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Transforming researchers and practitioners: The unanticipated consequences
(significance) of Participatory Action Research (PAR)

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
In
Urban Studies

by

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May 2011

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Acknowledgements

When picking up a new book, I find that the first two places I turn to are the bibliography and the acknowledgements. These two places help frame the heart and soul of the author's work. It is time that I place that heart in front of my work by acknowledging those who have helped me on my way. If I were to mention everyone the list would be longer than the work contained in the research but so it is with PAR when one establishes friends and a community of learning. Each person and community represented in this research is dear to me. All who have helped form my intellect and heart, past and present are carried with me in this work. There are so many, and I thank you all, so let me say;

For all those who have gone before me to help make the path,

For all who have traveled with me to illuminate the path,

For all who travel after, may their path be good.

For the historical witnesses of scholars, workers, and dreamers,

For my family at Grand Bayou, Bayou Blue, and Natural Hazards Workshop

For my family in the bayous and my family in the mountains,

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Nomenclature and Abbreviations

- Boulder:** Many participants with the Natural Hazards Workshop refer to it as the “Boulder” meeting since it had been held in the city of Boulder for most existence. The meeting has been held in recent years in Broomfield 30 minutes away, but the reference still remains the “Boulder” workshop.
- Border-Crossing:** Or border pedagogy requires the critical recognition of personal ideology and hegemonic systems in which we are operating. It is in the recognition and the overcoming of the prejudice that border-crossing takes place, always in experience with others and the their lifeworld.
- Borderlands:** Places that are created to stimulate understanding and knowledge. A place that helps build public discourse. The pedagogical place event to understand the other in their terms.
- CCPH:** Community Campus for Public Health is a list serve managed by the University of Washington to help to promote participatory projects throughout North America.
- CHART:** Center for Hazards Assessment Response and Technology, an applied research center, established in 2001 at the University of New Orleans- Dr. Shirley Laska, Founding Director Emerita
- Conscientization:** Conscientization is a term Freire coined to explain the difference between having one’s conscience raised regarding an issue to that of embodying the issue where it becomes part of ones’ thought and motivation for action.
- Critical PAR** School of participatory action research that adheres to critical theory and is emancipatory in its work as described and used by Freire, Park, Fals-Borda.
- Double Loop Learning:** involves questioning the role of the framing and learning systems. It is a critical praxis that helps detect and correct for the

modification of an organization's underlying norms, policies and objectives.

Emancipatory Knowledge: In this paper emancipatory knowledge means an active process that requires dialogue of a diverse community to seek out its unexamined ideological and methodological assumptions for the purpose of problem-solving.

FEMA: The Federal Emergency Management Agency, a branch of the United States government that works with disasters.

Gemeinschaft: Concept from F. Tonnies, referencing how communities put value on their connection to place and relationships over that of the desires of the individual, i.e. an Amish community.

Gesellschaft: Concept of communities of space, that is, an individual has importance above and beyond that of community or of any place, i.e., a mobile society in which the individual makes decisions for self or immediate associates.

Grand Bayou: The Grand Bayou Village is located one and one half hours south of New Orleans, mid-way down the Birds Foot Delta, in Plaquemines Parish. The Atakapa-Ishak community is accessible only by water. The people are a subsistence community drawing upon the resources of the land and water.

Hegemony- Hegemonated: Cultural hegemony identifies and explains domination and the maintenance of power. It refers to the persuasion or coercion of the subordinated social classes to accept and adopt the ruling-class values.

Hermeneutics: The act of interpreting the text and the theory of interpretation, concerned with general problems of understanding the meanings of texts.

IRB- Internal Review Board: The IRB is an ethics review conducted by the university to monitor the research being conducted to insure that it does "no harm". Some communities have adopted and adapted such an instrument to protect themselves from outside resource/knowledge extraction.

Natural Hazards Workshop (NHW): Since 1975, the Natural Hazards Center has hosted the annual Workshop involving close to 400 federal, state, and local emergency officials; representatives of nonprofit and humanitarian organizations; hazards researchers; disaster consultants; and others dedicated to alleviating the impacts of disasters.

Ontological: the philosophical study of being or existence.

Outside collaborators: the outside collaborators are the subjects in this study. They include people from agencies and the academy who have interacted with the Grand Bayou community and are not community members. The agencies include people from professional association, non-profit organizations, government, and academic/government funders. The academy includes students and professors. Not all have been involved with the core project but have been either exposed to the project or are contributors/recipients, learner/teacher of resources resulting from the project.

Participatory Action Research: An emancipatory method of learning and teaching that contains dialogue, trust, relationship building, reflection and inclusive methodologies for full community engagement and problem solving.

PAR or PRA: Participatory Action Research (PAR) or Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) are among 21 terms that are used as variations of a participatory methodology.

Praxis: A reflection-action-reflection, iterative learning process (pedagogy) where the learners become critical in their analysis of social and or environmental issues and take action, do reflective analysis and apply it again for action.

Pressure and Release model (par): The pressure and release model in *At Risk* is referred to by their authors as 'par', which is about socially constructed vulnerability and not related to PAR.

Problematization: is a participatory process defining the dimensions and root-causes of issues that go beyond problem solving to a conscientization of a new way of being.

- Participatory Action Research: An emancipatory method of learning and teaching that contains dialogue, trust, relationship building, reflection and inclusive methodologies for full community engagement and problem solving.
- Public discourse: A Habermasian concept of full participation in dialogue that is focused on a topic or issue of public concern.
- Public sphere: The context in which the public discourse takes place, such as a community meeting regarding a particular issue.
- RFP-Request for Proposal: A protocol released by a funder that outlines requirements for people or agencies seeking financial support for a particular project or program.
- University of New Orleans- Pontchartrain Institute of Environmental Science: A center at the University of New Orleans that specializes on physical science that studies the Pontchartrain Basin and the Gulf of Mexico.
- Verständigung: The facilitation or arrangements that helps foster understanding between entities.

Abstract

Each of us has knowledge but it is not complete. When we come together to listen, we learn, we grow in understanding and we can analyze better the course that needs to be taken. One thing I learned over the past several years is that words and their interpretation have power. *Grand Bayou community member*

This dissertation examines the question of change in the non-community people who have interacted or come into contact with the Grand Bayou Participatory Action Research (PAR) project. *Who Changes?*, a book on institutionalizing participation in development, raises the issue of ‘where is the change?’ in a participatory project (Blackburn 1998). Fischer (2000), Forester (1992), and Wildavsky (1979) indicate that a participatory process is beneficial to all stages of planning policy development, and analysis. However, planners, academics, and practitioners who work with high risk communities are often of different cultures, values, and lived experience than those of the community. Despite the best intentions of these professionals, these differences may at times cause a disconnect from or a dismissal of the community’s knowledge, values or validity claims as the participatory process transpires. The outside experts often fail to learn from the local communities or use the community’s expertise.

The Grand Bayou Participatory Action Research (PAR) project, funded in part by a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant, investigated the viability of PAR in a post-disaster recovery project. The NSF report revealed that the community did gain agency and political effectiveness; the study and evaluation, however, did not focus on the outside collaborators and their change. Freirian and Habermasian theories of conscientization and critical hermeneutics would assume that those engaged with the project have changed in some way through their learning experience and that change may be emancipatory. The change builds on a core tenet of PAR in developing relational knowledge while honoring the other. This study used a case study methodology utilizing multiple sources of evidence to explore the answer to this question.

A better understanding of the change in outside collaborators in a PAR project can be helpful in developing a more holistic participatory community planning process.

Keywords: Critical Participatory Action Research, Border-Crossing, Bi-Directional Capacity

Chapter 1

Introduction

In December of 2003, the Center for Hazards Assessment, Response and Technology (CHART) at the University of New Orleans (UNO) became part of an existing, relatively new participatory action collaborative with the community of Grand Bayou, LA. In 2004, the collaborative received funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) as well as from many other foundations and non-profit organizations. Academic and agency collaborators shared an extensive commitment of time and resources to help to encourage and to expand political efficacy of the Grand Bayou community so that the community could better address its concern of saving its land and culture.

The post-disaster collaborative was formed in response to the request of this coastal indigenous subsistence fishing community in Southeast Louisiana that had been directly impacted by a tropical storm, Isadore, and a hurricane, Lili, as well as by coastal land-loss and subsidence. (Subsequently it has experienced two more sets of hurricane disasters, Katrina/Rita and Gustav/Ike, as well as the BP oil spill.) The report summary to the NSF primarily concentrates on how the outside resources helped to increase the capacity of the community members (Laska, 2007). Limited analysis was given to the outside, non-community collaborators as to their change in capacity, in efficacy, or in value structure. Many of the non-community collaborators have made statements such as “I learned more from them than I was able to contribute” (Ac 16 04)¹ or “I contributed so little for what I received in return” (Ag 10 10). Statements like these are possible indicators that something might have changed in the non-community collaborators. Therefore the focus of this dissertation research is as follows: What was learned or changed in the outside collaborators, and has that new knowledge or change been appropriated in their personal or professional work? The question posited will be explored through the use of Peter Park’s knowledge typologies to understand if there was change and the variables that can help bring about open discourse for change.

¹ Coding for interviews are as follows: Ac for academic, Ag for agency, S for student, and GB for Grand Bayou. Each person’s interview designation follow his or her category which is followed by date of comment or interview.

Utilizing both Paulo Freire's applied theory of conscientization in adult education and Jürgen Habermas's theory of public discourse, a disaster recovery project emerged using the tools of PAR². Paulo Freire used a method of participatory action with communities doing adult literacy through the solving of real social problems (problematization). This pedagogy brought diverse people together to share and to develop knowledge in order to address and solve social, planning, and political issues. The egalitarian participatory process described by Fals-Borda (1998) and Freire (1985,1974) offers a model in which knowledge is respected and shared between the collaborators to create positive change. In so doing, a teacher/learner and learner/teacher synergy is expected that extends to all who are part of the collaborative's work to build knowledge (Freire, 1996,1974). The shared synergy and reflexive process that helps in the creation of knowledge can be the basis of knowledge awareness and change for all participants involved in the critical participatory action project.

Through the PAR project, the Grand Bayou community has been continually engaged in educating, in teaching, and in problem solving in a variety of contexts. Their agency and capability have been well documented (Bethel, Brien, Danielson, Laska, Troutman, Boshart, Giardino, Phillips 2011, Laska 2007). The Grand Bayou has engaged in various vertical and horizontal political interactions and in various types of venues such as universities, government forums, and professional association meetings. For everyone to understand better the influence these interactions have had, the focus of this research will be on the outside collaborators and others who have interacted with the community in the context of PAR-based disaster-related recovery work. Has the interaction been a changing force for the outside collaborators? And if so, can we learn from the context of that change to better create and execute community participatory projects?

The Study

The research is a qualitative case study that spans the course of eight years. It will use multiple sources of evidence including interview/conversations and participant observation. The researcher has been involved with the Grand Bayou community for the full duration of the study. The case study focuses on the non-community people who interacted with the Grand Bayou

²As used in this dissertation, the primary components of PAR are dialogue, trust, relationship building, reflection, and inclusive methodologies for full engagement, for and by the community. Other schools of action research will be noted in Chapter 2. This methodology is *critical* PAR as understood by Freire, Fals Borda, and Park.

residents and community over an eight year period, 2003 to 2011. The non-community people include academics, students, practitioners, and agency personnel. The settings for the interactions with the community members include learning exchanges, meetings, conferences, workshops, and site visits to the Grand Bayou. The question of the impact of the settings on the interaction dynamics will also be part of the study, as will issues of power relationships between outside collaborators and the Bayou community.

Many of the people involved with the Grand Bayou are disaster specialists because the original connection with the Grand Bayou was as a result of a disaster. The specialists were from various agencies, non-profits, and from professional, religious, and academic community. The specialists' expertises range from academic research in various disciplines, to policy making, planning and community activism. Because of their specialties, many of these outside resource people have been or are participants at the annual Natural Hazards Workshop, hosted by the University of Colorado Hazards Center. Thus, many of the interviews and research data are derived from the interaction of the Grand Bayou participants with other experts in this venue over an eight-year period. There were other settings for interaction including several university sites, professional conferences and workshops, but the majority of the data come from the encounters at the Grand Bayou Village and from the Natural Hazards Workshop. For some respondents, the interactions with the Grand Bayou residents have been in multiple settings during this time period.

The interactions of the outside collaborators and the Grand Bayou residents in various professional settings have helped to hone and to sharpen the skills of the residents as coastal experts and spokespersons. The non-bayou residents and the non-bayou arenas of interchange became the people and arenas in which the Grand Bayou residents refined and expanded their skills. The participatory process was the operable method used to bring people together in many locales outside their communities through the PAR project and with a tremendously diverse resource population. This method enabled the Grand Bayou residents' voices to be in first person exchange with outside resource people instead of having it interpreted by second hand data conveyed by others. If we are to understand the implications of Paulo Freire's PAR work as a mutual learning and teaching process, it is important to determine if there were also skills, knowledge and expertise honed by the outside collaborators through their intellectual and physical engagement with the people of Grand Bayou. This study specifically considers the

response or change of the outside resource people as they encountered the Grand Bayou community in order to refine the work and method of PAR to better understand the time, intensity, settings, and locales for encounters using PAR.

The Rationale

When the voice of a people is silenced or ignored, there cannot be authentic discourse in the public sphere (Habermas, 1991, 1987, 1984), Apel (1994), Dussell (1996, 1986), Levinas (2006, 1987). The silent voices cannot be part of the knowledge creation and discourse that are essential for problem solving or for an iterative process of public advocacy or change. The public sphere of discourse is just that, public. If it is closed to any sector of the community it becomes a private sphere and thus loses the advantage of knowledge from all possible participants (Comstock and Fox, 1993). An egalitarian participatory process that can bring people together for public sphere engagement is a method called Participatory Action Research (PAR) based on Freirian principles and Critical Theory. PAR embraces the voices that come together with the respect, trust, imagination that help in the building of emancipatory knowledge³ (Morrow and Torres, 2002). Problem solving through the development of knowledge is core to the principles of Participatory Action Research (Park, 1993). The egalitarian partnership in problem solving is especially fundamental for indigenous peoples' engagement in the public sphere because it is imperative that such communities participate with their own voice emanating from their lifeworld/habitus, experience, and knowledge (Smith, 1999).

The egalitarian knowledge- building process can be a long and arduous one. It takes time, commitment and trust by the people involved; yet it is argued that it yields a stronger democratic framework for societal problem solving and action than if it were not egalitarian (Morrow and Torres, 2002, Freire, 1999, McLaren and Lankshear, 1994). Is it possible to have an egalitarian process when there is unequal power advantage, i.e., if one partner of the participatory process is politically or socially advantaged (Dussel, 2003, Cook and Kothari, 2001)? Is it possible to discover, to explain, and to understand if change occurs in the advantaged voices, and if such change occurs if they recognize and understand their change in a PAR collaborative? How does

³ Emancipatory Knowledge: In this paper emancipatory knowledge means an active process that requires respectful and imaginative dialogue of a diverse community to seek out its unexamined ideological and methodological assumptions for the purpose of problem-solving and liberation.

the vocalization of knowledge from the ‘voiceless’ community influence the change of the other? Freire argues that through an I-Thou (Buber, 1958) or a face-to-face (Dussel, 1996, Levinas, 1969) relationship, the advantages or disadvantages of the parties are leveled, and true egalitarian discourse takes place. This discourse becomes the starting place for building knowledge.

PAR is a philosophical and methodological democratic discourse wherein people have equal voices. It helps to balance the inequality of power relationships by acknowledging the abilities of all people to contribute to the discourse (Herda, 1999). It brings unheard voices into the public sphere with an equal voice and authority as those voices that are with the “advantaged” (Gaventa, 2010, Morrow and Torres 2002). But for those who are the advantaged and have not heard the voiceless or who have made them voiceless, are they able to engage or hear the emergent voices or enter into a relationship of egalitarian conversation or discourse? Can and how does the expert outsider change in such a democratic process where their legitimated or hegemonated power is challenged by the power of the voiceless? Is it possible for those who adhere to their assumed advantaged knowledge and elite positions, through time, process and discourse, to learn to change to a democratic voice?

Communities that have been without political voice or acknowledgement, such as those of indigenous peoples, have at times broken the silence through the engagement of using PAR in the public sphere to engaged in public discourse (Denzin, Lincoln and Smith, 2008, Freire, 1996b, 1974, Fals Borda, 1991). Significant change has been documented in communities that utilize PAR, including the community that is the background of this study: Grand Bayou (NSF). What is not well known in the literature is the change created through PAR discourse in the non-community participant, especially those in the academic world, or those who have agency or political powers and have owned or controlled the knowledge and public policy discourse (Denzin, Lincoln and Smith, 2008, Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). One use of this work is to help understand if and how the collaborators who have recognized legitimized knowledge-power in their system and who do not need to change to maintain their knowledge-power have been affected by their involvement with a community that neither gives them knowledge-power nor validates their knowledge-power (Foucault, 1972). How have people of knowledge-power been affected or changed through their discourse or involvement with the Grand Bayou community?

What is learned from this study can help to inform the process and methods used for community engagement for future community resiliency, disaster and planning work.

Framework for the Research Question

In the *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Freire asserts that radical democracy can take place in the discourse of knowledge that solves problems (Freire 2007). Community engagement by planners, academics, and practitioners should lead to problem solving (Fischer, 2009). The premise behind community-engaged problem solving is that through involvement of all parties of interest in the problematization, a participatory process defining the dimensions and root-causes of issues (Freire 1985), of the issue there will be better understanding and knowledge formed for addressing the issue. The dialogue between expert local knowledge and expert academic knowledge becomes part of the analytical reflective process for problematization, and if followed by cooperative problem solving can lead to building a culture of democratic freedom and responsibility (Fischer, 2000, 2009, Krajewski, 2009).

Many international disaster aid agencies responding to disasters create or support projects that are top-down, frequently with non-local staff. These agencies are often concerned that the community adopt codes, choose the presented plan, or approve proposed development scenarios (Oliver-Smith, 2010, Giroux, 2006, Jim Schwab, 2005, Chambers, 1997). Seldom is the knowledge of the local people sought in the process, since it is assumed that the academic and agency experts know more than the locals; thus we see mountain top removal destroying communities, aqua-culture farms devastating indigenous fish populations, and oil canals cut deep into the marshes eroding precious land (Forester, 1989, Marsh, 1953). There are more communities at-risk today with more land disappearing at a higher rate along the coast of Louisiana in spite of the experts' efforts (Bethel et al., 2011). A pedagogy that brings voices together to learn from each other, to create knowledge, to stop such insidious destruction to cultures, communities, and the environment assumes that all participants are willing and able to learn as well as share (Smith, 1999). Learning implies change. Participatory action research scholars argue that if problematization and problem solving take place, then change should necessarily follow for those involved (Brookfield, 2005).

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Discussion

“So teaching and researching is not just one way. The same is true with capacity building in general; for example, if you are working with people in developing countries, you can learn a great deal from them. They can take away a lot from you too, but you can also learn a great deal from them.” (Ac 22 2008)

Literature Review and Discussion

The literature review in this chapter pertains to two aspects of the research topic: community participation in post-disaster development projects and literature on critical participation action research. It refines the presentation presented in Chapter One. A brief overview of the various schools of participatory inquiry will be included so as to distinguish the Freirian School of participatory action that is at the core of this research from other forms of participatory engagement. The community that is oppressed, at risk or without political voice most often initiates the Freirian model of social engagement for the purpose of problem solving. The literature on oppression is far too extensive for this study and is not necessary to understand it in depth. Yet it is important to examine some literature that may help in understanding the case at hand. PAR is used for the creation of the public discourse that enables ways to create knowledge and change in the participants, and it argues that the approach can be a tool for appropriate pre- and post-disaster recovery and community resiliency by providing a strong foundation for democratic action.

