was a valuable addition to the curriculum. It was what 'we' knew was right. By refusing to use Orwell's story, I found myself outside the community of knowers who espoused its use -- and I found myself alone. I also "just knew" it was inaccessible to the First Nations students in the classroom with me, and I would have been

hard-pressed to explain why I 'just knew' that, particularly if the explanation rested on the juxtaposition of me at 35 sitting on a small stool in a college bookstore and me at five, crouched before a forbidden bookcase in my parents' bedroom. My decision at that time was indefensible, according to Code's theory of responsible knowing, because I had not reflected adequately on the elements of my knowledge claim. I was not aware of many elements of my knowledge claim and I had no place where I could make it and consider it in a responsible manner.

One of my immediate tasks once I decided to abandon Orwell's essay was to find a community where I could explore what it was 'I just knew'. Consider the several perspectives on postsecondary teaching evinced by my colleagues, discussed in Chapter Three. Which of these perspectives would provide an epistemic community for me? If communal challenge is necessary to test knowledge claims, how would the community of knowers, each of whom is similarly responsible for her own knowledge claims and for testing my knowledge claims, assume such responsibility, such that when, like Gosse, I make an error I can be held responsible?

Code does not provide examples from daily, lived experiences in her writing. Her goal is a theoretical discussion of how knowledge seekers are to proceed responsibly, and, as she acknowledges, such a discussion "requires examples that are sufficiently context neutral to make purely epistemological points across a wide variety of cognitive situations" (Code, 1987, p. 83). She urges us to discover what shared ideology, values and background assumptions are/remain invisible in a community of knowers. She does not accept

"epistemology's traditional insistence upon examples wholly abstracted and isolated from context" (p. 83); rather, she espouses a pragmatic theory of knowledge, where evidence for the truth of a belief must come from its practical effects upon human action (p. 130). These practical effects are usually noted in the community in which the actions take place (such as the classroom, in the moment). Knowing well, then, allows us to become effective in the world; knowing well matters to people who care about being effective in the world. People who care about knowing well form epistemic communities, where they become epistemically interdependent. Such communities become rhetorical spaces (Code, 1995) where knowledge-producing activities are nurtured and shaped.

For example, if I find myself in an epistemic community where Ryle's knowing that/knowing how (Martin, 1961) are perceived to be the only available categories of knowledge, where knowledge claims are tested for correspondence and coherence in the first case or substantiated in practice in the second case, then I may not come to know completely. What I know may not fit into these categories. My proof may not fit into these categories. Closure, making sense, the mysterious 'Oh, I get it' may not be found in the distinction between knowing how and knowing that. Code's project is "to bring philosophically respectable theories of knowledge into plausible contact with the actual experiences of knowledge seekers" (1987, p. 163). By telling a story that reflects an actual experience, I provide grist for the respectable theories of knowledge. I create a text that can be read for its status as a knowledge claim, for its epistemological significance.

By observing those within one's epistemic community, Code advises, "... one acquires

ways of discerning when conduct and (analogously) claims to know are responsible, and when they are not" (Code, 1987, p. 64). "Epistemic responsibility [as a theory of knowledge] ...works primarily through example, in two principal ways .... the conduct of the virtuous shapes both the conduct of those aspiring to it and conceptions of virtue itself" (p. 63). Examples, presumably, are found in community. Evidence and justification are very much elements of this theory of epistemic community. As I have explained above, Code includes in her discussion of epistemic responsibility an analysis of the scientific method as a paradigm for all knowledge, a warning she elaborates in *What can She Know?* (1991), other essays (1988a; 1988b; 1991, Spring; 1994; 1996) and *Rhetorical Spaces* (1995): "Science is one sort of knowledge among many, albeit an important and distinctive sort. But it is not a paradigm for knowledge in general, such that only those methodologies modelled upon it merit philosophical respect" (Code, 1987, 67). Code would agree that the scientific method and the community of knowers that espouses the scientific method certainly model not only a way of knowing but also a way of being epistemically responsible *within that community*.

The community, *per se*, is not necessarily a positive force in its moral dimensions; I could perform my practice to the adulation and acknowledgement of my community of knowers and still 'do the wrong thing.'

> [P]ractitioners within practices have a responsibility for the practices as such ... [they are] conservers and modifiers of practice. Practices can be created and preserved only by their practitioners; they are neither self-generating nor self-sustaining. Intellectual goodness consists, then, in conducting one's moral and intellectual life so as to contribute to the creation and preservation of the best possible standards appropriate to the practices within which one lives. (Code, 1987, p. 193)

Code's notions of the interdependence of subjectivity and community are important

considerations for teaching stories. If the subject who makes the knowledge claim is to be identified as completely as possible, so also is the community of knowers to be identified. If the knower is to be accountable, so too, presumably, is the community of knowers. The knowing subject does not make her knowledge claims standing nowhere; the knowledge seeker is not solitary; she is dependent upon and depending upon the knowledge of others on whom she relies. I learn from others when I tell stories about teaching. Trust and interdependence (Baier, 1985a) figure largely in my knowledge claims when I tell stories about teaching. All I know is built, in one way or another, on previously accepted knowledge claims and my own experiences. Questions about how well I know may begin with which knowledge claims I have relied upon, how credibility was established and whether I am guilty of excessive, unwarranted credulity. These questions may arise within epistemic community.