In engaging the Grand Bayou community, the CHART team implemented projects and developed political efficacy through a Freirian Participatory Action Research model to address the Bayou’s recovery and redevelopment; thus the literature review will direct itself towards issues of community collaboration that utilize this model in post-disaster development and redevelopment projects. Because there are many types of participatory methodologies, the literature reviewed will help to specify the type of participatory work that was used with the Grand Bayou community. The type of participatory work, it is argued, determines the way the local community is engaged, and in this case, was brought into larger disaster community discourse (Kendon, Pain, and Kesby, 2009). Literature regarding the cultural differences between dominant societies and indigenous communities will be considered because it has

bearing on the relationships between outside collaborators and community members. Lastly, literature on critical theory as it pertains to Habermas's public sphere and discourse and Freirian emancipatory action will be discussed. Following the literature discussion, the gaps in understanding the PAR process relevant to this dissertation will be presented.

Literature on Disaster Development

Theory and practice should ideally be closely connected in post-disaster recovery and development (Chambers, 2005, Oliver-Smith and Hoffman, 1999, Anderson, 1998, Bolin 1994, 1986, Eade, 1997, 1996, 1995). When policies ignore the culture and knowledge of the disaster-affected people, recovery is seldom successful and it enhances any pre-existing vulnerabilities (Wisner, 2004, Anderson, 1998, Mileti, 1998). The lack of recovery is even often blamed on the community that is trying to recover (Giroux, 2006). Seldom are the systems examined and analyzed for their contribution to the root causes of the vulnerabilities.

Inappropriate policies and their application not only become a hindrance to recovery, they are seldom blamed for their inadequacies. The inadequacies are usually placed on the people (Brown, 2009). Fullilove (2005) describes this dilemma when the root causes of the social disruption are blamed on and shouldered by the vulnerable community as *root shock*. The people of New Orleans felt this type of betrayal and shock when blamed for their own lack of recovery by the former recovery Czar (Nelson, 2007). This inappropriate placement of responsibility closely parallels reports found in abuse-systems literature.⁴ Survivors, sometimes called victims in disasters, are re-victimized by society because it fails to do an analysis of the social systems and policies that have placed them in harm's way and the of economic systems that create hazardous situations (Oliver-Smith, 2010). Through the victimization of the survivor, the survivor becomes more distanced from participation in solutions of recovery (Hoffman, 2002) and has less of a voice (Gramsci, 1971, Habermas 1971). Not having a voice to share the knowledge of one's community prevents the survivors' knowledge from being used in the problem solving and visioning for the community's recovery (Phillips, 2010, 2008, Berkes, 2003, Smith, 1999, Chambers, 1997, Mathbor, 2008).

⁴ I have often heard comments at disaster conferences that refer to 'those' people and queries why 'those' people do not prepare while they expect or demand that the government do everything for them.

At Risk (1994) and *Disasters by Design* (1999) were seminal pieces of disaster literature published in the nineties. Each helped to shape the concepts of socially-constructed disasters and the need to address these issues in all stages of disaster planning and redevelopment. Each of these pieces calls for more community involvement, reflecting similar themes from the international development literature from such places as the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). The best practices of disaster recovery as well as successful models of sustainable development including housing and livelihood were gleaned from multiple sources, both national and international, and were reviewed in *At Risk* and *Disasters by Design*; yet neither recommend methodology or a process for a participatory application in the field. Emergent literature from disaster researchers such as Peacock (1997), Fothergill (2004), Hoffman (2002), and Bolin (1998), and others began raising issues of gender, race, class and at-risk populations and including them in the framework of their disaster research and analysis that is applied to policy and practice. The housing work of Peacock and his colleagues at Florida International (Peacock, 1997) showed how quantitative and qualitative research about housing post-Andrew could help change policies. Some of the stories that helped to build useful evidence on housing came from stories collected from the local citizens, thus demonstrating both their capacity and knowledge (Enarson and Marrow, 1998).

The application of theories found in disaster literature and related practices had, up to recent times, been to the greater extent paternalistic and prescriptive, disregarding the traditional knowledge and agency of the local community (Chambers, 2005). It has been a posture that the outside experts who came to assist could best assess what action was needed and how to accomplish it. The Highlander Center's director, Myles Horton, has conferred with Freire and others to learn appropriate counter measures to the type of paternalism referred to by Chambers (2005) and has opened the center for Rosa Parks and other civil and environmental leaders to learn PAR. During the Civil Rights time period of the 50s and 60s, freedom schools were set up to be part of the problem-solving process in the community and with the community. Freirian PAR, as it is practiced by the Highlander Center, seemed to be a logical method that could take a different path to build mutual trust and knowledge between the disaster experts and the community affected by the disaster (Horton, 1990). PAR methodology has been successfully used in knowledge transfer and in exchange in traditional native fishing villages (Berkes, Colding and Folke, 2000), in rural Appalachia (Gaventa, 1993), and in rural community projects

in South and Central America (Freire, 1974, Fals Borda, 1990). The next section will expound upon the various schools of participatory inquiry.

Participatory Schools of Inquiry

The focus of this literature review will pertain primarily to the Freirian tradition of Participatory Action Research, PAR; therefore, the review of participatory literature will be limited to PAR as known through Park (1993), Fals-Borda (1991) and Freire (1985, 1996) [other than to give a short background of other philosophical branches] in order to set apart this study's subject matter by virtue of its problem solving and emancipatory process. A short overview will be given regarding other types of participation or collaborative styles, but they are not the focus or the concern of this project. The compatibility of PAR with indigenous knowledge patterns will be touched on since the study is based in an indigenous community. The main body of literature will focus on the Friesian tradition because it is the foundation for the research question.

The participatory or collaborative research that has become popular in the United States has a multitude of names and various motives and practices (Kindon et al., 2009) and is different from PAR as defined by Freire, Fals Borda, Park, and Habermas. There is also a difference between the theoretical principles and application of each. Freire's work with PAR is with and by the people for the purpose of developing knowledge to problem solve an issue that is weighing down the community. Fals Borda and Freire would say PAR is akin to liberation theology (Dussel, 2003, Campbell, 1999). Park and Habermas would argue that it has critical theory at its core. Critical PAR as practiced by Freire et al, is emancipatory and leads to engaged democracy, engaged democracy with a voice.

A range of emerging community participation styles were discussed in the late 1960s when Arnstien (1969) developed a ladder of citizen participation. Arnstien's ladder of citizen involvement was one of the first instruments developed to help to navigate the various schools of thought and application regarding community participation. Historically, various types of participatory work have evolved in many disciplines, as well as in agricultural extension programs and in community action programs. The current popularization of participatory methods stems from the fact that public involvement is mandatory in various federal grants, and in public health and foundation mandates. Much of the current participatory or collaborative research as practiced in the United States is derived from various schools of theory; thus their

application or use greatly varies (O'Brien, 1998). Names that appear early in the literature are Lewin (1997), Gramsci (1971), Dewey (1944), and Tax (1953). Each of these people birthed a participatory style that lent itself to different purposes and outcomes. Lewin's interest was precipitated by the need to repatriate German prisoners of war; thus he created models that were useful in psychological and organizational collaboration. Argyris (1974) developed action science and was particularly interested in collaboration in places of commerce and industry. Dewey's followers such as Arthur Morgan (1984) developed service and experiential learning programs. Roger Hart (1997) refined a participatory model and adapted it to participation in the learning of children and youth.

The following chart is based on Arnsteins's ladder of participation as it is compared to the participation continuums of Hart (1997), Pretty, Guijt, Thompson, Scoones (1995) and Peterson's interpretation of Park and Habermas.

Continuum of Participation

	Optimum collaboration or conscientization	Collective Action	Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults		Critical knowledge (public sphere)	
			Child initiated	Self-mobilization		
		Co-learning	Adult initiated, shared decision with children	Interactive participation		
				Functional participation		Relational knowledge (semi-public sphere)
		Consultation	Children consulted but not informed	Participation by consultation		
		Compliance	Children assigned roles but not informed			
	Co-option	Tokenism	Participation in information giving		Representational knowledge (private sphere)	
		Manipulation	Passive participation			
		Decoration				
Low Collaboration						
	Arnstein's ladder of public participation	Hart's ladder of children's participation	Pretty's continuum of participation		Peterson's relational interactions Park-Habermas	

table 1

Sources: Arnstein, 1969; Hart 1997; Pretty et al., 1995; Kindon et al., 2009.

Critical Theory

Habermas refers to the distortion of modern Western development of culture and knowledge as “colonization of the lifeworld” and “cultural impoverishment”. In his work he suggests ways to bring validity to research through Critical Theory and the examination of speech acts and discourse. His work on the “ideal speech situation” argues that when people seek mutual understanding, there is an absence of coercion and an openness for better argument

(dialogue and analysis). He recommends that all discourse be checked and rechecked to "decolonize" speech. This recommendation is based on his belief that all humans are capable of rational thought that can be used for rational social intercourse and knowledge development and that everyone should have equal access to information and public debate.

Critical theory is dialectic in that it seeks inconsistencies in arguments and wrestles with the resulting contradictions, whereas most theories are based on the belief that there is only one truth. Critical Theory's internal and ever engaging search for patterns of inconsistencies leads to the development of acute analytical, reflective skills and can be emancipating for all participants. This process Habermas refers to as "internal critique". Habermas' path of rational thought can envision a future that is inclusive and radically democratic by involvement and production of new knowledge.

Habermas' predecessors in the Frankfurt School were skeptical of the direction instrumental reasoning was leading the modernizing world, the world entering a Gesellschaft type world. Habermas worked to find a systematic way through critical analysis of claims of validity to incorporate instrumental knowledge into a theory of social knowledge, as a foundation for a discourse theory of truth. If all parties engage in dialogical communication and a shared desire for mutual understanding, then validity or truth claims can emerge whether they are derived from empirical or normative data.

The goal of coming to understanding (*verständigung*) is to bring about an agreement that culminates in inter-subjective mutuality of reciprocal understanding, shared knowledge, mutual trust, and accord with one another. Agreement is based on recognition of the corresponding validity claims of comprehensibility, truth, truthfulness and rightness (Habermas, 1979, p. 3).

PAR: Types of Knowledge

Discourse is at the core of knowledge exchange and formation in Park's understanding of PAR (2001, 1993). Habermas as well is focused on dialogue as a tool for problem solving. Since this research case study needs to understand the exchange that has taken place through public discourse and public dialogue, it is important to understand more fully the ideas of discourse as understood by these two men.

Habermas's four categories of validity claims are similar to Park's analysis of knowledge types. They are as follows:

Validity Claims and Knowledge Types

Comprehensibility	Truth	Sincerity	Rightness
grammatically equivalent forms and mutual ways of representation. (Park's representational knowledge)	empirical propositions about the lifeworld that we hold as factually valid.	truthfulness and shared intentions that engender mutual trust necessary for open dialogue and disclosure. (Park's relational knowledge)	evaluates social worlds in the understanding of the other's recognized principals (normative or empirical). (Park's reflective knowledge)

Table 2

Morrow and Torres (2002) offer an ontological comparison of Freire and Habermas which can pertain to Park as well: (Park is added by author)

The nature of existence-being

ONTOLOGY

FREIRE- PARK

HABERMAS

Nature of praxis

action-reflection

symbolic interaction

Origins of dominance

anti-dialogical action

strategic action

Structures of possibility

humanization as vocation

validity claims and developmental - competencies

Park's definitions of knowledge types are compatible with the understanding of being and existence shared in the above chart. The awareness and discernment of knowledge types as presented by Park's knowledge archetypes are helpful tools for critical analysis in doing participatory action research.

Park's three archetypes of knowledge include representational-instrumental, relational, and critical-reflective knowledge types. Representational-instrumental knowledge is about things we describe or explain as objects of knowing. It is the type of knowledge that we use when we make a statement that the earth is round or that the sky is blue or that fire is hot. It is an expression or declaration and can be understood as technical knowledge.

Relational knowledge is the understanding that we have of others as human beings and as partners in relationships. Often there is a we/us or an I/Thou relationship with the Other in

relational knowledge. The equal relationship offers a possibility for understanding the other and for a way to exchange ideas with respect. Individuals and households are often understood as being in community, I am extending the parameters beyond people to include the totality of the environment. In relational knowledge, the Other is no longer a subject or object but is an equal partner in a reciprocal relationship. In the fuller meaning people and environment can be understood as inter/intra eco-system knowledge which is not necessarily limited to human interaction. It is in fact referenced by many as the intimacy with Gaia in various forms or ways (LaDuke, 2005, Moe-Lobeda, 2002, Tucker and Grim, 1994, Reuther, 1994).

Critical-reflective knowledge pertains to the realms of human values and ethics in which questions of right and wrong, good and bad, are raised. It speaks to our imagination and coaches us into thinking of how things ought to be, not how they are. It is normative, not necessarily in the sense of conformity but of righteousness of action, informed thoughtful reflections carried out in social contexts. It is sometimes called critical consciousness and may go against the status quo. Principled actions aimed at social change express and generate “reflexive knowledge.” Reflective knowledge can be understood as principled or value knowledge (Park 2001, 1997, 1993).

PAR as Border Crossing between Communities

Ferdinand Tönnies (1974) witnessed a difference in community patterns as he commuted from his rural residence to his urban university setting. That difference was in the way that people related to self and to community. Tönnies called these community archetypes *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. In a *gemeinschaft* community, people are more apt to defer to their kinship groups and their community structure, over and above one’s self-interests. The good of the community comes before the interests of the individual. People in a *Gemeinschaft* community often can trace their heritage through several generations in one locale. By contrast, a *gesellschaft* community is more apt to be a community of space where individual preference and desires are honored above those of the community, with people being more mobile and having fewer, if any roots in their given community. There is neither one type or the other in absolute terms; there are typologies that help make sense of different lifeworlds without prejudice. For example, I was raised *Gesellschaft* and was expected to go out into the world to make my own way wherever it was to be. It was expected that I secure a good job and find a good house, not necessarily taking into consideration my family, history, culture or friends.

My friends who were raised in a more Gemeinschaft setting are more connected to location/place and make plans that reflect their interconnectedness with their family, friends, and communities. One friend has created a business that has cultivated jobs for family members and friends so that they can stay “in place” with family. The commitment to connectedness in his situation has even included rebuilding or refurbishing buildings and housing so that family and friends can reside close by.

Gemeinschaft is often experienced in rural settings whereas Gesellschaft is often considered cosmopolitan in nature, i.e., in parts of cities and in suburban areas where there is considerable transient populations. Tönnie’s observations are helpful for this research because of the differences in framework and lifeworld of the participants and the possible power dynamics arising from perceived knowledge differences in those lifeworlds.

It is not the purpose of a participatory discourse of learning to convert parties to one particular point of view. but to recognize the differences in lifeworld perceptions so that learning can emerge from the richness that both perspectives offer. However, its purpose is to engender egalitarian discourse, i.e., to make sure that all participants have equal power in the dialogue. It was often observed that people who are convinced of the “correctness” of their own lifeworld will consider the lifeworld of others to be inferior. This conviction of “correctness” is reflected in an exchange at a professional conference. The Professional reflects gesellschaft and the community, gemeinschaft:

Professional: Your community is depriving its youth of the richness of the city, the malls, the movies the parks.....

Community member: You probably work hard at your job, what does your family do for fun?

Professional: Yes. I work hard all year so our family is able to take two weeks each summer to spend together in family time.

Community member: My family is together all the time with love and support for each other and enjoys nature everyday. It is too bad that your family can only do that for two weeks (GB 8 2009).

The decolonization that results from reflection is necessary to ensure that participants do not view their own values as being superior to that of others. (Guyette, 1996, Smith, 1999, Harrison, 2001). Misplaced prejudice and skewed perceptions often occur between urban and

rural cultures. Such prejudice creates problems in developing policies or inequities in general political discourse, inequities that favor those in power. One way of challenging prejudice (Gadamer, 1971) and finding mutual ground is through the public, open, and transparent discourse that is offered in a participatory action model. In fact, the model worked so well in Brazil, helping to create the democratization and inclusion of communities traditionally left out of the political structure, that after a regime change in 1964 all participatory action activities were banned. The Minister of Education, Paulo Freire, was exiled in part for his accomplishment in reducing the rate of illiteracy of the Brazilian peasants by 70 percent (Freire, 1974).

International exemplary models of participatory action are seen in the works of Linda Smith, a Maori who is a traditional knowledge expert and an academic in New Zealand. Smith's participatory work in and with the Maori is credited with the political gains and the securing of the people's language and land (Smith, 1999). The participatory public health model of Jamkhed, India, has documented the growth and capacity of the Jamkhed community but has not documented the effects of outside collaborators (Chitnis, 2005). The fishing communities of the northern regions of Canada that are working with the University of Manitoba exhibit capacity and political efficacy through the full use of their traditional knowledge in the public sphere (Berkes, 2005). Freire's work in Brazil shared collaborative knowledge in an analytical way that created and applied knowledge to problem solving on behalf of the community (Morrow and Torres, 2002).

PAR Perspective and Marginalization

In the age of modernism and positivism, respect for traditional knowledge diminished in favor of an academic scientific knowledge (Dezin, Lincoln and Smith, 2008). It was not until the mid-1940s that academic knowledge edged out traditional or community knowledge (Lemert, 1993). In the cold-war period of United States history, science and technology were seen as weapons against global enemies; the striving for technology made those without it redundant or relics (Hooke, 2008). Chambers asserts that emerging out of the late 1950s into the 1970s not only was local knowledge of citizens dismissed, it was seen as incomplete and worthless for the emergent planning experts (1995); during this time period, many folkways, and much traditional knowledge and ecological understanding were ignored and lost (Curole, 2009).

Our family members came back from the war where they were made fun of for their French ways and language, and they wanted to Americanize their speech, their homes and their way of life. This was so their sons and daughters would be accepted in the future. But for me, I tried that and now I talk like what I did when I was raised because that is who I am. (Curole 2009)

In mainstream America, diverse ways of knowing were displaced by homogenous, Westernized modern society. Areas that maintained traditional cultural ways were often seen or described derogatorily as backward, even subaltern. Kollmorgen, a prominent geographer, argued in a 1946 agricultural journal that the French speaking Cajuns of the bayou region would be better off trained to do manual work than to be taught to adapt to modern farming techniques due to their lack of motivation and interest. “Lack of experience, managerial ability, capital, and efficient work habits are cited as handicaps characterizing these small farmers.” (Kollmorgen, 1946 p. 157) Just as the Cajun French were seen as inferior to mainstream society, the traditional and Native American people of the South Louisiana still feel the prejudice. Mr. Burdeau shared his experience during an interview pertaining to the treatment of the Native communities after the BP oil spill:

Until the 1950s, most Indians lived in isolation, rarely interacting with whites. Old-timers recall barefoot children scampering into the woods to hide when the first cars rattled into their villages in the 1950s. Indian children were barred from schools until the 1960s and were called “sabines,” a derogatory term. (Burdeau, 2011)

Often the “local community” is only seen in terms of its economic or academic value. Rarely is the local community seen as having intrinsic value with its own merits and its own forms of expression. Contributors to eco-feminist literature Mies and Shiva state “local cultures are deemed to have ‘value’ only when they have been fragmented and these fragments transformed into saleable goods for the world market, food becomes ‘ethnic food’, music ‘ethnic music’, traditional tales ‘folklore’...thus [cultures] are dissected and ...commodified...thereby procuring a standardization and homogenization of all cultural diversity” (Mies and Shiva, 1993, p.12). Such dismissal of local cultural communities contributes to the loss of their Traditional Ecological Knowledge, TEK and to their voice in the public sphere.

The Westernization of knowledge and the loss of traditional knowledge have led to the destruction of ecosystems in various parts of the world (Berkes, 2005, Wisner, 2004, Berkes and Folke, 2003). The loss of traditional knowledge becomes significant when it is the loss of potential knowledge resources for the restoration of an assaulted environment (Philippe and Peterson, 2008). In Louisiana, the coast that is home to the Grand Bayou is vanishing in spite of the work of academic and engineering experts. Local expert knowledge is critical to help to give a more complete understanding to the workings of coastal bio-systems and to monitor and evaluate restoration projects (Bethel et al., 2011).

The juxtaposition of modern, Western, or technical knowledge with traditional knowledge often poses a problem for meaningful dialogue (Chambers, 1995). Fals-Borda (1998) and Park (1993) argue that participatory action honors the other, as in Buber's understanding of an I/Thou relationship (1958). In that honoring of "Thou", there is a respect for the person/environment as well as his or her lifeworld (Schultz, 1932, Habermas, 1987). Fals-Borda emphasizes that the relationship of mutual respect opens the discourse of shared knowledge. A dialogue of respect can overcome the differences of power and of knowledge that are experienced in a technical and traditional knowledge discourse. Park argues that Freire's praxis engages all knowledge types during the course of the collaborative; thus the community gains imagination which gives way to a different future.

PAR as Conscientization and Problematization

The practitioners of PAR in the tradition of Park, Fals-Borda, and Freire also argue that the collaboration of those without voice and those who are marginalized in a community are the ones that need to be at the heart of the collaboration. Democracy is about public discourse. Discourse is about voice. Voice is about shared knowledge, and knowledge is about power. Agencies and communities can be transformed in the Freirian participatory model by mutually created knowledge which creates the conscientization and the problematization. Fals-Borda (1991) and Goulet (1971, 1989, 1995) are among many that assert that those who create knowledge own the knowledge. Knowledge as experienced in recent history has been created and controlled by the western economic system and the academy. Thus even the protection of communities in the creation of knowledge through an Internal Review Board, (IRB), process is ultimately for the protection of the academy, not the community (West et al., 2008, Smith, 1999).

The essential core component of the critical process of Freirian and Habermasian theory

is critical reflection. Reflection is crucial for the integrity of relationships, of process, and of content both within a community and within the knowledge formation of the participatory project. This process manifests itself as the “decolonizing” of the outsider who is involved with a community/project and encourages the outsider to constantly reflect on the historical lens or cultural framework and assumptions that he or she or they bring to their work (Harrison, 2001, Smith, 1999). A requirement for academic researchers is to secure an IRB approval for their work with “subjects”. In an egalitarian project with PAR, there are no subjects, only equal partners; a university IRB is not usually required. But what about the rights of the community? How does the community retain its intellectual property rights or the ways in which it controls the knowledge development outcomes? It can do so through several methods sometimes known as community IRBs or “community declaration of principles” (West et al., 2006). Words, though they may be of the same language, can and will change in the context of community discourse and must be learned from the other’s framing. The community people of Grand Bayou have often stated that they have become multilingual, versed in the language of academics as well as in those of government agencies and non-profits (Harrison, 2001, Smith, 1999, Guyette, 1996). When various academic disciplines have different modes of discourse, it should not be assumed that an academic discipline’s language construct will be the appropriate or understood language in the community.

Peter Park’s contribution to the development of Participatory Action Research (PAR) builds on the works of significant others including Fals-Borda and Paulo Freire. By analyzing knowledge types, Park has made operational the types of discourse discussed by Habermas. These knowledge types help to understand the type of discourse and through PAR bring these knowledge archetypes together for collaborative problem solving. Park and colleagues favor the use of PAR because it recognizes populations that are usually left out of the formation and use of knowledge. Through the use of mutual knowledge development and praxis, the inconsistencies between knowledge formation can be addressed to liberate all parties. In many power struggles, those without power seek to either replace those with power and thus become the oppressor (Fanon, 1961) or to be co-opted into the dominating role. This can be seen in many revolutions where those overthrowing a regime become as repressive as those they replaced (Fanon, 1963). Through the mutual desire to find truth, inconsistencies in systems, in structures or of power and

dominance can be analyzed and changed through a discourse of language (Habermas, 1991), thus making this tyranny replacement less likely to occur.

Through analytical discourse that leads to action (be it change of self or systems) knowledge is created and movement at some level occurs. Both Habermas and Freire personally experienced repressively violent regimes that sought to silence the Other. Freire was exiled for his work with peasants that resulted in high literacy rates and democratization of the masses (Morrow and Torres, 2002).

Knowledge and the power of knowledge can be both liberating and oppressive. How knowledge is created, designed, and applied and who has dominion over the knowledge determines its direction. A positivist system that reinforces the dominant-positivist power knowledge system inherently oppresses (Smith, 1999, Herda, 1999). This positivist power knowledge-creation controls and distorts reality for regimes of truth. Foucault would argue that instrumental knowledge production perpetuates a system whereby those with power can use, manipulate, or gain by knowledge production over the Other (Foucault, 1972). In this imbalance of knowledge-power the "Other" is colonized, dismissed, and made subaltern (Gramsci, 1971, Gaventa, 1993).

Gaps in Literature

The literature search indicates gaps in understanding the application of the Freirian participatory approach to disaster recovery projects in the United States. As noted in the cited works of Chambers, Berkes and Mathbor, there are cases that show that some administrators have changed in their engagement with a PAR project. In most of the cases cited, the social and cultural dynamics of the community and non-community collaborators were very similar. The studies did not address the knowledge changes or understanding of the non-community members.

Alice Fothergill's work on knowledge transfer between researchers and practitioners in disaster is groundbreaking (Fothergill, 2000). Fothergill's research analyzes how information traveled or did not travel between groups in the hazards field. It falls short on the analysis of how researchers and practitioners learn from the community.

The following request was made on March 11, 2011, through the CCPH⁵ list-serve: “The capacity-building literature seems focused on community capacity to engage in research or interventions or health programs. We haven’t been able to locate information on organizational/capacity to engage with communities except for internal organizational capacity assessments or models. We are looking for information or models that talk about bi-directional capacity (Christopher, 2011). The literature does indicate that a gap still exists in understanding the knowledge development between collaborators, i.e., the community members and those from outside. A professor of natural resource sociology at the University of California Berkeley who has utilized PAR in her research career has also raised the need for understanding what happens to the non-community participants in PAR research (Fortmann, 2011). There is little in the understanding of whether, and, if so, how the ”outside” or non-community collaborators have grown in knowledge or have utilized that knowledge within their institutional or professional settings not related to the source community. This leaves a gap in understanding if there are shifts in knowledge and power relationships between outside collaborators and community participants that are manifested in changes of the way the outsider does their profession.

Application of the Literature for this Research

One of the strategies for the PAR project was for the coastal communities of Louisiana to gain access and to have a voice in circles of power. When the Grand Bayou entered these circles or spheres of power they gained access to the decision making process. When they were able to engage in relational knowledge they were able to influence the discussion on policy, by contributing to and helping to build knowledge. They were able to contribute to the discourse with their local knowledge (LK) and TEK of the coast. This type of discourse work had been successful in Canada in bringing traditional knowledge together with the knowledge of agency and academic stakeholders to help develop a model of co-management of natural resources (Berkes, 2008).

PAR has been used by both non-profit and agencies and increasingly quasi-governmental organizations like the World Bank and the United Nations in third world development projects (Chambers, 1995). The projects reviewed have documented the insights and knowledge gained by the outside collaborators in community projects (Harrison, 2005). Robert Chambers (1995)

⁵ CCPH - Community Campus for Public Health is a list serve managed by the University of Washington to help to promote participatory projects throughout North America.

has many case studies cited in his work on participatory collaborated work that indicate changes in collaborators and in the inclusion of traditional knowledge in final programs. Most of these collaborations were with and between collaborators from similar communities and/or backgrounds. His research differs from the research conducted in the United States in non-Freire collaborative projects that find high discord and tension among collaborators (Staggs, 2008). Marine biologists have found traditional knowledge useful in addressing the issues of declining fisheries and of the disturbance of ecosystems bio-diversity (Berkes and Folke, 2000). Even though traditional knowledge is used by some researchers, their work is not necessarily participatory if it is not done collaboratively with and for the benefit of the community. In some cases, the local knowledge is exploited for political or economic gain, leaving the locals without place or livelihood. Chambers' work reflects a development model utilizing social science (2005, 1997, 1983); Folke's integrates social, biological, and futuring in his model (2003). Their success would indicate a process transferable to a more complex system of disaster recovery and resilience whereby cross-disciplinary, collaborative models are essential for the sustainability of the community.

The cross-disciplinary, collaborative models that are being incorporated into PAR by some post-colonial workers-researchers are, as an emancipating process, seeking new ways of being in lieu of re-establishing forms of colonial systems. Linda T. Smith is one of the most notable proponents of decolonization through PAR (Smith, 1999). Through community usage of PAR and community knowledge, Smith, with her Maori colleagues and family, helped in the establishment of their language as the official language in New Zealand alongside English. Smith believes, as do other post-colonial theorists, that language is at the core of democratic discourse. This reflects Habermas's argument that language needs to have common symbolic meaning. Without common symbolic meaning, it is impossible for those who have had their language taken or denied them from having an equal part of dialogue. The authenticity of self and culture, of seeking truth in dialogue, is an essential element of liberation methods.

Park believes in the utilization of PAR in community work because it affirms and utilizes the community's knowledge and belief systems. It is not only emancipating; it also fosters creativity and imagination. It is from that creativity and imagination of knowledge that communities derive their hope for their joint future. Given this positive understanding of the method, Freire and others have used it as an effective teaching-learning tool in rural extension

work with marginalized laborers and sharecroppers in Brazil. The government and community members in the Netherlands have utilized PAR to address their critical water issues (Hommes, 2008). PAR is being used by indigenous and coastal communities in several regions of Canada to address issues of coastal land loss and dramatic changes to ecosystems (Berkes, 2005).

The book *At Risk* (Blaikie, 1994), offers a way to explain the build up of socially constructed issues through a model called pressure and release. Blaikie argues that the disaster event is the culmination of a population's vulnerability that is socially, economically, and politically constructed in high risk geographic locations (Blaikie, 1994). The increased risk of a community is in direct correlation to the socially developed vulnerabilities often forced or socially constructed on the community. Redlining is an example of the construction of racial barriers to housing (Peacock, 1997). "A disaster becomes unavoidable in the context of a historically produced pattern of 'vulnerability', evidenced in the location, infrastructure, sociopolitical organization, production and distribution systems, and ideology of a society. A society's pattern of vulnerability is a core element of a disaster" (Oliver-Smith and Hoffman, 2002, p. 3).

To reduce risk and vulnerability suffered by the community, socially constructed systems need to be addressed. The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) has as its mandate the reduction of vulnerability constructed either through physical infrastructure or through socially constructed means (UNISDR, 2009). Often it is easier for bureaucracies to address physical structures because social remedies need to address root causes. Those root causes are usually political and economic in nature (Wisner, 2004). Agencies like UNISDR admit their failures in the engagement of society for resolutions in disaster reduction and in the words of UNISDR, "[are] trying harder to work more closely with civil society" (Goulet, 2006, 1998, Chambers, 2005).

The gap between the decision makers and the local communities is also witnessed in the best of international relief and development organizations (Cernea, 2008, Oliver-Smith, 1999, Chambers, 2005, 1997, Goulet, 1995). While affirming the need to work with local stakeholders, many do not have the knowledge of how to do so (Mathbor, 2008). The stigma of victim-hood and marginalization often creates the mythology of the Other who is then blamed for their own condition (Freire, 1973). This type of cycle develops a lack of respect or desire to dialogue with the *other*, thus creating a knowledge divide and a socially constructed otherness that has

distances said Other from the public discourse (Habermas, 1991, Said, 1978). That, in turn, has programmatic and funding ramifications (Fischer 2009, Forester, 1989).

Understanding the gap between the scientists and the citizens, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) continues to urge all health-related research to incorporate community participation (Cook, 2008). The research in almost all these cases is initiated by an institution, not the community, and will benefit the institution first and primarily. In many cases, such research is participatory only for the sake of the institution. This phenomena has been referred to by some as the new tyranny (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). Contrastingly, the participatory approach centered in Habermas's language discourse (1984, 1987) is the only one that has at its core a dialectic approach of knowledge formation. The discourse on problem-solving is delineated by Freire (1974) in adult teaching pedagogies, and the addition of 'representational, relational and reflective knowledge' (Park, 1993). It is the relationship, familiarity, and respect that come through discourse/exchange as well as the reflective analysis that create the basis for change and application (Ricoeur, 1991).

PAR was chosen for Grand Bayou based on the literature that indicate the tenets of PAR affirm the knowledge of indigenous communities and a process for knowledge formation that is very adoptable and adaptable by traditional and historied communities (Smith, 1999). Participatory process by its very nature is as old as civilization (Park, 2001). Historically, communities have relied on the diversity of representational, experiential, and reflective knowledge types to survive. Such ancient patterns of knowledge formation are currently referred to as traditional knowledge or traditional ecological knowledge. PAR's method of knowledge development is understandable and useful with traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and traditional knowledge (TK) (Berkes, 2005). Knowledge has changed and adapted with civilization, and so did the ways in which it was honored or respected (Hoffman, 2009).

For the past seven years, Grand Bayou has utilized PAR in various projects. It is considered by many of the community members as meaningful and helpful in pursuit of their goals (GB 1 10), (GB 2 11). Community members were asked to respond to the involvement of outside collaborators in the life-work of the community. One gentleman said his eyes and life were open to possibilities that he didn't know they had. He stated that they (the community) can do things on their own but would rather work in conjunction with others (outsiders) now (GB 4 10). Another man affirmed this comment and noted the interaction was one impetus for

developing some of the current community events hosted for the larger area (GB 7 10). The members of the bayou are finding and defining their own capabilities, efficacies and inconsistencies, internally and externally. As they engage in relational knowledge, they believe that their voice is being heard. As they do the analytical reflective work, they are co-creating knowledge that gives them a creative and imaginative window to the future. “It is delightful to watch the community whenever they are presented with a piece of information, the work they do to analyze it and see if it will work. Wish we had the folks in government, maybe there would be fewer mistakes (Ag 14 10)”.

This research builds upon what is known and to fill the gaps by expanding understanding of the knowledge gained, adopted and adapted by the academics and practitioner community.

Chapter 3

Description of the Implementation of PAR with Special Emphasis on the Non-Community Participant Involvement

The task of the educator, [researcher or policymaker] is to learn the culture and community which partly constitutes the social location of the learner. The educator would therefore be, in Giroux's terms, a "border crosser", in that she or he would move across the border that demarcates one's social locations [including lifeworld, habitus, and place-world] in order to understand and act in solidarity with the learner(s), no longer perceived as "Other". The learners are also educators in this process since they play a crucial part in enabling the teacher to cross such borders (Mayo, 1999 p. 66).

This chapter is about the impetus and history of the Grand Bayou PAR project. It will describe the two primary settings, Grand Bayou and the Natural Hazards Workshop. These settings are the primary locales of interchange, communication, and sharing between the outside collaborators and the Grand Bayou participants. The first part of the chapter will be a narrative regarding the process and history of developing the strategy for engagement. In PAR work, the process and principles are as important as the findings. I will describe the setting up of the research query and the development of places for interchange and dialogue. These settings, meetings, boat trips, and community gatherings are the venues for learning and teaching exchanges. The learning exchanges are sources for data collection. Furthermore, unexpected consequences that can inform researcher on the process of observing PAR activity will be outlined.

The locations of interaction at the Grand Bayou and the Natural Hazards Workshop have a predominant role in this research and could not be more different, but the synergy between them became a significant factor in the development and adaptation of the case and in the findings. The reader will have an overview of the settings, one an indigenous coastal community fighting against the ravages of coastal erosion and cultural extinction in the most at-risk delta on the continent; the other an affluent hotel setting that brings together research experts in a new suburban setting outside a university town.

The Literature that Influenced the PAR Project Design

The last decade of the millennium was dedicated by the United Nations to disaster reduction. Much literature emerged from studying, analyzing and developing programs, policies, and agencies that would be better equipped to help reduce risks. During the same time period, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was eager to engage communities in mitigation work. Project Impact (PI) was developed and rapidly spread throughout the country, bringing together multiple sectors in various communities to problem solve their own risk and disaster mitigation issues. Though Project Impact was not a PAR model, it did contain some of the elements of collaboration, trust building, and citizen engagement, making it successful.

Concurrently, researchers such as Wisner and Cannon, through their work with the United Nations, Tear Fund and Cranfield, were designing models and approaches of disaster vulnerability reduction and resiliency for high-risk populations and regions predicated on several decades of international work (Blaikie, 1994). The pressure and release model, “par” they argue in their book *At Risk*, not related to PAR, is based on the failure of government and social systems to adequately include those who are most at risk in the political/social decision making process. Being denied, excluded or overlooked in the discourse on and work of mitigating risks, the most at risk are not part of the public agenda-making process or discourse. This was witnessed in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans (Laska and Peterson, 2011, Giroux, 2006). The failure of multiple levels of government in Katrina is an illustration of Wisner’s pressure and release model.

Efforts were made in the mid-nineties to link sustainable development with disaster mitigation. Many federal agencies had research projects and workshops helping practitioners, academics, and agencies to better develop methods to reduce risk. Programs emerged with the help of the University of Colorado Natural Hazards Center where Jaquelyn L. Monday wrote a monograph, “Building Back Better: Creating a Sustainable Community After Disaster”, that appeared in the *Natural Hazards Informer*, (Feb 2002), making the case for holistic community-based sustainable disaster recovery. There was an excitement and drive in the late 90s by disaster researchers and practitioners to think creatively and to work towards sustainable communities through many alternative projects.

Early on in 2000 and 2001, I was part of a failed attempt to develop a PAR recovery process in southern West Virginia following massive floods. Due to several of the relief groups involved, the PAR engagement could not take place at the grassroots level; thus it became a

hierarchical response that defied PAR. There was real interest in PAR however, by local communities and local organizations. My background in PAR convinced me that it could work as a grassroots disaster recovery model.

When Hurricanes Isidore and Lili occurred following the floods in 2002, I felt that the appropriate time had arrived to try to employ the best practices from the a book edited by Dennis Mileti, *Disasters by Design* (1999), which was a “second assessment” of disaster literature and practices to date. Mileti makes the point,

It is time for an evolutionary nationwide shift in the approach now being used for coping with natural and technological hazards by universally adopting goals that are broader than local loss reduction; by using a revised framework that links natural hazards to their global context, to environmental sustainability, and to social resiliency; and by modifying hazard mitigation efforts so that they are compatible with that new vision (Mileti, 1999, p. 18).

The Grand Bayou community requested assistance for technical support and resources to address their immediate and long-term issues. I believed that it was possible to apply the best of the second assessment knowledge and of the emerging theories of vulnerability reduction, sustainable development, and disaster response to their request and to do so by utilizing PAR. I also believed that even in the absence of funding, I would be able to recruit passionate, caring and talented people who really wanted to try to apply the theories and best practices that were emerging from the aforementioned literature and to engage them by utilizing PAR.

In discussion with Grand Bayou members about the extent of outside expertise and resources to address their issues, they revealed that they believed that this could not happen at the expense⁶ of either the integrity of the community or without their voice being central in any process. The Grand Bayou and other older coastal communities in the region do not necessarily hold researchers in high regard. There are many valid historical reasons for distrust of outside experts. The history of Participatory Action Research was shared with the community members and how it was used in Brazil for community engagement. After the community agreed to outside engagement, I and several of my colleagues that Grand Bayou could be a field site to

⁶ A graduate student wrote a successfully funded grant that helped to provide resources for the community that helped to ease the burden while we were with them. It was generally known as the toilet paper grant since that was one of the essentials, as well as water and a stove that had to be made available for meetings to occur in their remote community.

apply and test the second assessment recommendations. It was hoped that the best practices and knowledge of disaster mitigation and sustainable development could be applied through an engaged, democratic, participatory action research model (Peterson, 2003).

The Case

A case study model was used to frame the work. The case described herein analyzes the effect of the PAR methodology/process on those who were participants, bystanders, or observers from outside of the community. The PAR project in which the non-community residents were studied was initiated at and by the Grand Bayou community for the purposes of addressing cultural and physical stressors of a major disaster impacting the community. A case study model as defined by Creswell (2003) and others (Feagin, Orum and Sjoberg, 1991) delineates a research project by setting dimensions, be they physical or spatial. During the past nine years of the project's existence, the community has had interaction with many outside resource people. The findings and analysis herein will be drawn from the experiences and responses of non-community participants. The subjects, the outside collaborators, are experts, decision makers, and practitioners who influence the way that disasters are understood through research, policy, and practice, or students who are aspiring in these fields of endeavor. The academy includes students and professors. Not all have been involved with the core project but have been either exposed to the project or are contributors/recipients, learners/teachers of resources resulting from the project.