Whose knowledge claims did I rely on when I was in the teaching moment I describe in "The Trickster Brought Them"? I relied on my own, only partially recollected, experiences as a reader who had experienced exclusion from texts. I relied on the guidance of the coordinator of the NITEP class, who knew very little about teaching literature beyond its obvious consequences in a classroom with First Nations students. I relied on my colleague in the English Department, who is a conservator of the canon of English literature. I relied on "my boyfriend," as he would have been considered then, who recommended a text he had used himself in similar classrooms. I was uneasy because I seemed to have no epistemic community. No one to know with.

Knowledge depends upon acknowledgement, and acknowledgement for Code arises

from socially-constructed practices; issues of validity, she points out, are also issues of power. I may create a faithful account of the 'real world', may come to know 'how things really are', but this knowledge could be deemed to be worthless if my epistemic community has no will to acknowledge or adjudicate my knowledge claims. The methods by which I come to know what I ought to do and by which my knowledge claims are warranted have to be open to scrutiny. Teacher knowledge is not always propositional knowledge[4] or knowing how to do something. Knowing about teaching is different from knowing an inanimate object. It is analogous to knowing 'the Second Person' (Code, 1991) and to their dynamic interaction. This does not mean that failure to know well enough to perform the task is acceptable, or persisting in failing to know is acceptable. Community standards of completeness, and tolerance for ambiguity and revision have to be developed. What I know, what I declare in "The Trickster Brought Them" may be seen upon more experience, further testimony, and response from the interlocutor, to be inadequate, incomplete, or false. My community ought to be able to challenge me to know better and support me through the dissonance such effort is bound to produce (Perry, 1971).

Knowing the 'Second Person'

In *What can She Know* (1991), Code takes up many of the threads of *Epistemic Responsibility* and she explores more fully two significant points for my inquiry. First, she inquires how it is we come to know others as a heuristic for how we come to know. Setting aside the

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[4]S[ubject] knows that *p*[roposition].

propositional claim that S knows that p, where p is a concrete, testable declaration, Code proposes that how we come to know another person (the second person) is a way of knowing that is not singular or categorical but does point toward issues of accountability. She advocates for the inspection of each process of cognitive activity for its cognitive core, upon which deliberation and conclusions are possible, deliberations and conclusions shaped by the knower's knowledge of the situation, knowledge that is explicit and accountable. The abstraction of the autonomous man is rejected by Code, with support from many feminist critics (Harding, 1987; Keller, 1985; Lloyd, 1989; and Nye, 1988, 1990). Consistently challenging the hegemony of the autonomous knower, who undertakes "the construction of knowledge as an independent project, uncontaminated by the influence of testimony, opinion, or hearsay, [which] presuppose[s] cognitive agents who can know their environments by their own unaided efforts" (Code, 1991, 71), Code urges the reader to strive for autonomy and agency, but in different ways, ways that challenge and re-form the epistemological project to know well. She challenges the dichotomy between interdependence and agency, and suggests modelling 'knowing well' as an autonomous agent on the process of coming to know another well. Turning to Baier's "second personhood" (1985a), Whitbeck's "relational ontology" (1983, 1989), and Ruddick's "maternal thinking" (1989), Code offers a complex theory of knowing that would have knowers be autonomous within relationship as a heuristic for learning and knowing in an epistemic community. This position, a view from somewhere clearly articulated, calls for a situated, self-critical, socially produced subjectivity that is accountable. Code proposes that the knowledge derived from knowing another as a 'second

person', a position we have occupied from early infancy is set beside the hegemonic *S* knows that *p*. Rather than fleeing from this second person contact as a interruption/impediment of knowing well and establishing objectivity, Code argues, with others, doing so will provide a larger, more complex kind of knowledge that will increase our abilities to not only know well but do well. I would add that one 'way' to know another person is through her stories.

Code calls for a "mitigated relativism" (1987, 1991), by providing methods for contesting knowledge claims, by examining how the claim is supported, and by countering with other experiences. If, as she proposes, "... knowledge construction should be patterned on protocols of knowing other people ..." (Code, 1991, p. 281), then what becomes evident is that 'we' have few protocols for knowing other people and few locations where such knowing is possible over a sustained period. It is also not enough to advocate human interchangeability, as if somehow 'we' are all the same at some fundamental place, and learning to know one Second Person becomes knowing all Second Persons. Feminist identity politics is perceived by Code to be that fine line between discovering I (as a woman) and connecting with we (as women), while avoiding exclusionary, essentialising practices.

Code suggests knowing others as a heuristic for knowing. She, among others, considers the model of friendship as a model for epistemic community.

> An epistemology that draws on knowing other people well has to find a balance between the limits and the potential of such knowledge. It needs to guard against imperialism -- against the potential for harm in impositions of one person's understanding, patterns, and descriptions on another person's experiences and self-perceptions. It has to be fallibilist, open to revisions and renegotiations in claims to knowledge. It must be sufficiently complex to take account both of commonality and ineluctable difference, separateness, and resistance to being swallowed up in a relationship, subsumed under a description; it must be cognizant of the power that is claimed with every knowledge claim and hence

> accountable for the political implications of exercising cognitive agency. Like nature, friends are both resistant to their friends' pattern making and receptive to it. Extending to the natural world the model of knowing other people which establishing and sustaining a friendship requires could make possible a subject-object relation that is neither engulfing nor reductive, neither aggressively active nor self-deceptively passive--yet engaged and responsive, not neutral. (1991, pp. 154-155)

Using friendship as a heuristic for knowing and conversation as a hermeneutic for knowing give us abundant clues to Code's epistemic community and responsible knower. Code advocates conversation (a move reminiscent of Allison Jaggar's (1989) discourse ethics), as the method to establish and maintain epistemic communities within which the responsible knower can flourish (Code, 1991, 307-309). Narratives are the stuff of conversation, as the knowing subject weaves her web of knowing.