This research case study has the recommended qualities of time for observation. Given the number of years, there are many data sources: participation and observation, documents from the grant proposals, project reports, evaluations and documentation of "outside" team participation. Since the inception of the project, the community has experienced four major hurricanes and the BP oil spill. The community has hosted local, national and international people from a wide range of backgrounds, including academics, students, reporters, disaster responders, volunteers, agencies, foundations, government representatives, and members of non-profit organizations mostly interested in an indigenous coastal community, post disaster. The people/organizations have come for multiple reasons, ranging from curiosity, exploitation, altruism, and friendship, learning engagement, research, and problem solving.

The Engagement

The first source comes from my role as facilitator and thus as a participant-observer⁷ of the PAR process (Powdermaker, 1966). My PAR role has changed and been modified over the years to meet the community's needs. I entered the community as a disaster consultant, to give an analysis of the situation to a regional disaster response agency and to a national religious denomination offering assistance. I was invited back by the community as a resource person to share my experiences and knowledge of physical, financial, and human resources.

During the second visit, I became a facilitator in the PAR process. I was the one who would help link the resources to the community's work, and their work to resources for mutual learning exchange. Being a participant-observer through my role as facilitator made it possible for me to interact with and observe the outside participants, local participants, and their interactions. These observations over the years helped form the research question. Given the length of the study and the continual reflexive work, new questions or understandings of the situation emerged. The process becomes iterative [Argyris - double loop learning] thus incorporating inductive and deductive logic (Argyris, 1994). Coffey, refers to this dynamic iterative inductive-deductive process as abductive reasoning (Coffey, 1996, Kelle, 1995). The iterative (praxis) process between inductive and deductive allows for a constant interaction between data and theory, revealing emergent theories and themes from the data.

The Community as Described by a Grand Bayou Resident

Grand Bayou, a fishing village on the Gulf coast of Louisiana, is a wetlands community surrounded by prairie marsh and bayous. The people are indigenous to this area, and are descended from the Atakapa-Ishak Native Americans. We have lived and worked on these lands and waterways for centuries; yet to fully define Grand Bayou we must go beyond the physical aspects of description. There is a sense of belonging and of connection to place that transcends the mere physical descriptive. The changes and challenges to maintain the integrity of self are ever before us, and it is a testament to the resilience and adaptive nature of our people that we are still here, in spite of these challenges. We understand that our continued presence and survival is tied to the mimicry of nature's adaptive aspects; by making use of the resources our natural world provides for us as it accommodates both natural and human induced changes. (GB 2 09)

⁷ Freire calls the person who works in/with the community with PAR an animator. Animator when used in Spanish, is a creative, imaginative facilitator. In English it can have negative connotations of manipulation, thus the word facilitator is being used.

Plaquemines Parish, shown in Figure 3, is part of the bird's foot delta extending south of New Orleans into the Gulf of Mexico. In the fall of 2002, the Grand Bayou community sustained severe damage to its homes, gardens, church, and fishing fleet when Tropical Storm Isidore made landfall at Grand Isle on September 26, 2002 and when hurricane Lili hit Intracoastal City on October 2, 2002. The land loss experienced by the Grand Bayou region amounts to 1,758 square acres between the November, 1968, and November, 2009. This equates to an average yearly loss of 170 square acres.

Lower Plaquemines Parish, where the Grand Bayou is located, is surrounded by water. The communities in the region are cross-cultural and multi-ethnic, a mixture of Croatian, Vietnamese, Houma Nation, Atakapa-Ishak, Afro-American, Creole, Cajun, and French.

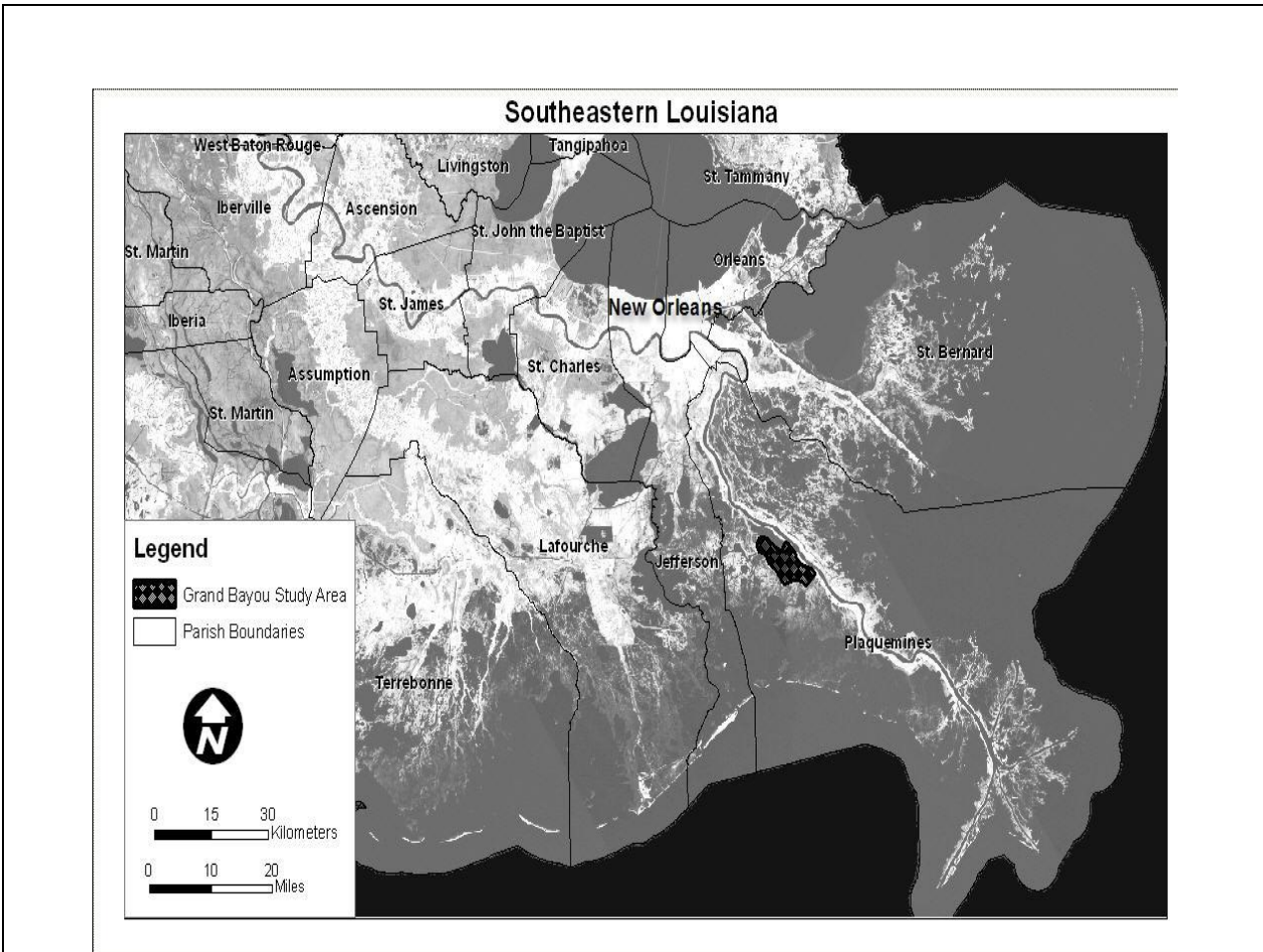


Figure 3

Map of the Southeast region of Louisiana. This region has the fastest loss of landmass of anyplace in North America. The area marked Grand Bayou Study area is one of the areas where the loss is being experienced at an alarming pace. Its location is a vital ecosystem, an estuary for spawning shrimp and a major fly-path for migratory birds (Bethel et al., 2011).

Selection of Locations and People

The PAR Grand Bayou collaborative started with a disaster tour of the community's devastation caused by the 2002 fall storms. I was invited to see the community by a FEMA mental health worker in December after a New Orleans recovery group had pronounced in November 2002 that all needs caused by the fall storms had been met. The FEMA mental health workers that were in the field in lower Plaquemines Parish felt otherwise and reported their feelings to their director. The director of the outreach program and I have had a working relationship since the early 1990s as a result of Hurricane Andrew's damage in Louisiana. She asked that I come to the area and investigate possible needs, concerns, and issues and make recommendations. She invited me specifically because of my history of working in a participatory, problem-solving methodology, post-disaster; and I had a grasp of the culture of the region and also had connections to a variety of its grassroots networks. I was not part of the academy when this project began; I was an independent disaster consultant responding on behalf of a national, faith-based disaster response organization funded by the Presbyterian Church (USA).

It was apparent from the first visit that the community was capable, strong, and knowledgeable. The community is not accessible by road, only by water, therefore a bit isolated from "outside" resources, from what many bayou communities refer to as "up-front" (any locale away from their immediate bayou). The community's request for outside support and assistance was simple; they wanted to save their bayou (land) and their heritage.

My first visit with the Grand Bayou community was on December 9, 2002. The disaster mental health director accompanied me. The tour included personal sharing between community members and visitors, culminating in the singing of Christmas Carols (in French) on the community Church's dock, over the water and under the stars. Hot coffee and homemade orange muffins were arranged on one of the fishing boats. The refreshments were to be shared between the community and guests. The event was closed with prayer and the fishing boat drove me back to the landing.

The community invited me back the following January, 2003. I met around a kitchen table with several women from the bayou and their children, drying ourselves from a downpour that is typical in early January. The boat filling with water on our trip to the house was a reminder of the differences in our daily life patterns due to their community being accessible

only by boat. The folks who were gathered told me their issues, showed me pictures of the land loss and the increased severity of each storm. They wanted a future on and in the place they love and were adamant that the land and culture needed to be saved. They were also adamant that they wanted to be the drivers in the decisions to make it happen. They did not want others making decisions or plans for them, nor did they want to experience, as a result of “disaster recovery”, a change in their cultural patterns. I shared with other “outsider” the principles of PAR, explaining their focus on community-driven problem-solving. I further explained that at the root of these principles was the idea that both outsiders and community members should work and learn cooperatively. I shared work that Freire, Gaventa, and Horton had helped facilitate through the use of PAR and its usefulness for problem-solving by and for the community. The folks who were gathered asked that I facilitate such a process to garner resources with the Grand Bayou. Their voices were articulate and described the problems that they were facing, but they realized in the last two major storms they needed new “tools” to address those problems. A participatory process could deliver such tools, and the process seemed in keeping with their goals and their culture while honoring their style of knowledge-building, TEK.

I was struck by the number of severely damaged homes in the community, yet they never raised a request for help with their homes. Their primary concern was their cultural continuity and the abatement of the diminishment of the marsh lands surrounding their community. There was a profound understanding of the large scope of the problem; they wanted to address its root-causes, not just symptoms of those problems such as housing. This illustrates a community cognizant of the root causes pertinent to their issues and their understanding that PAR would be appropriate to address the root causes by engaging in Freirian problematization.

When discussing the methodology of participatory action and the building of the collaboration, the community members emphasized the necessity that the outsider have “a good heart.” A good heart goes beyond what social scientists would call cultural sensitivity or cultural awareness; it includes not being extractive of the community’s resources. It’s about respecting their knowledge and showing social graces, kindness, and above all mindfulness of the people and their values. It seems clear to me that the community had experienced a negative history of “experts” over many years, be they lawyers, engineers, or anthropologists. This perception comes from the statements of the community residents in lower Plaquemines who were coerced

to sign legal papers pertaining to land and mineral rights. Similar stories of the area are documented by Jeansonne in *Leander Perez: Boss of the Delta* (Jeansonne, 1995) and through my own personal experience with the questionable work of an archeologist. The burden was on me to not only select people who had appropriate expertise but who also had keen “people” skills and a “good heart”. The values the outside collaborators were to respect included modesty of dress, the community’s abstinence from alcohol and smoking and use of “foul” language. This screening process was not always successful. Some of the recommendations for resource participants came through snowballing, a methodology that uses the recommendations of participants to recommend others based on their knowledge of the task. Some recommendations were people who did not understand participatory work and instead tried to implement other forms of “help”. When the community residents were respected it was invaluable to the development of the collaborative and to the relational trust needed in knowledge building.



Photo credit: K. Peterson

Photos: Grand Bayou Community Center and a Grand Bayou Resident’s home, offering hospitality and a time for learning and exchanging of ideas.

In the months following, a relationship of trust was built on the basis of my ability to “recruit” appropriately skilled and culturally sensitive people and services reflecting the stated needs of the community. While PAR is primarily focused on knowledge creation for the development of problem-solving (problematization), in a post-disaster situation, the community also has immediate issues that require immediate resolution. These immediate concerns were addressed while building the trusting relationship that was the foundation for the long term PAR collaborative. For the long term problematization we drew a map of all their concerns and then a chart of all the possible issues that could arise from their goals to stop the land loss and to retain their community/heritage. This chart helped “imagine” the types of expertise and resources that

would be necessary; it was the beginning of developing a long-term collaborative partnership not only with the community but also with many of the non-community participants who were identified for their abilities to garner and contribute resources.

Over the years of community advocacy and disaster work and from attendance at either the National Hazards Workshop or FEMA's Project Impact events I became acquainted with various people who had the types of expertise that were pertinent to the community's goals. Although valuable, those whom I could identify would not be enough for the severity and complexity of the Bayou's issues. I sought out other friends and networks with valuable expertise such as Native American networks and friends, environmental justice circles, housing action groups, social green entrepreneurs, sustainable building groups, and alternative energy and religious advocacy organizations. Many of the people and organizations were familiar to me through past or current working relationships and were helpful in providing both direct and indirect resources such as financial backing and expertise. Many provided connections and introductions to other possible resources. The native peoples, including Lakota-Sioux, Ute, Choctaw and Chickasaw, provided their stories as a way for the Grand Bayou community to avoid as many obstacles as possible as they developed capacity to address their issues.

Because I was not living permanently in south Louisiana at the time, at the beginning of the relationship with the community I was only able to be present in the community for short intervals every other month. This created a burden in keeping close contact. I made phone calls every several days to check on the progress of the resource people rendering assistance. Email was not yet available in the community. (A computer was later provided for the community's email use and for use as a tool to keep and preserve documents.) During the time away from the community, I read as much as I could possibly find from books, documents, old newspapers and literature to help give me a fuller understanding of the background of the Plaquemines region where segregation and land grabs have been common, especially in the lower part of the parish where Grand Bayou is located. The Perez family is famous in Louisiana politics for their racial views and powerful stance on segregation. Common pool resources, such as lumber, furs, birds, oysters and oil were privatized with little access or oversight protection from the communities of the region (Jeansonne ,1995).

One of the first resource people to partner with the community was a contractor who was able to perform the needed damage reassessments that were used for FEMA damage assessment

appeals. I knew the young man through his community rebuilding work during Hurricane Andrew and knew him to be a very quiet, gentle and honest “bayou guy”. Since he would need to stay in a home in the community, this would be the first test of my ability to find people with “good hearts”. For two reasons procuring the appropriate resources in a timely fashion was important: 1) to gain trust with the community , and 2) to develop the FEMA appeals which had a tight deadline.

All went well with the young contractor as his work was able to generate appeals through TRAC, a recovery group based in Houma. Unbeknown to us at the time, the FEMA reviewer who approved the appeals was a student of one of our key collaborators. The appeal process was successful for the residents. The initial average FEMA claim monies that were received by each household approximated \$350.00 for major damages sustained. The contractor was able to re-evaluate each home with detailed structural documentation and pictures to attest that the damage was not pre-existing but was indeed caused by the hurricane. The process gained some trust by the community and I was affirmed in the role as trusted facilitator with the community.

The next event was to bring a group of resource people to the Bayou to listen to the issues and vision of the community’s future path. Potential outside collaborators, when approached, were intrigued by such a process and were willing to give of their time to be involved (Phillips, 2003). Academics and outside experts became engaged as early as February 2003, five months after the storms, and worked at their own expense. (An initial grant from the Presbyterians channeled through TRAC covered the expenses for the contractor and some material needs for housing repair) (Peterson, 2003).

It was important that the resource people were brought to the Grand Bayou. Given that the Bayou is only accessible by boat and that it is one and one half hours south of New Orleans, it seemed that outsiders coming to the people was one way of being considerate of the community’s time. It was also a way for the outsiders to start their learning process about subsistent fisher folk who are indigenous to the region. It is essential in PAR that any outside collaborator hear the issues from the community’s own voice and from their own place/location (Merleau-Ponty, 1958).

Included among the experts were the senior research consultant for the American Planning Association, three tribal leaders, the director of an emergency management program at a southern university, the chair of Project Eden (the USDA Agricultural Extension Disaster

Mitigation Program), a small business specialist, local experts in the Louisiana area, TRAC and Morgan City Vision (experts in case management and rebuilding), a LSU geographer, as well as others. I helped choose people who had the needed expertise identified in the early chart developed by the community. The outsiders had to be good listeners and understand that they were to follow the Grand Bayou's vision in a Freirian PAR project. The initial group of people made recommendations of folks whom they thought would be helpful, and the snowballing of resources and expertise continued to grow. It has never stopped.

In my understanding of Freirian PAR, it is essential that none of the collaborators "gain" by their presence in the community either through payment or publications or other means. This was important for gaining trust and to giving legitimacy to our commitment of working in partnership on the community's concerns. I made the commitment to the Grand Bayou that anything I did or said about the Grand Bayou would be done *with* the Grand Bayou, as in the African proverb— *Nothing about us without us*. The commitment extends to this dissertation as well. It also pertained to any media coverage, press releases, or requests for funding. Everything had to be done with the approval and with input by the Grand Bayou. The iterative process of sharing information and doing reflection is a core part of the PAR learning process.

After the initial six months, I shared with the community residents information about workshops that could be helpful to them and suggested that they attend them. The workshops included ones such as the First Nations Aqua-culture workshop in Seattle, the Housing Assistance Council, a grassroots, housing network for rural people of color, (held in Atlanta), and the Social Enterprise Alliance (SEA) held in San Francisco. A young American Baptist minister and board member of the Social Enterprise Alliance was an initial resource person for the Bayou and came to the first gathering of outside collaborators in April 2003. He encouraged the residents to engage in the SEA to gain resource knowledge to realize their dream of opening a bait shop, a minnow farm, and a fisher's cooperative. Conferences and workshops were intentionally chosen where the attendees would have similar grassroots backgrounds and issues as the Grand Bayou. The workshops all had histories of excellent applied resources both in content ideas and people and most importantly were directed by and with grassroots groups.

It was suggested by a Native American friend and resource person that a minimum of three community people attend conferences together. She pointed out that it is important for several reasons: 1) So that they would not feel out of place, they could support each other in a

foreign or strange setting; 2) So that they could together share and evaluate the content and ideas of the meeting, 3) So that they could share a diversity of perspectives of the meeting with their community, and 4) So that more community people could become acquainted with outside resources. Over the years, we have abided by this suggestion, and it has been very helpful. An outside collaborator has usually accompanied the Grand Bayou folks on the trips, which is helpful for a mutual learning experience. These workshops, as well as other others, required financial resources, so we worked with the community to develop their own 501(c)(3) non-profit that enabled them to receive donations and foundation funding. (The non-profit ceased to operate following Katrina, but up until the time of Katrina it had received several hundred thousand dollars in grants.)

The Natural Hazards Workshop is the first public setting where I recruited PAR collaborators outside of the immediate area of the community. I issued an announcement during the workshop about a coastal community in Louisiana that was hit by a tropical storm and hurricane the previous fall and invited people who were interested in applying the best in disaster recovery knowledge with PAR methodology to an informal discussion. Eight people responded to the invitation, including one who later became the co-PI for an National Science Foundation (NFS) grant.

The collaborators from Jacksonville State, Louisiana State University (LSU), and CHART who came to the Grand Bayou in December 2003 were all experienced disaster researchers. University of New Orleans Center for Hazards Assessment Response and Technology became part of the mix of resources through their director. They were also experienced in NSF funding and with the assistance of the Jacksonville disaster researcher promptly secured a SUGR grant that helped cover expenses for the purposes of exploring the PAR model in disaster recovery. CHART and its staff became core participants in the project. Under the SUGR grant, we were able to fund three community members' attendance at the Natural Hazards Workshop in the summer of 2004 as part of the panel on PAR and the work that was being accomplished which was the beginning of a seven year history between the GB and the NHW. Shortly after the workshop, I became a Ph.D. student and a research associate at CHART for other projects but have remained attentive to my work with Grand Bayou.

The Grand Bayou is not typical of the kind of community that has representation at conferences, political events or events like the NHW. I believe this is important to understand

since the focus of the research is about the change in the outside collaborators many of whom are members of the political and academic elite. The inclusion of the Grand Bayou in and with a community very different than their own is a significant “border-crossing.” As understood in Gramsci’s terms, this is a community that the political hegemony has excluded and has left behind, or what Dussel would call the “forgotten other” (Gramsci, 1971, Dussel 2003).

Because of the vast differences between the study communities, it is important to know key features, elements of each community. The differences and strengths of the Grand Bayou community from the perspective of this dissertation are as follow:

- a. Traditional Ecological Knowledge
- b. Native American community
- c. Gemeinschaft community
- d. Vision of community committed to action
- e. Regional as well as local view
- e. External forces creating swift environmental degradation to area

The Natural Hazards Workshop, an invitational venue, is the first place where the NSF component of the Grand Bayou project was shared with the larger disaster community. A panel that was a composite of Grand Bayou and academic participants shared how the project was formulated and how it was working. Residents from the Grand Bayou continuously have returned to the Workshop since the summer of 2004 (a little more than a month before Katrina). Since the first invitation, the Bayou has been represented by sixteen invitations with nine different people (several attending more than once). In that time period, the Grand Bayou participants have been panelists and poster presenters and have been actively engaged in all the workshop’s activities. “The Bayou residents have been integrated into the life of the workshop” (Ac 9 10). As a result of this interaction at the Hazards event, obtaining interviews with the disaster research community regarding their interaction and knowledge of the Grand Bayou project was relatively easy.

Because the Natural Workshop community is a relatively small gathering (ranging from 250 – 400 people) and because I have been attending the workshop for more than 20 years, I am familiar with many of the participants. I have worked with many of the same participants in the field and on mutual projects or conferred with them on research ideas. I have read their work or witnessed their engagement during or after disasters. There is a level of familiarity within the

multi-disciplined disaster research and policy community that is enhanced by the NHW workshop. Such familiarity fosters conversation more than formal exchanges.

The Hazards Center director has invited the Bayou to the Natural Hazards Workshop for seven consecutive years. The consistency of attendance has allowed for significant interaction between those who are regular attendees at the workshop and the Bayou participants. It became apparent, to our core PAR team in doing critical reflection, that through their presentations and interactions something different was occurring in this setting than had been witnessed in other “professional” settings or even at the Bayou. The workshop has some of the leading experts in the disaster field in attendance. The experts include researchers, practitioners, heads of federal agencies, policy makers, and major funders. I was convinced that the Bayou representatives attending the workshop would help garner additional interest for people to come to Louisiana and participate in the Bayou’s rebirth. I did not expect that the participatory action-learning process would extend to the workshop setting. A transition happened when the Bayou was no longer extracting from the workshop resources (knowledge) but became partners in building knowledge.

It was with that revelation that I dropped my previous dissertation project on resettlement during the Great Depression and directed my work toward discovering what change was transpiring in the relationships that were building in Boulder. If the people in power could be influenced through their interaction with the Grand Bayou and the PAR project, then they would be the ones who could help to develop policies, research, and programs that would be beneficial to Grand Bayou and to so many communities like them. If this be the case then what is learned can be helpful in building models of citizen engagement and in initializing of community knowledge. Although there were other conferences and university settings, the Natural Hazards Workshop became the central focus of outside interaction in data collection.

I used the registration roster for the Natural Hazards Workshop as one mechanism for finding academics, students, and practitioners who came into contact with the Grand Bayou. I also used the recordings of the various sessions that the Grand Bayou members presented. During the six summers that representatives of the Grand Bayou community have participated at the Natural Hazards Workshop, they have had interaction during poster sessions, workshops, socials, and the plenary, so most of the people in attendance have met the Grand Bayou folks in some fashion. I chose people from a diversity of backgrounds: the academy, agencies,

students, and professional organizations. All of the people have as a common thread disaster expertise and training, either professional or academic. When having the conversation with the people connected to the Natural Hazards event, I interviewed them for the most part at the NH workshop. I knew some of the people whom I interviewed and others whom I did not.

Other interviews and conversations were with people who had visited the Grand Bayou and/or worked directly with the Grand Bayou project. Some of these people also overlap with the Natural Hazards while others do not. Others that were interviewed who have visited the Grand Bayou include university students, both undergraduates and graduates and agency personnel (government and non-profit). Some of the students, however, did not visit the Grand Bayou nor were they at the Natural Hazards Workshop, but instead encountered the Grand Bayou residents in a university classroom setting.

Elaboration of Non-community Setting

I always wanted and lusted after an invitation to Boulder [NHW]. You know with good cause because it was such marvelous place and I learned a lot of good things. (Ag 15 2009)

Since many of the respondents were participants at the Natural Hazards Research and Application Workshop (NHW), and it was the location for a good portion of the interaction between the Grand Bayou and disaster specialists, it is important to understand the historical, cultural and political setting of the Workshop and its importance and influence on disaster research, policy, and practice. It is just as important to understand the format of the workshop, its style and its intentionality for lively, creative discourse, and its informal environment for interaction.

The Center's mission statement from their website is as follows:

Our mission is to advance and communicate knowledge on hazards mitigation and disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. Using an all-hazards and interdisciplinary framework, the Center fosters information sharing and integration of activities among researchers, practitioners, and policy makers from around the world; supports and conducts research; and provides educational opportunities for the next generation of hazards scholars and professionals. (<http://www.colorado.edu/hazards/about/>)

The Natural Hazards Workshop is the gold standard for the disaster community. The

workshop brings together the decision makers within agencies as well as the top researchers in various disciplines. James Lee Witt, after his appointment by President Clinton to head FEMA, addressed the opening session at the Workshop by saying “I have been wanting an invitation to this workshop for a very long time. It took me being appointed to head FEMA to get here” (field notes 1993).

The dedication to the systematic study of hazards is relatively new. The first assessment of disaster literature was conducted in 1970 and was the baseline for disaster knowledge that led to the later study mentioned in Chapter Two, the second assessment (Mileti, 1999). Early disaster/hazards scientists—Quarantelli, Dynes, Haas and White—initiated and hosted a forum of 250 disaster experts to examine the “state of the art” of disaster research. Suggestions emerging from the findings included changes and improvements in funding, in organization, in collaboration and in the dissemination of disaster work and research were made. The suggestions prodded academics, practitioners, government entities, private sectors, and non-profits to radicalize the way disasters were addressed to include not only the physical ramifications but the social ones as well. The development of applied research and dissemination of research usable by government and private agencies was a primary goal (Mileti, 1999, Quarantelli, n.d.).

The Natural Hazards Workshop became a yearly event that brought together a multi-stakeholder and inter-disciplinary group of people who, being reflective and imaginative in their interactions, would build an evolving body of usable knowledge. The NHW is a legacy of the first assessment. The workshop fulfilled one of the suggestions that emerged from the first gathering and secured the funding of major federal agencies.

White’s study (1944) helped to change funding patterns that were primarily focused on physical resolution of risks, to include social impacts on losses. His research showed that money spent on physical adjustments (precursor to what is now referred to as mitigation) continued to increase as did the expenditures on structural losses. A quote from White’s doctoral dissertation expresses his core premise that human influences are a major part of disasters; “floods are ‘acts of god,’ but flood losses are largely acts of man” (Kates, 2011, p. 8). This quote became a mantra in helping to organize an association of floodplain managers in the early 1970s, which later formed the Association of Floodplain Managers.

The spirit of the workshop is different from that of most professional conferences. It

utilizes several different types of venues for discussions and informal interaction. During the three to four days of the workshop, the participants have the chance to go on disaster-related field trips, to attend sessions, and to socialize with a diverse group of people who are passionate about mitigating the effects of disasters. The opening session begins with all participants giving a self-introduction, even when there are 400 in attendance. There is a balance between several plenary and small group sessions on various topics as well as between participant-generated interest groups such as the gender roundtable and the public health gathering. The presenters are encouraged not to present papers or use PowerPoint. Instead, they are given common questions to answer in a roundtable fashion. With this approach, they are encouraged to spar with “lively discussion” and push discussion within their gathering. A moderator assures ample time for discussion from the floor.

Many opportunities are intentionally incorporated into the agenda, giving time for conversations, for building relationships, and for community building. Coffee breaks are longer than those usually experienced at conferences so that there is ample time for informal discussion between the plenary and small group sessions. Several hours are afforded the luncheon that offers a time for people to gather at roundtables and enjoy a long and leisurely conversation with old or new friends. It is a time for conversations and community building. The poster session is accompanied by food and beverages with plenty of time for informal interaction.

In the earlier days of the workshop, Gilbert White hosted the event’s picnic at his mountain ranch, an event intended for building relationships. In recent years, the picnic/barbeque has been held at Boulder Park, National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) and at several other lovely locations. In a personal conversation with White (1989), he stated that the gathering (workshop) was in part based on his values as a Quaker, to bring diverse people together through fellowship and to do something everyone likes to do: eat and converse together. White’s conviction is reflected in his letter from the Second World War, 1942: “I believe it is fair to say that the firm Quaker insistence upon the sanctity of the individual and upon friendly treatment regardless of race or creed, has done more than anything else to keep alive a desire to act humanely” (White, 1942).

White incorporated hospitality and respect into every component of the event. He felt that people learned best from each other when mutual care and friendship were engendered. And given the gravity of disaster, we needed to do all we could to bridge differences and build

knowledge to address the complexity of prevention and recovery (field notes 89). He was not just building a gathering of disaster power elites, he was building a place that could become a public sphere.

We can be confident that action which is in accord with a few basic beliefs cannot be wrong and can at least testify to the values we will need to cultivate. These are the beliefs that the human race is a family that has inherited a place on the earth in common, that its members have an obligation to work toward sharing it so that none is deprived of the elementary needs for life, and that all have a responsibility to leave it un-degraded for those who follow. GFW (White, 2006)

From the perspective of this dissertation the critical praxis enabling elements of the conference are as listed in Table 4.

Table 4

Critical Praxis – Workshop Attributes
Diversity of participants defined through their professional work
Continuity of history and infusion of new people/ideas/practice, research 2/3 of the participants are returning invitees, 1/3 are new to the event
International participation
Informality of the setting
There are no dress-up events
Barbeque in lieu of “banquets”
Leisurely lunches without speakers so that table conversation becomes the focus
Attractive setting with amenities - time and focus is on the interaction of attendees
An emphasis on people meeting each other
Staff knows all participants by name and accommodates special needs
Staff helps to orient new participants and to provide needed materials
Everyone is introduced at the opening plenary
Time is built in for informal conversations
Personal titles are not used - first names are used
People’s positions, especially those of power, are minimized
Time is built in for building relationships
Imagination and visioning are encouraged - “lively discussions”
Formal presentations-papers are discouraged (PowerPoint prohibited in workshops)
Discussions are more important than presentations

Chapter 4

Methods of Data Collection

A case study method was used for the research, incorporating multiple sources of evidence that were available for use. This chapter will describe the methods used in the study, why they were chosen, and how they were used. It builds upon the description of two major settings in the case from the previous chapter. The chapter will cover the hypothesis and questions, the types of evidence collected, and how the data were collected. It also addresses the type of Internal Review Board (IRB) that was obtained for the study and the tools that have been derived from the IRB investigation. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the researcher's bias.

Methods for the Study

This case study research has boundaries of space, place, time, theme, and longevity. Yin states that an exploratory and descriptive case study can help with contextual conditions, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2003). The case limits those who can be involved (subjects). The case study model gives parameters and helps to delineate the study group by adding controls to the study case. Most importantly, the setting and boundaries can help the researcher to explore more fully the setting's dynamics of culture and place. A phenomenological model was considered, but because a phenomenological approach assumes no assumptions or pre-assumed theories (Reason & Bradbury, 2008), I chose a case study.

Multiple sources of evidence were utilized including interview-conversations, participant-observation, and documentation inclusive of historical materials, emails, reports, proposals, progress reports, photographs, and field notes which contributed to a greater analytical density and in-depth conceptual understanding of the data. A phenomenological method would have limited my data sources in that it uses a single data source analysis (Fielding 2009, Cresswell 1998, Marshall & Rossman 1989).

Research Design

As Yin (2003) notes, due to this necessity of understanding the locations of the two communities, Grand Bayou Village and the Natural Hazards Workshop, having substantial and

detailed descriptions of the context of work within the case is important. Those details were explored in the previous chapter.

Rationale

PAR is a dynamic learning process in which the people involved are not static players. Through what Freire would call the conscientization and problemization, people and their perspectives are altered or changed. For me to understand the change or altered perspectives of people during the process, various sources of evidence used. The various kinds of observation that I used that logically fit into critical analysis are historical documentation, that can give time frames for analysis, conversation-interviews that expose the narrative and experiences, and participant-observation.

The Boundaries: People. Geography. Content.

The boundaries of this research are limited to the outside collaborators who have related to the members of the Grand Bayou community during and as a result of a participatory action project. The context will focus primarily on the physical sites of the Grand Bayou and the Natural Hazards Workshop. Though there are interactions at other locales, they will be used for comparison in the data analysis. The boundaries of duration are limited to the time span of December 9, 2002 to the present, spring 2011.

The Hypothesis and Questions

The primary hypothesis of this research is that the outside collaborators and participants in the PAR process did change as a result of interaction with the Grand Bayou project and community. Questions to explore include the following:

1. Did they change? If so, what changed in them?
2. To what extent did they change and how was this change manifested?
3. What were the conditions (including the differential settings) that helped to facilitate the interaction/change? (This question, not part of the initial theorizing, emerged from the data.)

The task is to analyze the effect of the types of places of interaction that resulted from PAR on those who were participants in the Grand Bayou project, or were bystanders or observers (outside collaborators). The research analyzes the process that transpired, not only in dialogue or discourse but as a function of context. The contexts will include the location of the physical

community of the Grand Bayou and the external activities away from the Grand Bayou, primarily the Natural Hazards Workshop.

In-Depth Conversation/Interviews

Most of the interviews took place at the NHW between 2008 and 2011. This was a convenient location for the interviews because many of the people whom I wanted to interview attended the workshop. I also chose other workshops where I knew some of the subjects were in attendance in order to both save on my time and make it convenient for the person who was taking his or time for the conversation. Unfortunately there was not enough time at the Natural Hazards Workshops for all the conversations to take place, so some of the interviews were either left for the following year's workshop or conducted by phone. I tried to avoid phone interviews as much as possible.

Interviews

The people interviewed have been involved with the Grand Bayou in various ways stemming from the PAR that began in 2003. Some of the respondents have known the Grand Bayou for as much as eight years and have been with the residents both in their community and elsewhere at meetings, conferences, and universities. Some of the respondents have only met the Grand Bayou through meetings away from the bayou community. Likewise there are some respondents that only know the residents by being in their community. The groupings chosen for this research are based on the interaction and the role the interviewee had with the Grand Bayou. There is overlap among the groupings since some of the people encountered or worked with the Grand Bayou in multiple ways.

To gather data from the subject community I conducted 67 taped interviews representing 65 different respondents. Academics were the largest percentage of interviewees followed by students and agencies. Table 2, Category and Gender of the Respondents, indicates the respondents' physical relationship of place with the Grand Bayou, noting if the respondent only met the Grand Bayou residents away from the Bayou, at the Bayou, or in multiple locations. There are some who have experienced either one setting or the other while some respondents experienced more than one setting. Of the people contacted for interviews, all granted interviews except for one who did not return my calls or emails. Only one respondent did not remember the Grand Bayou participants even with the assistance of several photographs of him with one of the

residents. Sixty-six of the interview sets representing 64 respondents were usable data sources, only one was not, lowering the original number of 65 to 64 respondents.

Ethnicity of respondents was not asked. The percentage of respondents known to the researcher as being non-Western European is 23 percent. Precise nominal measurements were not obtained on age or place context, which are known only through my observation and knowledge of the respondent. The comment by an agency person notes the difference in the people from the Bayou in relationship to the disaster research “community”. His reference in context of the entire interview pertains to a “cosmopolitan” or “local” worldview. That difference will be covered in Chapter 6, Findings. As an agency person points out, “Many times disaster victims are more like us, and I think we assume everybody is like us. The people from the Grand Bayou are not like us. We need the diversity of thought and experience” (Ag13 09).

Table 5 Category and Gender of Respondents

Setting	Men	Women	Total	Grand Bayou	Natural Hazards	Both	University
Academics	11	15	26	13	20	7	0
Students	5	18	23	15	3	1	12
Agency	9	7	16	6	14	6	1
Total	25	40	65	34	37	14	13

Casual Conversations

Not all reflections were done in the context of interview-conversations. There were groups of students from universities who came to Grand Bayou and participated in various types of activities, including service learning, educational exploration, and fact finding. These students were asked to reflect on their experiences in and with the Grand Bayou community. The students’ reflections were usually gathered by their professors and then forwarded to me. In some cases, the students sent their reflections directly to me and not through their professors. One professor invited several of the Grand Bayou residents to talk to her graduate classes in public administration. Part of the students’ assignment was to reflect on the Bayou’s presentation and if it contributed to their knowledge either of the Gulf region or of policy formation and application. The students’ reflections did not count as part of their grade. I participated in several universities’ activities with the Bayou residents. Some of the activities were at the Grand Bayou while others were at the university campus. More than 15 different universities have either hosted the Grand Bayou residents or traveled to the Grand Bayou

community. The engagement of the Grand Bayou at universities included teaching classes and lectures for the university community. The reasons for the visits to the community by universities varied, from classroom instruction to service learning. Most of my observations of these events are contained in progress reports produced in conjunction with the Bayou participants and myself.

Historical Data and Documents

Over the nine years of being involved with the Grand Bayou, I have been the primary facilitator of grant development and management in conjunction with the Grand Bayou residents. Each of the proposals contains project intent, funding needs, and capacity of the community to carry out the project. Some proposals were for the development of capacity through the attendance at workshops, for travel for meetings, and for public engagement. The reports necessary for the grants offer valuable data from the evaluation process and in the progress and final reports submitted to the funder. Even proposals that were not funded provide information regarding what the community understood as their needs as interpreted by the request for proposal (RFP) and funding source. Over twenty different sources of funding through private, government, and religious sources were secured through this time period. Some sources continued to grant funding over multiple cycles and/or years, depending on needs. Many of the core participatory team members were in some way involved with the various funded projects.

Reports, proposals and progress reports were utilized in data evidence. The reports are data sets that contain newspaper articles, photos, field notes and observations. The reports varied according to the protocols of the funding agency. The reports include such agencies as the National Science Foundation, the Jessie Noyes Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and others. Each of the reports honored the PAR process of community contributions both in content analysis and in approval of the reports. The reports were constructed in an iterative manner, in that outside collaborators and the Bayou residents contributed, read, critiqued, and confirmed the reports findings. The same process was utilized for the building and constructing of proposals for funding agencies and for funding research projects such as the one with University of New Orleans, Pontchartrain Institute of Environmental Science (UNO-PIES), utilizing Traditional Ecological Knowledge (Bethel et al., 2011). The rigors of PAR research include the development of proposals and projects; therefore they need to be part of the data evidence. The

deliberations and knowledge sharing for developing a proposal are as dynamic as the execution of the actual proposal scope of work.

Participant Observation Utilizing Photography

Photography was used in two ways during this project, first and most commonly as a method for documenting events. The second use of the photos was to help to elicit recall of the speech-event or interaction by the person being interviewed. Pictures of the person being interviewed interacting with a Grand Bayou participant were shared with the person being interviewed before the interview took place.

Photographs are tool for visual elicitation (Goffman, 1982, Mead, 1970, Taylor, 2002). The researchers or the “outside” collaborators usually use this method of visual elicitation with a local community or individuals. Anthropologists usually use this method with community people for several ends:

- To ascertain the community’s knowledge of a research topic,
- To have a common reference for a conversation,
- To help identify critical issues, places, or people from the photos,
- To help to give an entrance to an open-ended conversation about a topic at hand, and
- To give a common point of reference for an issue (Wang, 1999).

I reversed the traditional use of this method, that is, I used the photographs and visuals with the outside collaborator to gain insight into their understanding of the interactive, praxis learning that may have transpired with the community.