Friendship is often constructed through stories. Friendship is often sustained through a respectful attendance upon stories. Trust is developed in the process of telling stories, hearing stories, and caring enough about the teller to investigate the story as a knowledge claim. Code advocates an epistemology "that draws on knowing other people well (1991, p. 154); telling stories initiates the conversation Code advises could lead to knowing better what I ought to do. A single story, told in isolation from the teller's life or told by someone else (such as a researcher), does not advance knowing the Second Person. Believing this, in this inquiry I have woven the one story into the "whole" story, a move I undertake more responsibly within the community of Second Persons with which I live my teaching life.

Storied Epistemologies

Storied Epistemologies

In her 1995 essay, "Voice and Voicelessness: A Modest Proposal?" Code extends her 1986 'modest proposal' that "perhaps, by taking stories into account, theorists will be able to repair some of the rifts in continuity ... between moral theory and moral experiences (1995, p. 154). She uses the word "stories" to refer to "stories about the provenance and hegemony of theories of knowledge; about interconnections between theory and practice, and about how it is to experience the world in certain ways" (1995, p. 155). She believes that"[t]elling such stories locates epistemology within the lives and projects of specifically situated, embodied, gendered knowers" (p. 155). As I have explained previously, Code uses literature to illustrate theories of ethics and epistemology, such as Philip Gosse's *Father and Son*; William Styron's *Sophie's Choice*; May Sarton's *As We Were* among others in an attempt to "... establish[es] continuities between the experiences and circumstances that people seek to explain, and the theories that purport to explain them" (p. 155). Code points out that "the narrative voice locates theory, knowledge, and experience production within social-historical situations and epistemic struggles" (p. 156), yet assures us there is no single, "true" story (p. 156). These stories then situate the knower, situate the knowledge claim and elaborate the context in which these knowledge claims are made and contested.

When I tell stories about teaching, I am situating the knowledge claim. When I add details from my teaching autobiography, I am elaborating the context in which my knowledge claim is being made. When I remember an event with unspeakable clarity (such as the experience with which I begin the Literature Review), I am adding details that are essential to

my fuller understanding of the knowledge claim expressed in "The Trickster." I am examining my knowledge claim by integrating *one* story into *the* story.[5]

By implication, stories stand as a connection between how knowledge is made and how practices therefore arise from such theory-making. In "Voice and Voicelessness," as she does in other essays, Code imbricates practice with theory and insists on "a reciprocity which precludes granting primacy to either" (p. 158). She believes "[s]tories shift epistemic inquiry from the lofty, extraterrestrial places that many theorists have claimed to occupy, into the localities, situations, and specific academic 'disciplines' where people seek to produce knowledge that will make it possible for them to act well, in their circumstances, with the resources at their disposal" (p. 158). Code's stance, then, permits me not only to create stories but also to insist on rhetorical spaces to tell such stories about the construction of knowledge (epistemology) and the virtue of the resulting actions (ethics). Stories must become part of the overt practice of coming to know, not regarded as peripheral or attendant material but as central aspects of the responsible knower making knowledge claims. Code notes the importance of "experiential stories of how it is for cognitive or moral agents to be located as they are and to experience the world from there" (p. 158), warning that "[s]uch stories are often told in a first-person voice; they are as often dismissed as anecdotal evidence, and contrasted pejoratively with data, 'hard facts'; such stories are often cast as the

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[5] When I say "the" story, I am not reaching for the illusory true, complete, absolute version.

stuff of which folklore, gossip, as opposed to knowledge 'proper,' is made" (p. 158)[6]

I have made several references to the dialogic process that has to develop between the knower and those who would know what she knows and how she knows. The dialogue develops about the knowledge claim in an epistemic community. The process constitutes the individual's epistemic responsibility. The dialogue is partly concerned with how to evaluate claims of situated knowledge, claims espoused in auto/biographical forms; that is, the stories I tell represent claims to know well what I ought to do (or what I ought to have done), claims that are framed by language of evidence and justification. These claims and subsequent judgment are central to the development of epistemic responsibility and to the validity of consequent knowledge claims and resulting actions. Judgment, as far as Code is concerned, is a process of assisting the knower to know more responsibly.

Code rarely provides specific examples of how a real person (*S*) in a specific location and time (*t*) would construct knowledge, particularly if that S is also a gendered being -- that is, a woman. She provides instead examples of knowing well (or failing to know well) from literature. In *Rhetorical Spaces*, she provides an example of epistemic responsibility from the story "A Jury of Her Peers."[7]

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[6] Code continues in a footnote to this sentence: Hence researchers in the Chilly Climate project at the University of Western Ontario in 1990 were criticized for basing their analysis on first-person testimonial evidence of women who had experienced its "chilliness." Hence, also, a colleague suggested that if I do not need access to the university's computer mainframe for statistical data, then it must follow that my work relies only on "anecdotal evidence." Code, 1995, p. 158-9n.