It was a simple process. I shared photographs (representational knowledge) of the person being interviewed (somehow connected to either a community member of the Grand Bayou or to the site of the Grand Bayou) to help the outside collaborations to recall the location or situation (relational knowledge) that in turn may induce a reflective process. The reflective photo process gave data of what transpired in the person’s encounter. The interaction with the representational object, the photo, allowed the person being interviewed to either stay with “representational” knowledge, as in “Yes, that is a nice photo of me” (Ag 11 09) or as tool to describe the “relational” knowledge with the person in the photo, “We had a wonderful time at the barbeque” (S 1 10). The researcher seeks to understand if this type of interaction helps the person enter into a reflexive analytical mode, as in “She discussed the wetlands with such passion and knowledge that lead me to think I have overlooked local resources (knowledge) in

my previous work” (S 8 10). When the photographs were not helpful in the process or if they were not deemed necessary, only open-ended conversational questions were used.

Open-Ended Interviews

Interviews were kept as conversational as possible to keep the established relationship that I had with most of the people as authentic as possible. The content was consistent, but the flow of the conversation took its own form. Open-ended interviews were used to obtain data from the informants. After the first dozen interviews, I found that I needed to add an additional question to the conversation regarding the significance or the importance of having the Grand Bayou participants present at the NH meeting. It had not occurred to me when formulating the questions to ask about location and places of learning or where the knowledge exchanges occurred. Table 6 shows the original set of questions that guided the conversations:

Table 6.

Interview Guide
1. How did you get to know the Grand Bayou community? How do you know about the Grand Bayou?
2. How has their story impacted you? What can you tell me about the work of the Grand Bayou? Have you met community members? In what setting?
3. How has your knowledge/relationship with the Grand Bayou altered or changed the way you do your work? Has your research, funding (whatever their professional extension would be community work etc.) been affected? Has this changed over time?
4. Have you made changes in the way that you do your profession? How do you understand local or community knowledge? How can it be valued? What has the Grand Bayou experience meant to you?
5. Is there anything else would you like to share regarding your experience?

In the initial ten conversations, questions one, two, and five were most valuable. These conversational leads gave me valuable data without my necessarily having to follow all the original questions. Phillips reports that, when conducting interviews with the Mennonites who had worked in the Grand Bayou village, she had a similar experience with her questions. She only needed to introduce the conversation for the respondents to share all that was needed (2011). An additional question was asked based on the location of the interaction with the Grand Bayou and that was in regard to the importance of the setting for their interaction, with the questions being adapted to the type of data that emerged from the initial conversations.

Questions for Conversations

Table 7.

1. How did you get to know of the Grand Bayou community?
a. How do you know the Grand Bayou? In what setting?
b. If NHW was mentioned, I asked of its importance to the person's story.
2. How has the Grand Bayou story impacted you if at all?
3. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the Grand Bayou and your experience?

Academics, Agencies and Students

The breadth and depth of people's participations with the Grand Bayou varied tremendously. Initially, beyond those whom I did include in the interviews, I considered people who were participants from foundations, religious organizations, grassroots agencies, and media. I limited the interviews to the three groups simply due to the number of respondents.

Most of the foundation, media, and non-profit people with whom I interacted over the past eight years are recorded in my data sources through field notes, observation, and ethnographic work. The interaction includes the involvement of foundation representatives in field trips, including photo opportunities to the Grand Bayou community and is not limited to the foundations who actually gave financial assistance to the Grand Bayou such as Heifer Project International and the Gulf Coast Fund. The reasons for either the various groups or people's involvement were so extremely varied that it would be difficult to separate out purposes and motivations for the sake of this study. Non-participatory involvement included media and non-profit aid organizations that came to the bayou to use it as a backdrop for their fundraising campaigns following the various sets of disasters. These data sets are rich in understanding the power dynamics between funders and grantees or those who are represented in the media but are not core to this research project.

IRB- Internal Review Board Protocol for the Research

How a PAR project "fits" into the guidelines of an Internal Review Board process is subject to question and discussion in many academic settings. Because PAR is not a commonly used research method, many review boards still struggle with the ethical issues posed by the possible risks and liability of the research. One of the first PAR projects I conducted with the

team at UNO-CHART included an investigation of participatory or collaborative IRBs from various universities familiar with this type of work. Our team also explored community IRBs that have emerged over the years, IRBS that have been developed by the community for protection from and clarity with the research community. These community IRBs help to delineate intellectual property rights of the community and the parameters of respect by which the outsider will abide. The CHART team published on this topic (West, Peterson, Alcina, Laska, 2006) and incorporates the approach into the work it does with communities.

This research following the common understanding of PAR was considered to be low risk by the IRB and thus was given an exemption. Exempt status means that each person interviewed did not have to sign permission papers, nor were such papers kept. I did, however, for the sake of ethical practices ask each person for their permission to tape their interview-conversation, how they would like to be referenced and if they would allow the use of his or her name in any future publication or reports.

For a sample of a Declaration of Principles developed while working with one of the coastal communities see Appendix 1. It reflects the type of document that we now develop with each community with their full participation.

Transcription

Most of the taped recorded interviews were transcribed by a woman from a local bayou community (not Grand Bayou). The woman is a member of the United Houma Nation and works with the local school district. She was able to transcribe the first 30 interviews though the process was slow due to the terms the informants used as well as their patterns of speech. Because she suffered personal damage sustained by several of the hurricanes, she was unable to complete her work with the transcriptions.

When the transcriber would drop off the tapes and the printed interviews, I was able to have a conversation with her regarding the content of the interview and her observations. Since she was not part of either community in the case study but was familiar with the issues that are common to the region, her observations were helpful.

I transcribed the remaining interviews. All interview transcriptions were re-read while listening to the tapes for accuracy in the interviewers content. Several of the people wanted to have copies of their interview. They were provided their transcription immediately upon completion of the conversation. All people gave verbal consent to the taping of the interview.

Data Analysis

After the tapes were transcribed and I had re-read the transcriptions while listening to the tapes to make corrections to the transcripts, I listened to each taped interview again a minimum of three times, each time for different purposes. I listened for content, for voice tones and speech patterns, and for patterns in words or particular a phenomenological approach of discerning the meaning of the message (Herda, 1999, Creswell 1998).

Coding is subjective; therefore the transcripts have been cross-coded for consistency. The bias of the researcher was cross-checked throughout the process through self and external monitoring. A colleague who knew of the project but was not involved either in the project or with the Grand Bayou coded the transcripts (Creswell, 1998, Denzin, 2005). The neutral coder was able to either verify or lift up themes that were missed or interpreted differently by myself. I re-read the texts and/or listened to the taped interview for the three instances where the content was interpreted differently. In each of the three cases, the usage of the word was out of context with the overall conversation. All variances were reconciled.

I looked for patterns of language or described behavior that would indicate “conscientization” or “problematization” as understood by Freire. Language patterns and content were analyzed using Park’s knowledge types (Park, 1993). Indication of types of knowledge could be manifested in changed behavior in their work setting or with the way in which they conduct funding, research or carry out their personal or professional duties. I looked and listened for places of transformation for themselves, in their relationships, in their research, in their teaching styles, or in the way they do or receive or use funding.

Open Coding, Developing Categories and Themes

Interviews were labeled so as to obscure the identity of the person. Because the “outsiders” (practitioner, agency and professional association people) might be easily identified, they were put into one group labeled “Agency.” Interviews were coded by themes that could be assumed to possibly emerge from the interviews if the hypothesis were correct. The interviews were also reviewed for word analysis and for an analysis of the narrative (Riessman, 1993). The process included a traditional method of coding as well as an adductive iterative analysis. The labeled interviews were shared with several of the key Grand Bayou residents to ascertain if there were other themes that emerged that were not found by either myself or my colleague who was cross-checking the coding themes.

Most of the themes are derived from the validity claims of Park and Habermas' ideas of public discourse and the three types of knowledge use and creation (Morrow and Torres 2002, Park 1993). The themes also incorporate Freire's ideas of conscientization and problematization. The coders and cross-coders also watched for emergent ideas or words that did not necessarily derive from the original list. Park's three typologies of knowledge as used in this dissertation are set out in Appendix 2, which elaborates on my earlier discussion of the typologies.

Internal and External Validity

The Grand Bayou was instrumental in the triangulation of the results (Smith, 1999). It was imperative that the community's perception change in the collaborators (agencies, academics and students) match the data collected because of the imbalance of power between the communities. The analysis of the data will include the Grand Bayou community a part of the scientific discourse, including but not limited to presentations, to teaching, to co-science investigation on grants, to place of teaching/learning, and to funding sources. I have included the Grand Bayou community in the dialogue regarding all aspects of the research and data collection. It is important that there was never a time that the data was not transparent or concealed from the community (Cooke, 2001, Smith, 1999, Freire 1974, Gaventa, 1993, Hull, 2003). The iterative and reflective process will be part of the evaluation of the research methods and the resulting recommendations in the findings. The process for the creation of knowledge between the collaborators can then be shared and discussed with other PAR projects for triangulation (Denzin, 2008) and appropriation.

University Settings

Field notes were kept for the past nine years of activities, projects, funding, and learning exchanges. I was involved with many of the activities that placed me as both a participant-observer and an ethnographer. Many of the reports for the funding agencies were co-written by the GB residents and myself. The reports to the various funding streams as well as our proposals to many that never materialized are also documents that were used for this dissertation.

Email exchanges and personal correspondence were also used for data sources. There is nothing in any of the data sources, emails, reports or documents that were not shared with the Grand Bayou. All information kept, including field notes, are open source data for the residents, which is part of my commitment to PAR and my relationship with the GB village.

Protocols of Data Preservation

The tapes and interviews are secured with electronic backups. The historical documentation is accessible both through the shared drive on CHART computer system as well as my own. The historical documents are also available through public access with the various funding agencies in the form of final reports and updates. Other public records include records obtainable on-line from the Natural Hazards Workshop as well as several other professional meetings referenced in the report documents.

Researcher Bias

During a 30-year span of responding to disaster and of engaging in grassroots community development work, I have been constantly amazed at how a local or indigenous community recognizes its own ability to address their own problems. My own work in disasters and community development has mostly been community based, participatory, and collaborative. The participatory projects have included advocacy, policy work, and regional coalition building. I am biased towards grassroots community work, especially with communities that have been intentionally marginalized or colonized by the dominant society. My knowledge of the disaster research community is personal and extensive through work in the field, through literature and through disaster conferences and workshops.

I have attended the Natural Hazards Research Workshop (NHW) for 20 years. The NHW provides a place for discourse between some of the best disaster researchers and practitioners in the world. My first invitation to the workshop was following the 1985 floods in Western Maryland and West Virginia when I was invited to speak about the grassroots model of organization that was developed to address long-term recovery issues. Each year that I have returned I have been perceived as a grassroots advocate and given the title of “Mother Jones of Disaster”. I am aware of this perception and have taken that into account with my interviewing/conversation techniques and analysis (Smith, 1999). I believe that one person did not return my request for an interview due to my public persona; yet another person was eager to talk to someone whom they thought might better understand his or her perspectives of local communities.

I conducted a gender analysis of materials for the United Nations Decade of Disaster Reduction and helped in the development and review of materials for FEMA’s Project Impact and Community and Family Preparedness Program. My current work includes a community resiliency collaborative between CHART, NOAA and the communities of the Jean Lafitte-

Barataria region. I am a researcher with CHART as well as a pastor of a Presbyterian Church in the bayous of Louisiana.

I live and work on the coast of Louisiana, a most vulnerable and at-risk region. I have a vested interest in the stabilization and the rebuilding of the coastal wetlands and communities as well as in the resiliency of the heritage and culture of the traditional coastal communities. My research bias includes two things: 1) being an older Euro-American woman with disabilities, and 2) my closeness to grassroots community activism (which also includes a bias towards place-ness and a connection to a diverse people and an equally wondrous bio-diverse environment).

Chapter 5

Data from Interviews and Observations

They [the Grand Bayou residents] inspired me (S 17 11).

This chapter presents data mostly from the interview/conversations with three primary groups of people: students, academics and agency personnel. The people represented in the interviews were placed in the group that they primarily represented at the time of the interview/conversation. In some cases the respondents might claim identity in more than one category but only one group identity was used per person.

I have used people's quotes from their interviews throughout this section with minimal comments from me. I have used this method of reporting the findings because I believe it is important that their voices are heard on their own. The quotes are grouped into several themes that will assist the reader in understanding the breath of the findings from the data obtained in the interviews. The next chapter, Chapter 6, will be used for analyzing the data and for developing the insights from what the data reveals.

The questions that were the core of the interviews and conversations with the participants were open ended and elicited the context in which the informant knew the Grand Bayou people or encountered them. (See Chapter 4 for the details about the interview schedule.) Thus the conversations varied depending on the history, context, and relationship the person had with either the setting, the people or both. The people are identified only by category and number; this helps retain anonymity for each individual. Academics are identified Ac; practitioners, professional and agency personnel by Ag; and students by S. There are several quotes from residents of the Grand Bayou which are identified as Gb. The numbers following the category identify the number assigned to the person and the year in which the conversation took place.

Most conversations never used more than the first two questions: "How did you get to know the Grand Bayou?" and "How has their story influenced you?" It was from these two primary questions that each person developed and wove their own narrative. The depth of conversation, as to be expected, varied depending on the relationship I have with the person and the amount of time the person had to devote to the conversation. Some people, when getting into

their story, decided to miss other scheduled events to continue the interview with me. The conversations that were most candid were with people whom I either hardly knew or have had no ongoing relationship with, or with people who are trusted colleagues. Others people whom I know, with whom I work or see on occasion, e.g., in the middle range of social connectivity, were more apt to stick to the point of the questions with less additional input. I attribute the openness of the first group to the trust relationship and of the second group to belief in the anonymity of their answers because they would not necessarily come into contact with me again.

Initial coding themes established at the beginning of the analysis were expanded to reflect the emergent dimensions that the conversation and interaction with the data revealed (Ricoeur, 1976). The significance of the types of themes that emerged from the data will be discussed in Chapter 6. Responses from the interviews presented below are grouped into six themes that emerged:

- a. Role of residents (GB) in social (learning) dynamics of workshop,
- b. Policy implications,
- c. Respect for resident capacity,
- d. Awareness of different lifeworlds,
- e. Limited knowledge of the Other,
- f. Commonality of care ethics, and
- g. Impact of interaction in general.

Role of Residents in Social (learning) Dynamics of Workshop

As the analysis very strongly revealed, often the place of the encounter with the Grand Bayou residents was important in the person's change in perception. People frequently referred to their experiences with the Grand Bayou residents and to visiting their community, and a common thread woven through the interviews was the importance of place for dialogue and learning. As one academic insisted, it is imperative to "carve out a space for dialogue" (Ac210). One such "carved out space" is the Natural Hazards Workshop.

The Natural Hazards meeting was a place of dialogue where the most interaction between respondents and Grand Bayou representatives (nine different community members attending seven annual workshops) took place. Thirty-seven of the respondents had interacted in some way with the Grand Bayou participants through both formal and informal activities at the Workshop. The more formal interactions transpired during the panel discussions and poster

sessions. The less formal interaction included luncheons, and informal conversation times built into the venue such as the community barbeque and refreshment breaks. Additional conversations revolved around activities with other workshop participants that included sight seeing in the mountains or visiting in homes of those who lived in the vicinity. The variety of activities and places for exchange at the NHW was observed to see if there were different outcomes as a result of the venues.

When I heard their stories in the session and then got to talk with them more in depth, like at the barbeque and stuff, it really was amazing. It really touched me because I heard a personal story. I heard how it affected a specific community and not just one person but a community. There are silos of communities, and when we engaged with the academic community, the practitioners as well as the industry with the mix of all the others who come to these things, it makes it all real. When I hear their stories, it just grounds me. I hear the things that people say that people do based on their research, this is how “people act”. But when you hear their story, it is grounded in “this is what *we* do” as opposed to “this is what *they* do”. So it really puts it into reality having them as part of the conversations as opposed to just like being data. (S 10)

“They are the meeting. We need that connection, that grounding” (Ac7 09).

“One can read books like Mike Tidwell’s *Bayou Farewell*, but it doesn’t put quite the personal touch on it that actually meeting and interacting with such a community does” (Ag9 08).

An agency person was delighted that the Grand Bayou people were integrated into the workshop program and agenda so that there was intentional interaction. “They keep bringing folks from Grand Bayou to the meetings, getting them on the program actually, so that they’re not just roaming the halls and nobody meets them. But we all get to hear their story” (Ag16 08).

There is universal recognition that the Natural Hazards Workshop was meant to be a place that brings a mix of people together to work on issues. Many people stated that having the Grand Bayou residents present brought the “researched” community into a face-to-face relationship with others.

This is supposed to be a workshop that brings together a mix of people, an eclectic group that is supposed to listen to each other and our ideas are taken seriously. Well I find that more of a reach than a reality; but to see them [GB] not come just once but consistently, to become part of the community here, I don’t know if there is funding

for that or if you are getting funding for that, but there *should* be funding provided for this because this is so important. It is always important to have survivors come into the community to talk about the recovery from the first-person ground-up perspective but more importantly for this conversation I think is their sustained presence. (Ac 5 09)

“So there is a place that you have created for them and I think that you made this happen and that is a way of making this happen, a way to change our profession” (Ac2 08). The Grand Bayou residents make real the conversations instead of thinking of disaster communities in abstractions.

Many of us do deal with people on the ground but it is never really brought into the face-to-face in Boulder. They are a walking scenario, I mean we give all kinds of case studies to each other in terms of delivering papers but we don't actually put or see the faces of it all that often. I think it has been very effective. I wish we had some more voices from that kind of level, not just the GB, but from other communities (Ac3 11).

The NHW is frequently considered a “crucible” of multi-disciplinary conversation. Many people felt that folks from a disaster community helped contribute to that crucible or mix. One academic stated that the “folks need to be here or else we do not ‘hear’ ” (Ac1 08). Another academic expresses the need for multi-disciplinary planning that is inclusive of community involvement as part of the team as experts. By having community citizen experts at a meeting that is creating dialogue, the disaster community reflects what it professes to be, a mix of good science and policy.

It is emulating what we say we want to do and that is to engage the community in our planning activities or in our responding. In that regard this is very important that people are engaged in this. This says that they are involved in decision making, that they can tell their own stories much better than any of us can tell it for them, and it also is a visual image. One of the most powerful things about this conference, the founder Gilbert White was known for that fact that he brought people together from different disciplines to talk about disasters or hazards. He is lifted up or very well respected for that, and now we are talking about it at another level, or perhaps a different community doing the same thing. And I think that you all should be applauded for demonstrating that you are doing the Gilbert White thing at the actual community–people level. (Ac5 09)

Participants frequently mentioned the continual need for the diversity of disciplines, dialogue and collaboration within the research community's work. However, multi-disciplinary disaster work can bring its own set of problems, given the difficulty in "talking between silo" with "our own jargon" (Ag 18 09). Some people wondered how the community participants could participate or understand if the professionals and academics had difficulty transcending their own verbal boundaries. "It is easy to ignore a problem, but the people showed us the problem directly" (S17 2011). The awareness of the silos or jargon may have been heightened or been more easily talked about by having community members present. Some even mentioned that having lay participants at the workshop helped with cross-disciplinary communication when professionals used common language. It helped not only the lay people to understand the topic but also the participants from other disciplines who did not want to admit that they did not know or understand the language of other professionals.

I'm sure it's a world that is very different for folks from Grand Bayou to be exposed to. But the other thing is, it probably improved the quality of communication for a number of people at the disaster conference, because people involved in research can sometimes get very dry and abstract in terms of the kinds of discussions and communication they have, and I think it's an interesting challenge sometimes for people to learn how to say those things. To talk about what they are actually doing and what it means to somebody in the community like that, in plain English. It might improve the quality of communication for a lot of folks here. It has improved the understanding of what benefits there are from making effective connections. Over time, there has grown an understanding that the process of planning and communication are more complex, it is not a straight arrow from point A to point B. (Ag9 08)

The complexity of issues as articulated by the Grand Bayou participants was helpful to others. Some of the observers at the Natural Hazards were "amazed" by the "systems analysis" ability of the Grand Bayou which brought into question for the outsiders the inaccurate assumptions they held that local communities were not able to engage in such complex theory discussions and application. One agency person gives some insight as to why the outsider's perception may be limited regarding local citizens. "Practitioners often don't get to have a chance to talk with individuals from communities outside of a very challenging disaster

environment. And this provides an opportunity for that kind of discourse” (Ag8 09). If the major time of engagement between the outside practitioner or academic is during the disaster, then that person is only engaging the community people at a time of a narrow focused attention; therefore, it may not be the most opportune time to assess the people’s ability, capacity, or their overall understanding of the issue before them when they are focused on obtaining water or sandbags.