[7] In an essay published in 1985, Annette Kolodny provides a reading of this story that concurs with Code's. Kolodny notes "the very act of perception becomes sex-coded ...

In this story, while the sheriff, the county attorney, and a nearby farmer are investigating the violent death of a farmer, the sheriff's wife and the farmer's wife are tidying up the scene of the crime and while doing so making discoveries of their own about "what happened" the night the farmer was killed. The discovery of several subtle clues to the life the wife might have led are discovered by the women, who begin to conspire *with the reader* against the wilful unknowing of the three men "looking for clues." The discovery of the body of the woman's pet song bird, hidden away in a sewing basket, tells the women what they need to know: that the victim of the crime of violence was almost certainly abusing his wife. The story concludes with the women hiding the bird and disposing of all other 'evidence' which would implicate the suspect in the murder of her abusive husband. The jury of her peers, in this story, is the two women, who come to know and to act responsibly, against the code of action of their respective husbands, who fail to know what the evidence they discover means. Code 'reads' this story (actually, she appears to be basing her synopsis on a film of the same name) and then explicitly connects what emerges from the story to aspects of gossip she is discussing in her essay:

> The details ...the women piece together, in a frankly *interested*, engaged process, yield knowledge ... the women achieve a solidarity around common points of reference; a micro-community ... able to commit itself to a course of action that contests the adequacy

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Convinced as they are of 'the insignificance of kitchen things,' the men cannot properly attend to what these might reveal ... they thereby leave the discovery of the clues, and the consequent unraveling of the motive, to those who do, in fact, command the proper interpretative strategies" (Kolodny, 1985, pp. 55-56). She concludes her reading of this story with this statement: "the Glaspell story insist[s] that, however inadvertently, he [a man reading this story] is a *different kind* of reader and that, where women are concerned, he is often an inadequate reader" (Kolodny, 1985, p. 57).

> of a social order that would greet their knowledge with outright incomprehension ... the randomness of their activity ... contrasts markedly with ... "normal" procedures of inquiry. (1995, p. 146)

When Code uses such examples, I can watch her interpreting them and I can return to the text of the story to "check her conclusions." Doing so assists me in my efforts to "read" the texts of my teaching stories. It is true that Code does not provide examples, nor does she claim to provide them, from daily, lived experiences. Her project is to provide a theoretical discussion of how knowledge seekers are to proceed responsibly, and such a discussion "requires examples that are sufficiently context neutral to make purely epistemological points across a wide variety of cognitive situations" (Code, 1987, p. 83). She does not, however, accept "epistemology's traditional insistence upon examples wholly abstracted and isolated from context" (p. 83). She calls for context neutral, not context-less, in order for her readers to have some common story to begin with.

Code's work continues to suggest the importance of community in the development of knowledge. Belenky and her colleagues (1986), Carol Gilligan (1982), Nancy Goldberger and her colleagues (1996), Noddings (1984, 1996), and Ruddick (1989, 1996) also endorse either explicitly or implicitly the concept of community in the development of knowledge. What I am left with, however, is only a vague notion of what that community of knowers would be like in practice. Below, I sketch out some of the issues that arise when epistemology and ethics of the individual are yoked to community.

Telling Stories in Community

The communitarian notions of self and social relationships are contested by feminist philosophers such as Baier (1985a, b,c), Battaglia (1995), Benhabib (1987), Campbell (1994), Code (1983, 1988a, 1991, 1995), Jaggar (1993), Friedman (1992) and Ferguson (1989), among others. These theorists generally point to the oppressive consequences of many social relationships, and question the legitimacy of founding the development of self within the very structure that has fostered the repression of self. It is not disputed that a community of knowers drawn together out of similar interests, values, mutual affection and mutual esteem, operating in trust and emotion, would foster a positive sense of self and serve to assist the developing mind. The collegial or communal aspect of learning figures largely in most theoretical discussions of adult learning; collaborative learning, co-operative learning; curriculum design teams, consensus decision making are all popular topics in learned journals in the 80s and on toward the new century. Current wisdom has it that learning in community is the way we learn and perform best.

The issues of self and agency in community are complex. Code is proposing a holistic, responsible community of knowers. When she writes of Philip Gosse's epistemic community failing to aid him in being responsible as a knower, she does not indicate how such a community was constituted. Here, I explain how my "ideal" epistemic community might "hear" my stories about teaching.

When I tell these stories I have a purpose. I am trying to explain or defend my actions, in order to understand more deeply. The interlocutor's responsibility may be to hear

and reflect another story, perhaps embedded in the one I tell. Telling each other teaching stories allows us to come to know each other, as Code (1991, 1995) advocates, well enough to confront each other, as Argyris and Schön advocate. We trust each other to build a community of epistemic virtue. We are willing to risk negative feelings, in order to discover truth (Argyris & Schön, 1974). Most of the time, however, within a community established through friendship, responding to a story with criticism and re-vision is not acceptable. We may, therefore, be out of practice with the response I am advocating. The trust required is built through the practice of responding critically and reflectively to each other's stories. This is quite a responsibility for most of us who have learned to listen to stories in a non-judgmental, appreciative manner. This responsibility calls for us to read the narrative in a critical, discerning manner, rather like reading a piece of literature, which is why Code's use of literature is important to my inquiry. The knowledge produced through this process of dialogue with the narrative is partial. Some aspects of my knowledge are apparent only to me, and the interlocutor will bring another partial knowledge, perhaps see something I don't see. Further dialogue may ensue, which will assist me in knowing better what I ought to do.

"The Trickster Brought Them" is a form of evidence or data to support knowledge claims. The interlocutor has to accept the stories as true[8], in an act of trust, an initial act of unwarranted credulity. Narratives, even outright lies, tell us about each other[9]. I want the

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[8]I prefer here the archaic definition of the word: "correctly positioned or balanced; upright; level." I do not mean "in accordance with fact or reality."

[9] Phillips (1997) maintains that "sometimes a story needs to be true" (p. 101) and I agree with this. If I am telling a story in a quasi-legal situation, such as a grade appeal, my

interlocutor to enter the story, to put herself in my shoes, in order to acknowledge the stories may have meaning and thus to 'hear' them. When I tell a story, I set myself for a moment within a community, even if it is temporary. Those who elect to hear the stories have set themselves, at least for the moment, within my epistemic community. They have elected to witness my testimony (Felman & Laub, 1992). The witness becomes part of the production of meaning, by hearing the stories and acting with me on them. Felman reminds us those who practice psychoanalysis "profoundly rethink[s] and radically renew[s] the very concepts of the testimony, by submitting and by recognizing for the first time in the history of culture, that one does not have to possess or own the truth in order to effectively bear witness to it, that speech as such is unwittingly testimonial; and that the speaking subject constantly bears witness to a truth that nonetheless continues to escape him, a truth that is, essentially, not available to its own speaker" (Felman, 1992, p. 15). The testimony of the stories, therefore, becomes reliable after the process of dialogue is completed within an epistemic community. The subsequent knowledge claim relies to some extent on the presence of the Second Person. If the interlocutors can place themselves within the experience *as I tell it*, a move reminiscent of knowing the Second Person (Code, 1991; 1995), they may be able to see it from a different perspective, look in a direction I was not looking, hear something I did not hear, come to know something I did not know *about the experience I recollect.*

The interlocutor is encouraged to adjudicate with me the knowledge claims thus expressed. Having said that, I also acknowledge that stories are sacred space. Adjudicating

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story needs to be as accurate to the phenomenon as I can make it.

knowledge claims expressed as a story is very difficult and threatening, especially if the interlocutor does not agree with the conclusion or just thinks the story is trivial. It is even more difficult when the interlocutor takes the story seriously and wants to offer correction or re-version. The interlocutor, therefore, is not expected to turn me into "a source of data" (Kolb, 1984, p. 9). Nevertheless, "The Trickster Brought Them" is a story, hence in some ways now context-neutral, that is, once told, we who have heard it can discuss it (instead of the teacher telling it). If it is successful (that is, a well told story), we can be in that moment with me and A. and her brothers and sisters. We can "dissect" or read the story for subsequent knowledge claims. We can see where the structure may have shaped the story, where the demands of the genre of biography have directed what gets told about that classroom. When I add, at least for myself, the details some of which I have added in these pages, the story becomes richer, a "thick description" as Code advocates. The story becomes a text, and the reader (who might be me) can 'read against the grain.' This story, above all, is a lesson for me. The lesson, at times, "saves my life" when I am unable to know what I ought to do in the classroom of the present.

I believe we, the interlocutor and I, have a responsibility to face the possibility of error and persist in knowing well, to resist *akrasia*. These stories are told to explain my actions, and if the interlocutor can detect a flaw in reasoning that led to the experience described and can discuss this flaw with me, then the interlocutor has a responsibility to discuss this with me, to refuse to validate my knowledge claim, to forbid me to persist in error or refusal to know.

This interlocutor is a Second Person, and is different from the helpful facilitator in the theories and practice of Argyis & Schön, or the 'other' of Fenstermacher and his colleagues, or the collaborative researchers such as Clandinin and Connelly advocate. All of these theorists, however, inform the work that could be done by an interlocutor wishing to become part of the process of constructing knowledge claims through stories about teaching.

Code's work is important to my project because it provides justification for the practice of telling teaching stories and reflecting upon them. This telling and reflecting is assuming epistemic responsibility, of publicly declaring this is what I know and why I claim this knowledge. This declaration is made openly and invites interrogation. Code advocates making responsible knowledge claims within a community of responsible knowers, in order to come to know well what I ought to do. "The Trickster Brought Them" is an example of a responsible knowledge claim that I have made in a community of responsible knowers. Telling this story is an example of epistemic responsibility, advocated and theorised by Code. In the culture in which I do much of my work, I am supposed to know independently of others. Code's work theorizes my claim that I can't know independently of others. I need to tell stories about teaching *to* someone. I need an epistemic community in order to know well and act wisely. The interlocutor has to *assist* me in this. I am finally responsible for what I conclude from my stories about teaching. I assume responsibility not only for knowing but also for acting well based on that knowledge. I do not advocate turning any of that responsibility over to the interlocutor, to members of my epistemic community.

In Chapter Five, I conclude this inquiry by re-visiting "The Trickster Brought Them."

CHAPTER FIVE: RE-VISITING "THE TRICKSTER BROUGHT THEM"

In this chapter, I close this inquiry into my teaching practice. Because the process of reflection I am engaged in is always incomplete, always not quite done, always begging definitive conclusions, it is difficult to declare "It's done." I keep hoping for some flash of insight that will make all of the reflection worth it. I am, in some ways, still waiting for *the* answer. I contend here that I cannot know more than I did in the moment A. proclaimed "the Trickster brought them." I can, however, know better, as I continue to reflect on the story and the context in which I tell it.