Several agency people and academics indicated that the workshop provides a place of equality and leveling for conversations. An agency person spoke about the excitement that she had with the shared poster session and their collaboration and interaction with those who stopped by their display. “It was interesting, we did the poster and talked a little bit about the brochures and that whole activity and project” (Ag 14 11). She then went on to say that the interactions in the workshop session also involved true collaboration and equal participation.

What I loved so much about it was actually going to the session where the community members attended. They asked questions and brought a perspective that usually is missing. The conference is pretty focused on professional kinds of people in different disciplines but similar in their research in what’s going on out there and how it is effected. The Grand Bayou (residents) participated as researchers, because they really, *they really are* part of that research activity and provide that different perspective. The value that the other researchers placed on the input they (GB) provided and the interest in their stories and their outcomes in what they have been involved in, they (NHW) are really interested in them. It was fun, it wasn’t just the poster session, it was the activity of them participating. (Ag14 11)

For some the presence of the community participants may have opened their own perspectives in seeing or understanding particular issues in a new way. What occurred was the “opening” up of conversation with and between “the others” is what Habermas would hope for in his public sphere Dussel’s hearing the Other, and in Freire’s conscientization. As one academic remarked, the Grand Bayou opened a window for the opportunity for freshness in dialogue, “They’re not engaging in any kind of contempt. And they’re bringing with them, a walking open window. A chance for people to relate to them in a normal human way instead of as specimens or examples for a visiting case study” (Ac12 09). The open window for dialogue is just that, an opportunity for conversation to go both directions with people learning from each other. One practitioner noted that it is not very common to be able to have an extensive dialogue

outside of the disaster setting, which may not be the most opportune time for learning discourse. Stepping outside of the disaster creates both an opportunity for sharing more fully the experience and a public sphere for reflective knowledge building, problematization, and solution-seeking.

An example of problematization and solution-seeking came about when an agency person was assuming that the actions of his agency resulted in its intended outcome of providing equipment at a fire station. The conversation that ensued resulted in suggestions for a change of financial allocations within political jurisdictions. The practitioner noted that having community people at the Hazards meeting gives agencies and academics a chance to see if what they have prescribed or presumed to have transpired in the field is in fact happening.

A guy asked me about all the money coming down from FEMA and I said “What money?” This guy was from FEMA and he was shocked that the money hadn’t made it to the local communities. It is now just trickling down (three years later). The people like me or the bayou bring knowledge and a face to that local knowledge that the doctor types at Boulder just can’t dismiss. It gives us a chance to have our voices heard and our knowledge shared in a non-threatening or adversarial way (Ag1 11).

The dialogue that takes place between the various agency levels and jurisdictions can help resolve issues. It can demonstrate or affirm the work between various entities, by actually showing the achieved agency of the project, the people or the research. Agencies felt that working in a PAR relationship with the GB improved the agency’s work and gave their agency more credibility. Some agency participants expressed appreciation for the presence of the Grand Bayou in the agency work as a “manifestation of a job well done” referring to the Bayou participants in an agency presentation. Staff from different agencies stated that having the “bayou folks front and center with total confidence, ability and expertise” (Ag 20 09) was a validation of, and an affirmation to, the support the agencies had given over the years. It gave those particular agencies unsolicited and affirming evaluations.

I met a number of folks from down on the bayou, and of course they were very complimentary of the work that was going on down there, and that is always great to hear as a funder from afar. It is always great to hear that the folks in the community are actually finding the participation of people like you to be central in their thought process and their re-establishment processes of recovery. (Ag2 11)

And from another agency, “I share very much her desire to put some reality into the end results, the end user, the field testers of all the stuff we do in or from an academic perspective.

That really does it, it is a ‘deliverable occurrence’ to see them participating in that environment (NHW) and being totally comfortable doing it. That was great!” (Ag 14 11). The funders had an opportunity for ‘real’ discourse over issues which was enabled by the ‘face-to-face’ interaction. For the particular agency funders, the ability to have a conversation apart from the context of a “funder-‘grantee” relationship allowed for more ease and sincerity for the sharing of ideas and issues.

The value of “real” people and of having the opportunity for the face-to-face conversations was a recurring comment regarding the presence of the Grand Bayou folks introduced when one academic pointed out: “We need real people at the NHW— otherwise they will never see the face of the real people who are affected by their decisions, their books, or their policies” (Ag1 11). “It is fascinating to actually hear from the voices of the people who are living this sort of thing everyday. I mean *they* are the ones who can actually enlighten us on how recovery is going and how things have or haven’t changed. It is critical, absolutely important for their participation not only to be present (at the NHW) but to be prominent” (Ac15 10).

Policy Implications

I try to emphasize to my students what we do affects other people and so we don’t necessarily have the right to do as we please all the time even if we technically own some land or property—that our decisions can affect other people too, so I talk about the Grand Bayou a lot in that kind of context. (Ac19 10)

Students, academics and agency folks frequently mentioned how listening to the Grand Bayou participants caused them to reconsider disaster policies or at least understand better inconsistencies in the application of policies. For example, the disaster community talks about all disasters being local, yet policies pertaining to various aspects of mitigation and redevelopment are national and universalized. The tension between federal policies and local application raised questions for some about the “one size fits all” of most of our disaster policies.

I still don’t have a clear idea of how we as a nation should deal with this. Because on one hand we can’t set national policy based on the idiosyncrasies of a certain group of people in a certain geographical area. On the other hand, what’s this all about? You know, it’s about helping people. What good does it do to come up with some

grand scheme that leaves the people out? I'm not clear right now in my mind how this should all get addressed (Ag 13 09)

It is in the questioning of preconceptions that problemization, solution-seeking and reaching consensus can take place in the public sphere. Thought was even given to the type of small rural community Grand Bayou represented and if it might be more typical and more representative than what policy makers want to admit because, "traditional communities [similar to Grand Bayou] or ones that are different are not well understood by traditional policy makers" (Ag 8 09). From their dialogue with the Grand Bayou participants, students especially became cognizant of the connection between unjust policy and the increase of risk. One student questioned whether the lack of emergency response was due to racial or geographic barriers, noting that "The exclusion of help for that indigenous tribe, I am not sure if it is because they are an indigenous tribe or because they are so isolated from normal civilization" (S1010). When unjust policies are implemented, the community experiences inequities in resources of all types. This disparaging difference in aid or resources for recovery and development harms the efficacy and effectiveness of the local community (Oliver-Smith, 2011, Goulet, 1995). That loss of efficacy, effectiveness and the diminished voice of the community then lessens the quality of the decision process for the larger community.

Their plight reminded me of the trailer park communities who are pushed out by developers and the local governments in their interest for increased tax revenues. Access and influence are key to applying pressure to decision makers to ensure they do what you perceive as the 'right thing'. Local knowledge of community members is an invaluable resource that is often underutilized and or unknown to government decision makers. Citizen involvement may be hard to get activated yet one of the few ways to actually produce results. (S2 10)

The disconnect between the local needs of the community and the understanding of those needs by outside planners was often cited for what was seen as inappropriate actions (Schwab, 2005). Often, local residents would try to no avail to explain circumstances that made typical interventions inappropriate.

FEMA would give out all these trailers but to give trailers to that community did not make sense. It didn't fit. It wasn't part of their culture. They wouldn't have anything to do with it. They would rather have a boat. I realized how important it is

to understand the unique ways in which certain communities are based on their environment and work. (S1 10)

The story about Grand Bayou's practice of evacuation that is based in traditional ways is contrary to what authorities (academic and governmental) believe to be proper. This and other stories helped stir the students' imagination to become critical of planning assumptions as one student put it, "To hear about how they evacuate and how they evacuate with their boats and tie them all together and then find a place to weather the storm and how it is not recognized as an official way of evacuating made me upset" (S 508). Another student said, "It made me realize that government officials do not always understand the needs of the people. People have to speak up if they want to be heard" (S 6 09)"

Several students appreciated that the Grand Bayou community was learning about policy and planning issues; it had been their assumption that communities don't really care about the larger society and are just focused on themselves. One student observed, "I like the fact they took time to learn the ways of the government in order to fight for their land" (S910). While another student stated, "It confirmed for me that the idea of citizens' involvement to solve problems is in the community, because those affected are the ones best able to contribute meaningfully to finding solutions" (S 14 10).

The knowledge of the local community can often be helpful in the planning process. People who truly care about their community and have lived there, or remained there, despite problems which might exist, usually have more knowledge, and are usually right about issues concerning the community. Their information is first-hand knowledge and not second-hand information, so a lot of confidence can be placed in the information they offer about the community. (S 13 10).

"Federal agencies are looking at alternative approaches on how we develop our science and how we integrate the public, how we integrate the public-engagement process. They (GB) can provide a lot of input into that, on how to do the public-engagement process. They can add real value to that as well" (Ag8 09). The participation of the Grand Bayou has helped open the discussion regarding the inconsistencies of policy and local practice.

Very powerful comments were made about how the Grand Bayou has become the story for those who testify or make policy recommendations on the Hill. An academic and an agency person had this to say about the use of the personal story:

We're talking to policy makers and congressional staffers who work for members who

are on the Homeland Security and public health preparedness jurisdiction. So, when we can make a policy argument it doesn't grip them as much as a story. And when they can hear a story about real life people, it makes an otherwise theoretical argument real for them. So that's been important, I guess, because of the Grand Bayou story. (Ac11 08)

I have also been in discussion on the Hill of Congress in which, and I think people say rather uninformed and despicable things about south Louisiana. And you know, I have built upon insight that you have had in trying to do that educational task (of countering the prejudice), but it is challenging because a lot of people had a pre-conceived notion of how things are in south Louisiana that have superficially only been reinforced by the state's response to the oil spill and all that has come since. (Ag 2 11)

Some respondents have used the voice of the Grand Bayou in their work. Through their encounters with the community and through their knowledge of the community's story they have been able to speak with authority to powers in Washington who are making policy. "In my press conference presentation in Washington at the Press Club, it allowed me to talk about the economic and social relationships between the Gulf Coast communities and the bayou communities and New Orleans and the cultural connections and how those rural communities enriched the history and culture of the city of New Orleans. I did that partly because a lot of the news media attention was focused on New Orleans. I could cite material by Tidwell [*Bayou Farewell: The Rich Life and Tragic Death of Louisiana's Cajun Coast*. Pantheon Press, a book formed from a series of articles written for a special series expounding on the crisis of land loss and culture on the coast of Louisiana] from the Washington Post, because that's somebody in their own press corps that they can relate to and he wrote that. But the fact that I actually personally have been involved with Grand Bayou allowed me to speak, I think, more effectively and more powerfully on that issue" (Ag 9 08). For those who are influential in making policy in various government arenas, having real stories, experiences, and faces has been a powerful tool for dispelling misperceptions of the region. It seems that "real" people stories are powerful and are just as important as all the representational knowledge (data) that is so often shared. An old fashioned way of communicating has come back into its own with regard to government testimony.

Respect for Resident Capacity

[In disasters] locals are the experts (Ag16 08).

The interviews often reveal a deep appreciation for the expertise and local knowledge of the community members. The data did not always reveal if this countered pre-existing perceptions of local communities, but some data clearly showed that the encounters gave the respondents a new perception.

An agency embarking upon a new community training venture was able to learn from the Grand Bayou how to create and use tools that would be helpful in training programs for other regions of the country.

Just watching them as a community looking at their own areas on the maps and how they interacted with their stories a little bit better with those graphical products was wonderful. Knowing that one of the things they were looking for was how to tell their community story actually was incredibly helpful to us in the design of our training. It was also helpful in the development of our materials for the risk and vulnerability assessments. (Ag14 11)

Students were acquainted with local expertise to help them to better understand the way local participation can benefit planning.

I couldn't believe how much I learned from them. All the natural ways and their abilities to take care of themselves, like their evacuation on boats and tying them together. It made them safer than if they were on the road in bad vehicles, in bad traffic, in bad weather conditions without their social network with them. (Ag1 11)

People were recognizing the expertise of the community that is valuable not only to the specific community but beyond it as well.

Students involved in a work project at the Grand Bayou talked about the community's expertise and knowledge of their environment. They were especially moved by how the community understands their place as a microcosm in a very complex macro-system. As one student said, "Their analytical expertise regarding all the dimensions of issues that are part of what they have to address just made my head swim. Yet they talked about systems analysis as if they been teaching it all their lives" (S18 11). A planning student outlined what to him were dynamics that he had never considered.

The representatives are very knowledgeable and continue to avail themselves of the

effects of 1) The levees on the river that causes flooding in their communities; 2) The canals that have been dredged, and the possibility of salt water seepage; 3) The pipelines that carry petroleum to the refineries; 4) Decisions by policy makers, and its effects on their lifestyle and culture. (S1410)

People often expressed how impressed they were by the community members' expertise and their capacity to express it. "She just knocked me off my seat. I think I'd had known about the project and it had a presence among the research community before I actually got to go to that session. But she was such an impressive speaker and a person, what she was saying was so outstanding" (Ac2 08). The Grand Bayou representatives have been invited to speak in a variety of venues at seven different universities based on their capacity to convey their knowledge, their traditional ecological knowledge. In a follow-up interview several years later, one of the academics who hosted several bayou speakers was even more adamant about their expertise and reinforced their original impression.

They are very powerful representatives of what is going on and are able to negotiate that relationship between an endangered community, a community that has been put at risk and the larger natural hazards community which is not a very simple thing to do, I don't think. I have really come to admire them, get to know them and just to be concrete, the session we did several years back, where the women spoke, as usual without notes, without anything, just laid everyone out, they were just splendid. I think people would agree that they were the most powerful speakers on that session (Ac2 10).

A New Orleans resident who visited the Grand Bayou community for a house blessing remarked that one of the residents would make a great spokesperson for the community. He thought that the man was articulate and would be able to carry the message of the community to a larger audience. He was both surprised and pleased that the community members were speaking out on behalf of the coast. He had not been aware of the knowledge and capacity of the citizens in the region not that far removed from New Orleans saying, "I wasn't sure what to expect when we arrived. We were welcomed with open arms and hearts. I am taken by how well spoken the people are and how well they expressed their issues and their gratitude and were gentle but forceful in their message" (Ag 19 11).

Others, too, often noted that community problematization and solution-seeking skills were not always known, recognized, or honored by academics and that there was no adequate methodology to encourage or recognition of the community's agency.

I have to go right to the term, *expert*. The fact that you said, *their expertise*, is to emulate the model of inclusion and to deconstruct the power inequities in relationships. Despite their (academics) knowledge, the literature, the research, and the systems that drive the research and add the people who make the decisions whether to build a levee or to bring together a plan; we (PAR people) value the communities' expertise. If we can't humble ourselves to realize that there is an expertise that exists among all people and that we too can learn from them and vice versa, and if we can't do that, then we need to explore what it is that we profess to do. (Ac5 09)

Another academic expresses the same idea a bit differently and demonstrates Habermas' instrumental knowledge,

The importance of bringing local knowledge for solving problems that society faces is that the local community has what are very technical pieces but also very strong social value pieces for problem solving. It is gratifying to see a group (community) coming together with such a sense of self-efficacy [to address the problems]. And they are taking on the big stuff; big stuff, like economic development, environmental management, disaster management, social justice, cultural survival, just to list a few of them. That's what is striking, is that they embody a lot of problems that society faces. They're about problem solving and valuing things that can come up from the grassroots. And they really take on these very complex problems that otherwise are thought to belong only in the hands of agency authorities alone or technical expert alone. (Ac11 08)

Awareness of Different Life Worlds

Social scientists have used various descriptions to help understand differences in ways communities relate, internally to themselves and externally to the world. Some of those descriptions include cosmopolitan and local, modern and traditional, structured and unstructured, pre-modern, modern, post-modern. I find the work of Ferdinand Tönnies especially helpful. Tönnies has archetypes of communities which he calls *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, understanding that most communities are somewhere in between these two descriptors (Tönnies ,

1974). The descriptors can be helpful in understanding the differences between the Grand Bayou community and the communities that many of the people who attend the NHW are from.

People perceived or experienced differences in the way knowledge is formed or framed by the Grand Bayou community's TEK. TEK was initially unfamiliar to many of the outsiders, as was the close kinship network of the community. People noticed the close connection of the bayou community to self, to others, and to place. One person stated that "it is *the* village" from the expression that "it takes a village". What many saw as unique in the closeness of the community, was a core learning experience in several interviews and mentioned in many others. The difference was noted by some in the ways in which we communicate. As one academic put it, "We know our colleagues in cyberspace. I didn't understand how close they (GB) were or could be" (Ac2 08).

This woman observed the difference in how she oriented her world to herself while the Grand Bayou oriented their actions in regard to family and community and how that relates to disaster resilience.

I feel like the American culture that I grew up in was oriented to yourself and not your neighbors or the larger community. Coming from and living in a suburbia kind of culture the stories that I heard from them really spoke to how important it was to have community, especially when a disaster happens. (S1 2010)

Another student remarked about the difference in the connection to place and what that might mean for the advocacy and fierce loyalty to fix the problems.

You (in suburbia) don't have the same natural ties to place. And that was the thing that was so important to this community. I guess I never necessarily felt similar ties to a particular place, where they are really fighting for their home. In other communities they maybe more used to thinking of picking up and going someplace else. There is not necessarily the same dedication to having to fix those problems because people will pick up and go someplace else. (S508)

Several members of the bayou community have often said that if you keep going somewhere else to get away from the problems facing the community, you soon will have no place else to go (field notes 06).

A student caught the passion and connection a Grand Bayou presenter had towards the land, the water and the eco-system and expressed her longing for a similar type of closeness.

When she spoke at Village de L'Est, that love of the land and the connection they feel for it, and I have never been anywhere where I feel so connected to anything and I am quite envious of that. I wish I had just a little bit of that. I wish I had what it is they have, their love for their area. I wish I had that. I am actually envious. (S1210)

For some respondents who live and work in places where family implies nuclear, mom, dad and kids, the Grand Bayou made real the concept of extended family.

The 155 member (extended) family was amazing to me. I'm not sure that any disaster recovery program that we have now would really take that into consideration that these people think as a unit. Because so much of who Americans are reflects individuals in nuclear families, we don't understand. I don't live anywhere near my brothers and sisters. There were four of us, and only one person lives in the same state where we were born. And I think a lot of us are that way. If something happened to my home, I would be sad, but it wouldn't be a big deal for me to pick up and move to another state. And I wouldn't be thinking about the other 153 people that were not moving (Ag13 09)

Besides the closeness of the community, others noticed a different way of parenting and modeling for the younger generation.

Most touching for me in interacting with them has been the relationship between mother and daughter. I didn't know that type of care and devotion. And so it's really different what they are modeling; how you stand up for your community, for your faith and for your tradition of family and what you believe in, it is being passed down from one generation to the next. (Ag8 09)

Over the years I have heard comments about the types of conversations that the younger and older generations would have with each other. People noticed that the parenting role was more overtly inclusive of teacher and mentor as well as nurturer. Teaching and passing down TEK is critical in the survival of a culture. It was good that people caught that type of connection (Merleau-Ponty, 1958, Polanyi, 1996).