Still waiting, however, I continue to teach First Nations adult students, many of them returning to learning. In the autumn of 1997, I teach grade 12 English literature to adults who have "failed" this course earlier in their lives and who now are facing it as a barrier to their career goals. We, the students and I, have unfinished business written all over us. I plan to use "New Shoes." I teach the "elements of fiction" because I am required to do so. We are planning to read Thomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters* (1988) and make a public performance, in the cafeteria, some time in November. Sometime in January, they will be required to write the provincial Grade 12 English literature examination. When I agreed to teach the course, I was given five "practice" examinations, 'for my information'. We are going to "do" this course, get those high school diplomas and get on with our lives. And I will tell the story of A., who answered the question.

Doing so, I rely on the wisdom I find from reflecting on "The Trickster Brought Them." I also rely on the theories expressed by others who are undertaking similar journeys. I have indicated in Chapter Three those scholars with whom I sense an affinity, scholars

engaged in similar work. I also continue to live and work on the margins of a vibrant community of First Nations peoples, who continue to listen as I continue to learn. Here, however, I return to "The Trickster," in order to explain what that story means to me as I reflect on my practice, as I assume epistemic responsibility, and as I persist in my inquiry in order to determine what I ought to do in the classroom.

Revisiting "The Trickster"

> "A person cannot *be* an appropriately autonomous, self-creating and -sustaining human being when she is constantly aware that she is known and treated as object, as other" (Code, 1995, p. 100).

"The Trickster Brought Them" is an example of how one "actual, historically situated, gendered epistemological and moral [subject knows and responds] to actual, complex experiences" (Code, 1988, 187), in a well-mapped middle ground between absolute truth and extreme relativism, and between dogmatic ideology and abject objectivity. This story is an account of provisional, revisable and unstable knowledge, but this knowledge will not be interminably undecidable, endlessly open to interpretation, a text with no closure. For as Code warns, the postmodern stance itself contradicts the purpose of knowing -- to survive and to do well. Code cites Alcoff, who predicts that "following Foucault and Derrida, an effective feminism could only be a wholly negative feminism, deconstructing everything and refusing to construct anything" (Alcoff, 1988, 418). In the daily experiences in the classroom, however, if one were to follow the abjuration to deconstruct everything, one finds oneself with the paradox that while we are taking everything apart, someone still has to <u>do</u> something. I may not know, I may never come to know all "The Trickster" can teach me

about teaching in the First Nations literature classroom. I still have to do something. I came to know, through my body, when A. spoke, that the way I had been teaching literature was a violation of the knowers I was with in the classroom. I came to know the way "we" construct literature as the vehicle to adequate writing skills, to the discourse of the academy, imposes a foreign voice upon the students, a voice that silences the authentic voice that could declare, against all evidence to the contrary, that "The Trickster brought them" and understand so completely, so absolutely that this was the right answer for her and her brothers and sisters in the classroom. Her statement silenced me, as it was intended to do, and chastened me as it was intended to do. It was a challenge to what I knew about literature and rhetoric and knowing.

I thought I was doing the right thing. I was filled with pride that I had figured out the material was probably a barrier to First Nations learners and set out to lower the barrier by finding more relevant material. In 1983, this was a novel concept in our college. What I was unaware of was the concept of a whole theoretical discourse that excluded the students before any of us got to the classroom door, as theorists such as Belsey noted years before I undertook this teaching assignment:

> But there is no practice without theory, however much that theory is suppressed, unformulated or perceived as 'obvious.' What we do when we read, however 'natural' it seems, presupposes a whole theoretical discourse, even if unspoken, about language and about meaning, about the relationship between meaning and the world, meaning and people, and finally about people themselves and their place in the world. (Belsey, 1980, p. 4)..

I felt defensive about my choices. I felt this very keenly at the time. I wished to find works that I could easily defend as literature, by which I realise now I meant works from the

canon. Some of these works have now been canonized. I note with interest which ones. I felt my book list was embattled. I felt the scrutiny of unfriendly eyes.

I was guilty of *akrasia* -- abridging the inquiry. I thought for years the 'point' of the story was the quaintness of A.'s response, her naive reading -- and by her statement the distance *she* had to go to get to the academy - to the canon. Reflecting on the story, however, in a graduate seminar and with the examples of teachers telling stories (Bogdan, 1994), I see now it is a story of my own foolishness, arrogance and pride, which I don't 'read' until so much later. I learned a lesson -- "they" need a stronger bridge, but it was only part of the lesson. The little girl crouching before the father's bookcase was still there, the one forbidden to read Dante, a forbidding that continued when I was able to read Dante, because there is nowhere for me to read that poetry, where Jews are in Purgatorio, where Beatrice is the muse but has no voice, no agency. The woman was also there, who was for the first time in her body all unwillingly in the classroom, the woman whose son was struggling through adolescent despair, and apparently losing, the woman who was falling in love with a forever marginal and magical place in the academy that had already cast her out -- who was *falling* in love and resisting every step of the way. I knew all this and yet did not know, persisted in not knowing what A. meant when she proclaimed "the Trickster brought them." I realised in that moment, but did not know it for many years, that not only was the material a barrier (which I corrected) but also the way I was teaching was a barrier to the students' learning.

What I chose to offer to the students, what they countered with, what they created for themselves, arose from several ethical acts, the first of which was an acknowledgement and turning away from a story that might cause the students to read against themselves, to find

themselves nowhere. Where was the First Nations reader to position herself to read "Shooting the Elephant"? Persistently not finding oneself in the literature causes pain. I knew that as a woman reading. Finding one's self unrecognizable in the literature causes pain. I knew that too as a woman reading. I could not say 'You don't understand' or 'I didn't know' unless I was prepared to admit my experience as a woman reading but bar the students' experiences as First Nations people reading. In 1983-84, I began to see the First Nations students had a different way of apprehending and comprehending literature, within a different taxonomy. They had to construct an understanding of the "ideal reader,"who was not any one of them, and then deliberately climb inside that alien skin. They had to maintain and suspend I, the figure and the ground. They already know how to do this. Had been doing it all through their lives. They had to teach me how they did it. That teaching began at the moment I heard A. tell me "the Trickster brought them."

I learned that to use curriculum that excludes the student in a course of study is harmful. I know the way "we" naturally read and respond to literature is not necessarily the way "we all" read and respond to literature. I know the structure of English literature arises from one culture's perception of the world, and is not "universal." I know this knowledge was not widely accepted or readily acknowledged within the context in which I taught. I know that I can know all of this and still miss the implications of the *way* in which I choose materials and teach. These are the claims I make in the "Trickster" story. I have told that story many times, and I am always surprised by new claims, ones I was not aware of, ones that do not seem 'true' to me, which others hear.

For me, reading backwards in "The Trickster Brought Them," the important evidence

is my connection to A., partly as a result of her question and partly because of my memory of crouching before a forbidden bookcase. Something about the juxtaposition of the question and my memory allowed me to step outside the rhetorical space I had been occupying for many years as a student. I was a novice teacher. I had little theoretical knowledge about "teaching" literature to anyone, let alone to this group. What little I had been told was along the lines that "everyone" learns the same and that "we" ought to be teaching canonized works. Our physical locations from the beginning of that semester to its end are important. Teaching that semester felt like all of us crouching before a forbidden bookcase. I invoke, when I tell this story, the remembrance of the child who suddenly knows what she does not know. I don't do that deliberately, or even, in the first few tellings, consciously. But she arrives. I still trying to understand this aspect of "The Trickster Brought Them," and I find telling this story in some situations brings me closer to understanding something I do not understand.

Can I, at last (although it's not ever at last), explain "The Trickster Brought Them" any more than I have throughout these pages? "The Trickster Brought Them" and the pages that follow that story I offer as my storied epistemology. I have told the story. I have situated the story in the British Columbia postsecondary system. My perception of that system *at that time* was that there was no perspective on teaching within which I could have told the story. It seemed, *at the time*, outside all commonly held notions of teaching adults, especially First Nations adults. I have provided personal context for the story with three lengthy excerpts from my teaching autobiography. While doing so, I have expressed some concerns for the consequences of using the genre of auto/biography. I have extrapolated from the teaching

autobiography some evidence that illuminates the story. In the review of the literature I discover, long after the story, scholars whose work could constitute epistemic communities in which I could now fruitfully express my knowledge claim expressed in a story. I did not know of them then, and I still knew what I ought to do.

Issues Arising

Without the theories of Lorraine Code, however, much of the preceding would be so much story-telling, as I explain in the previous chapter. Several issues remain to be resolved, issues with which I will engage as I continue in my professional life to tell stories about teaching as expressions of epistemic responsibility.

One issue is the role of the interlocutor. I have alluded to the role the interlocutor might have in the epistemic community in which I may tell "The Trickster Brought Them." Such a relationship is not possible in the context of this inquiry. The reader cannot assume the role of the interlocutor, because the conversation necessary for such a relationship is not possible. Nevertheless, the epistemic status of the knower in relation to the interlocutor needs to be determined more fully than I have been able to do in this inquiry. The interdependence of the knower and the interlocutor remains to be more fully defined and theorised.

Another issue yet to be resolved for me is this. With such a reliance on situation, context, and epistemic community, what of the dangers of unmitigated relativism yielding "useless" or indefensible knowledge?

A final issue has particular relevance for me in my professional life now. What of those knowers who find themselves isolated, without community, alone? Epistemic

responsibility is connected to epistemic community, as Code explains. The knower, however, can sustain quite a few shocks in community, particularly where oppressive behaviour is take for granted. If the knower is unrecognized (a vision-oriented word) because the she or he is voiceless/silenced, then development is not likely or may be difficult -- too difficult. If the knower learns the language of the dominant group, then only some facets of the knower's knowledge will be recognized (re-seen/re-known). What happens to all the other facets? If community is crucial to knowledge construction, and only a particular category of knowledge is acceptable in a given community, what then? If the members of the community can only hear what they have been taught to hear, and therefore the knower will only say what falls within what they believe constitutes knowledge, what can be claimed for the knowledge thus constructed in this community? Am I only able to talk about what I may talk about? If this is *true*, what of the other, unconstituted because unspoken, hence unthought, unknown? I sense that some of that unknown could re-invent the classroom for the adult learner. I return to a question that has haunted me since the beginning of my teaching life: what stories could I tell if I had my own voice? And who would be there to hear it?

These issues, and others as yet undiscovered, will engage me as I continue to teach literature and composition to First Nations adults.

Story-tellers still tell stories, if only to ourselves, as we reflect on our lives and learn from that reflection. Failing to find a space to tell "The Trickster Brought Them" does not mean the learning did not take place for me. I did come to know something of value about teaching. I did discover what I ought to do. Telling the story, however, is my assumption of

epistemic responsibility, of responsible knowing.

I am not alone. Telling stories is no longer such an unusual way to come to know what I ought to do in the classroom of my professional life, populated with First Nations adult learners struggling to know, to connect their lives to their knowledge claims. With them, more than any others, I live and work. They challenge me to know well, and to act honourably, and to understand why. I no longer 'just know" and I no longer 'just' tell stories. I am situated in a community of knowers who insist on responsible knowing and a detailed, persistent return to specific accounts of how an actual woman, situated in place and time, assumes authority, epistemic responsibility and a voice of her own.

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IMAGE EVALUATION
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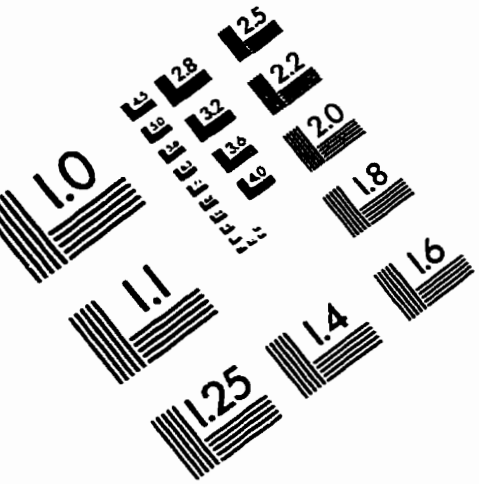

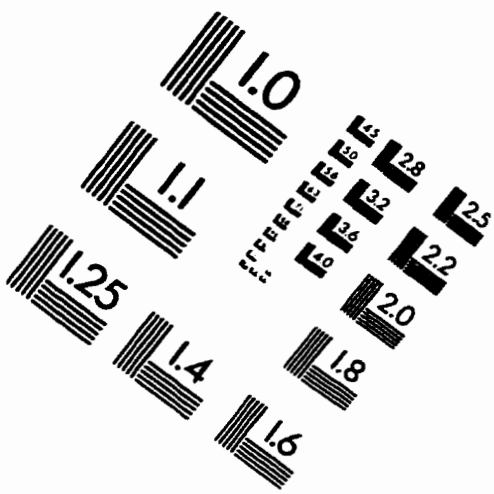

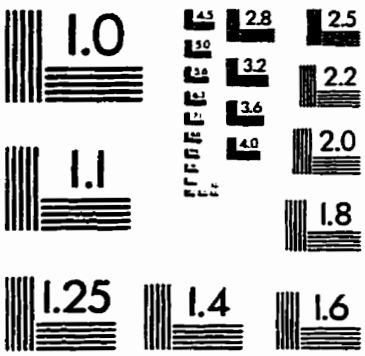

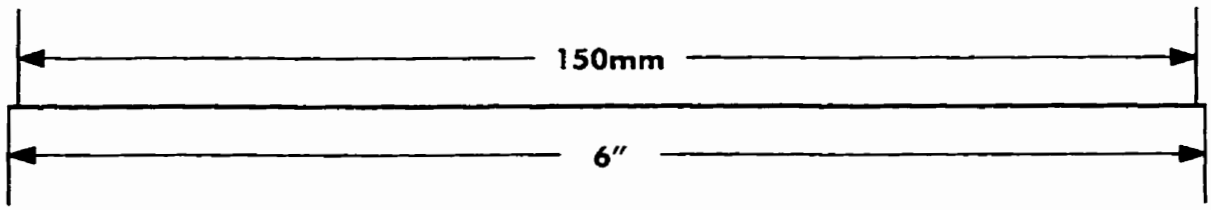

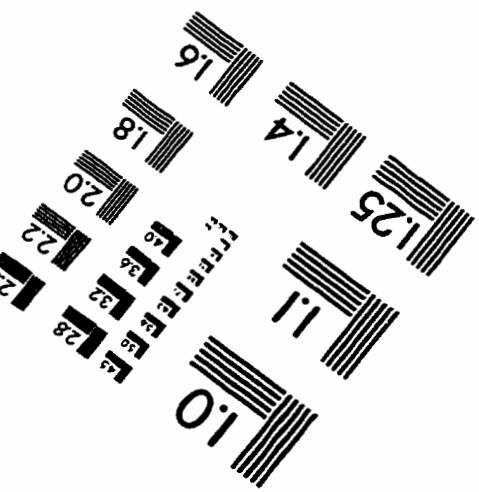

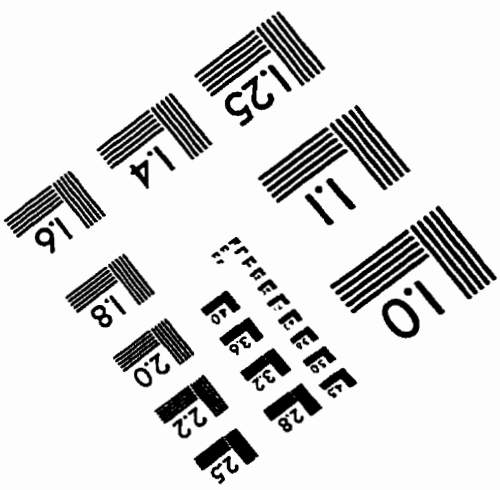

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