Respondents often made the connection between the community's social cohesion and its embodiment of the environment and place. It was noted by people who visited the Grand Bayou that their place commitment and the physical/ecological knowledge of the Grand Bayou contributed to their resilience. "It was really striking how a community that is so close knit and how important that is to any community's survival. And so here you have a community that is facing, we assume, overwhelming obstacles and they are really coming together and forming

those real close networks. We are able to see what they are able to do. It was powerful” (S5 08). Seeing how a community can come together to overcome obstacles also means going a bit further to also embrace mutual help. As one student pointed out, “The community’s independence and self-reliability was reinforced when one person stated that the community would pull together and find ways to help each other and survive” (S1711). This resilience is contained in local and traditional ecological knowledge that is shared in the community. As noted by the academic who said “Their knowledge of water, the land, all the complex systems, like a ship on a sea, they need to know it all and their family systems reflect this. They are tied to the place and the place is tied to them” (Ac25 10). An agency worker noted, too, that “I need to re-emphasize the importance of traditional communities, which I find to be in some ways far more savvy than ‘progressive’ ones. They are fully integrated communities into the general everyday life in this country” (Ag8 09).

The dynamics of a highly social cohesive community was recognized as core to the resilience of the community.

These memories, these experiences, these human bonds that constituted community were much more resilient, much more durable in this case than was the physical fabric of community. So I think that again that lesson in this, a small fragile bayou community was a really important message for which we can extrapolate both lessons for smaller communities within a much larger urban fabric as well as for larger communities taken as a whole, those physical bonds those memories, those threads of cultural and experiential continuity are far more important than, lets say far more enduring, lets not say important but enduring and resilient than the physical fabric. (Ac14 10)

Many of the visitors to the Grand Bayou found that the community was not socially vulnerable but witnessed ways in which it was resilient through mutual aid and assistance to its community and family networks. One student said, “I was amazed at how each individual person that is in the community shares everything and almost anything they can with the full community. We thought it was absolutely amazing” (S1010).

Residents of the Grand Bayou and adjacent communities frequently gave their time and resources to people who visited the area. Often delegations from foundations, media/press, non-profits, academics and agencies would drop-in for a “fact-finding” tour. Some of the visits

bordered on voyeurism and exploitation while other visitors were sincere and wanted to know what was happening at the ground level after the series of disasters. The time the residents gave was like a hands-on field experience; it helped outsiders understand the multiple and complex issues of the region. Local and community knowledge was usually shared with warmth and hospitality. The practice of hospitality in the bayou region was present at the Bayou during educational exchanges, The welcoming and embracing of strangers was frequently accompanied by being embraced with splendid hospitality on either their boats and/or in their homes. Some respondents saw it as quite refreshing and quite unusual. One academic delegation leader said they were overwhelmed by the welcome and hospitality because he knew that no one in the community where he lives would do the same for a group of strangers.

We came to their village and they took their time to show us the water, the marsh, the canals and all the things that are hurting them. Then they took us into their home and feed us like we were kin. They took time out of their lives, out of their work, away from their trapping. I couldn't believe the friendship extended to us, strangers, and their humor! I wish I could experience that in other places. (Ac26 10)

While traveling cross-country, one respondent looked for Grand Bayou and instead found a different community. She came to understand that the type of hospitality and openness was not an anomaly found in Grand Bayou but that it is found throughout the region.

In one town, there's this little courtyard in the middle of town. We started talking to people until one said, 'Oh yeah, the mayor owns the coffee shop over there'. And so we went over to the coffee shop, and the mayor sat down with us at the table. She actually was the coffee shop owner. She sat down all afternoon with us and as people came in, she'd introduce them. So different than California. (Ag13 09)

Limited Knowledge of the 'Other'

Some respondents revealed their limited understanding or knowledge of geographical and cultural differences. These limitations surfaced in racist or classist remarks. One example came from a graduate student studying technology who understands technology only as it pertains to electronics. "Their emphasis has not been on technology or they don't use technology or I mean they don't use technology all that often. They are one example before technology existed. I find value in looking at things through a cultural heritage lens" (S1 2010). Another student stated, "I

felt closer to Pocahontas, they were as beautiful as the depiction of her character.” Another said, “I felt the need to lobby for them. I feel that they could do more by organizing themselves” (S710). Another student commented that the Grand Bayou was “something outside of normal society, like seeing something on TV” (S1010). An agency respondent from the region explained the historical prejudice towards this region.

My accent, I can talk different, but this is the way I learned. So, I don't change. If you don't speak language well, then you are stupid, you lack of education, we are stupid. You combine not talking right with having the wrong occupation and living in the swamp and living in funny houses on stilts and not having similar types of education, and people think you are stupid! Why not look at who we are? Our local knowledge about the environment is key, but the scientists need to learn from the locals, they know (the locals), they have to know because their lives depend on it. And the shrimpers know it. (Ag4 09)

The language disconnect (Dussel, 1996, Apel, 1984) is not just a regional issue but pertains as well to terminology (discourse) used by professionals one academic noted, “You're [Grand Bayou] not a curiosity any longer; you become integrated into the community and of course it also works both ways. You have learned the community [NHW], and can speak to the community in a way that you couldn't the first times” (Ac3 11). An academic noted,

I think it is important to look at people and recognize that prior to these disasters that they are people who deal with daily disasters and crisis and they should not be ignored. In many ways, a healthy society, eliminating health disparities and recognizing needs of people in communities: a healthier society increases the likelihood of successful disaster response. So you create an access to health to create an access to other economic opportunities and it creates a more balanced community, then they will more resilient. The resiliency aspect of it will be much more impressive and that's what I think needs to happen, to take these lessons and put them in light so that others can hear them. Not just at the community levels, their stories need to translate their issues into language that engineers and policy makers and planners understand. There needs to be some healthy times at Boulder to do that. Like community based organizations like yours and other groups like that can come to Boulder because there, they could communicate to folks in the community as well as take that information and broker it to people. Language translation is not

just bilingual, its multi-lingual. And that is what I think is important. Perhaps evidence of that, will be more grassroots people at Boulder. (Ac5 09)

The discussion and comments about the Other as a curio as a reference to the people who do not belong, appeared in several of the respondents' conversations (Giroux, 1992, hooks, 1988) and in this academic's comments,

Being from a discipline where I think the field is incredibly important, so what has happened over the years that I have seen the GB go to meetings is that they are becoming increasingly vocal and articulate and as soon as they have the vocabulary down then they can't be ignored. When they first showed up they were very shy and looked like a curiosity, I mean, we all had a nice cute little curio, but now you can't ignore the GB members. They have shown up and shown up, for example and their voice has become not only eloquent but educated. They are now using the vocabulary. One woman, as one example, has involved herself in NGOs and other kinds of groups that have given her more confidence, they now understand clout in a way they didn't understand it before. (Ac3 11)

One respondent suggested that the interaction at workshops and through PAR methodology helps to dispel community members' and practitioners' possible pejorative framing of academics.

I think those who participate in this kind of research (PAR) give communities an image of academics which is quite different than what they might have had. I think people under those circumstances tend to look at us as indifferent, aloof, highly educated elitists. I think that you can dissuade them of that perspective; it will certainly help them to move ahead, in my opinion. The younger people, who at some point will hopefully be in a position to make some choices about education will see the value of education, what it means to be an educated person. And that, by being an educated person, doesn't mean that you're unsympathetic with those that have perhaps less than you have. So, that's part of the exchange, that's part of what our community, I think, can give people that are engaged in this participatory activity. I think it's very important. (Ac22 08)

Several comments were made about the GB becoming part of the larger group at the Natural Hazards. One academic noted, "People recognize them because they become regular participants. It's been four or five years that they have been attending" (Ac6 10). "It also is a visual image, just as we look at them (GB) they are one of the most powerful things about this

conference” (Ac5 09). Another said “It just feels like they have become a part of the hazards community in a very short period of time. People who have been coming (NHW) for a long time say, ‘how can I get into this community?’ But it just feels like the workshop needs them and that they are part of this community” (Ac9 10).

This academic respondent, who frequents the NHW, cautioned that not all conferences or venues create the dynamics for discourse to happen as it does with the NHW.

I think it (NHW) creates the context in which it can happen but I don’t think it (the place) is necessarily a sufficient condition. The best way to think about it, I think is like Freire. A big part of his doctrine is about the mentality that people approach interaction with each other, and I think that is the key. One of the key pre-conditions to having those kind of interactions I think you can re-create, but just having practitioners and academics at a conference together is not necessarily enough. Because I think you can recreate the thing we are trying to address and still not have people hearing each other as being valuable, not knowing how to value each other or not knowing what to do in that interaction in order to get something out of it. So I think just having them physically present is a necessary step. And I think sometimes we do that, and it works. I just came from a conference where I felt like it was unproductive because of the fact that it was structured in such a way that people didn’t get what they needed out of it. I don’t think that practitioners found it particularly valuable; I don’t think academics found it particularly valuable. It was just everybody, we were just there, it just really wasn’t structured in a way that I thought it worked very well. (Ac17 10)

Finding a way to cross boundaries of disciplines and knowledge was critical.

I guess that it was one of my first experiences with a community of that stratum or with those in that situation. I mean it was everything wrong from a flood perspective to me. You know, they’re outside the levee. It’s not a community I was used to at all. So, you know, it showed me where some of my audience is and by continued association with that project and with UNO, which does this kind of thing, you know I’m beginning to learn how to, or the importance at least of communicating in two ways. (Ag15 09)

The “boundary crossing” often happened when the GB people helped the respondents go beyond their representational knowledge of the region. “There is the representational knowledge

we know about the coast, we all know it, but do we *know* it?” (Ag8 09). “Before visiting Louisiana, and especially the Louisiana delta, I did not fully understand the problems the people and especially the land faced in that area. It is one thing to look at a map in the classroom and another to be standing on a small piece of marsh and see water all around you” (S16 11).

The interaction with residents of the Grand Bayou helped build relational knowledge by humanizing the *representational knowledge* of the region that the respondents may have had. As one agency worker said, “One can read books like Mike Tidwell’s *Bayou Farewell*. But it doesn’t put quite the personal touch on it that actually meeting and interacting with such a community does” (Ag 9 08). Often respondents talked about knowledge becoming relational by putting a “face” on it. “Yes, they have lots of statistics and charts (reports on coastal land loss) and power points, but they don’t have a face. Those figures, they don’t have a face. We need to have a face, but much more importantly the knowledge that face brings” (Ag1 11).

An agency respondent articulated the border crossing as being twofold, one of process in research and the other of respecting and utilizing the knowledge of local experts. Through this process of border crossing, preconceived notions and stereotypes were broken.

Meeting the folks that were here at the meeting was very, very powerful. It was partly because that at the same time I was meeting them, I was hearing from you and Shirley about this whole idea that was new to me, participatory research, and so two things were sort of coming alive at the same time. First was hearing about their situation but the other was the whole idea of how a community could and should be the best equipped to sort of know how to deal with its future and to come back from such events and to prepare for future events and so on. And I got to say; both those learning experiences are still under way. How has it changed over time? You know, it’s embarrassing almost, but the progress is from sort of a whole bunch of stereotypes that are not only useless but counterproductive and I am sort of shedding those, so when you’re doing that, you’re making progress (Ag16 08)

As one academic said, “I do vividly recall when the members of the Grand Bayou were present and participating as equal partners. That stuck with me” (Ac15 10). As respondents became part of the relational knowledge-building with the GB, they realized that the GB was representative of many other communities that remain “un-represented”. “I think the very powerful part of this has been not just learning about the Grand Bayou but when we hear about

them we begin to extrapolate, we begin to think, hey, there are other communities that are like this one. This is a surrogate for hundreds of thousands of people in a situation” (Ag16 08). That type of extrapolation from one community to many led some respondents to begin to think about taking appropriate action.

My hopes are multiple: first, I want these students to share their newly-found awareness with their families and other students here at the university.

Heightened awareness stimulates action. I also hope that some students will decide to work alongside communities to secure coastal futures, while others work to generate necessary government action. And finally, I hope that some will dedicate their careers and lives to coastal issues. (Ac28 11)

For other respondents the interaction with the GB helped them reflect on other experiences with and in similar communities.

That could be true because geographically Bangladesh and Louisiana have one thing in common, that both are delta, that they are very close to sea level, or below sea level, or just a few feet higher than sea level. So that’s true, and we have some people living in Bangladesh living in similar environments that do fishing and trapping and stuff like that; and that’s what they were doing too. So I probably relate to what they do, how they survived in Bangladesh for generations. But we do storm cyclones, and they just have to go out of the way of the storms if they can, or build something very high strong nearby, so they can go there. So that information probably would be what they could relate to. (Ac1 09)

There were international visitors at the bayou, and I was amazed at the similarity of their stories and issues. You know you kind of just think of those people in third world countries as just being that way but then you hear the GB story and you wonder what knowledge we are overlooking by assuming ours is better? (Ac19 10)

Similar community experiences were also helpful in learning mitigation and coping strategies.

I remember a few scientists who visited from China who looked at the islands of Louisiana and the first comment they made, ‘Why don’t you plant rice in here?’ Because any land they see is suppose to be farmed for rice or something. So they should have had rice on that, a barrier island farmed for rice or something. But people

can give an idea of people who farm rice on barrier island and how important that is. Because in our country, people live in barrier islands year round, and farm rice or whatever else they can. And that's how they survive. From that point of view, they are way ahead. (Ac1 09)

Several folks recognized that a mutuality of shared experience helps to create a “comfort zone” for additional sharing and learning. “Some of the Caribbean islands are similar, and culturally they have had to deal with these issues without real government interaction, they just dealt with it every time. So I think it was something that they could relate to. It was in their comfort zone” (Ag3 11). A Grand Bayou community member was amazed that the visitors from the Caribbean “got it” when so many others from “our” region didn't understand. And she added ‘it felt comfortable, like family’ (GB 1 04).

Care Ethics

The comfort zone that many talked about or referred to was also referenced in terms that can be described best as “care ethics” (Noddings1984). Respondents used words such as *trust, faith, hope, listening* and *love* to describe essential elements they gleaned from their Grand Bayou experience: [The following quotes show the diverse situations that involve care ethics, the first several highlight listening.] “It is so difficult for government officials to gain the trust of the people. But I think there are a few keys to regain that trust. Once again, listening; we need to find ways that people can communicate” (Ac13 09).

I think the experience takes you beyond what you really get by reading about something. The face-to-face interaction, the serious engagement when we come and listen to their presentations; *we can't possibly not be moved*. I think what it does for me and for other people in the field is to give us early evidence that we have capacity for really making a difference in people's lives and we can do this by giving information, but we can also do this by showing them that we care about their situations. I think having them, the Grand Bayou friends here, makes us care more. That's a gift in my opinion that they give us that we would not have otherwise. So I think it's absolutely wonderful that they're part of our community and I hope that they remain part of our community. I hope that the community is able through you, their colleagues and friends, to help them and they continue to remind us what is important. (Ac22 08)

When one respondent was talking about his interactions at a session, his face lit up with a smile and tears came to his eyes when he said that the Grand Bayou folks brought him *joy*.

The value of knowing the folks and having them here is on a simple concept of joy; that you get some extra pleasure out of getting to know people that we weren't familiar with before. And you know, becoming familiar with folks like the Grand Bayou folks, is at a very, very different personal level as well as, they're not just research objects. I think that it's worth considering the joy. Simply getting some human pleasure out of knowing people. (Ag9 10)

Freire says that hope is a critical part of the praxis of liberation and transformation (1996). Hope is something that is not talked about often in the disaster community. It often becomes something wished for instead of something realized. The Grand Bayou community, for many people, went beyond just a symbol of hope to become an embodiment of hope for others to share.

It has given me a lot of hope. Here is a community that has been faced with tragedy and difficulty almost beyond our belief and comprehension as bad as anything I have ever seen or heard about on disasters. And they are bouncing back and they are resilient and they are trying to figure out a way to restore their lives and live within the rules and the law and at the same time rebuild their economy and to do it their way under very difficult circumstances. (Ag12 09)

As one academic said, "Hope is one of the themes that I got from their stories, and also you know I learned that people who come through disasters don't lose their sense of humanity, that is one of the things I love about them" (Ac13b 09).

God and humor came up in interviews as the respondents were reflecting on how their lives have been influenced or changed as a result of being with the people of the Grand Bayou, with one academic noting that, "Another thing that the Grand Bayou project has done for me is to help me connect with God, so this has been going on a bit and you know this has been good" (Ag16 08). Another academic insisted that, "Humor is part of their resilience. It is also what attracts me to them" (Ac12 09).

The relationship that exists between the Grand Bayou and UNO-CHART collaborators was observed by some as an ideal, a goal to strive for in research projects.

The sense of the researchers who have interfaced with Grand Bayou, just the respectful relationships that go on. It's not a researcher-to-subject relationship in the traditional sense. That's empowering. That's another story that I think is important professionally. Just in terms of the mutual respect that goes along with that (PAR). I know that sort of genuine collaborative research is really powerful to see, but you know what I mean? We can all say it's important and we can write papers about it. But to actually do it is a pleasure to see in that respect. The issue of researchers making a conscious decision about grants, 'I'm not going to take that grant if there's not money in the budget to support the participation of members of the community' (referring to CHART's work). That's a bottom line. We all know that money talks in very powerful ways. But when researchers are very clear about what they consider to be the appropriate use of grant monies and letting their sponsors know that, and that was another thing that was educational for me. Again, one can talk about collaborative relationships, but with people out in the field you are actually doing it. (Ac11 11)

The care ethic was talked about in various ways in stories of action. The stories included ones of hospitality, of engaging in I-Thou relationship, and in the solidarity of standing with another in his or her place. One academic noted, "They gave people license to think about their problems as human beings" (Ac12 09). Another said, "I think about the Grand Bayou community on a weekly basis, if not more. And I think that their symbolic stance is something we all need to learn from, their stance on staying with their history, their culture and their environment and fighting to save it all in a sustainable way" (Ac16 10). Still another felt that staying the course with the community vision "really changes the power dynamic with agencies and creates a public discourse. The bayou becomes the picture in my mind of why we are doing our work" (Ac11 11). One academic summarized by saying, "When I went to the bayou I had to *stand* in the water; they are water people. *I stood with them* in their home, in their place, I stood in the water." (Ac1 09)

Influences and Change

The hypothesis that this PAR project would influence or affect the way people did their profession became quite evident in all but one of the interview/conversations. The data reveal that many had a new awareness of coastal issues; some had a new or renewed appreciation of

local knowledge, others were validated or affirmed in thoughts they had in trying PAR within their own work. For others PAR meant changing the research agenda of their agency. The following are excerpts from the conversations which show various types of conscientiousness, awareness, adaptation, motivation or change.

I think that's where the participatory process comes in, is you're honoring the person. And it may be that there may not be any new knowledge that's created, but that relationship that is established now, then builds the trust with other things that come down the road. That's cool. And I think that relationship is important. (Ag16 08)

At least from my point of view, these kinds of meetings, you have all done something extraordinary and yet again this year, you have created this dialogue. I am hoping the other people as you do the other interviews will remember this as contributing in a similar way as I did, and that this is a major contribution to the way we do our work and improving the societal benefit. (Ag16 08)

It's [meeting the GB and hearing about PAR] really enhanced what I've been able to do in a number of ways. (Ag15 09)

[They are] helping us to remember why it is we do what we do. (Ac16 10)

The Grand Bayou has become the, what I will call, the touch stone so that when I think about things the question I ask myself is what impact will this have on the Grand Bayou. (Ag6 10)

What lessons I learned, what meaning I draw from the experience? Other than I respect it and think it is pretty darn wonderful. And I think people who don't have the experience that they are much the poorer. (Ag5 09)

We're kinda known as the people with all those brochures. We send out one every month on gardening, *Horticulture Hints*. I've learned from my association with the leadership of what's going on at Grand Bayou; the benefits of the two-way communication with the community. (Ag15 09)

Prior to that project, we included the community but not to the extent that you have, your group has done with the Grand Bayou. And so it is kept, always in the back of my mind, how we can further incorporate, or if you will for lack of a better word, the things of the community, the participation of the community. ...there is always that voice 'like how can we make sure we are involving the community to the extent that we can and still fulfill the requirements of the grant and what FEMA wants to see as the deliverables. So it has definitely made me more aware of this methodology and just trying to incorporating it more and trying to use it more in all our projects. (Ac10 10)

Chapter 6

Findings

Functionally, oppression is domesticating. To no longer be prey to its force, one must emerge from it and turn upon it. This can be done only by means of the praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it. (Freire, 1973 p. 36)

This chapter begins with the preconceptions or bias of the research followed by Section One, the response to the research question of whether change occurred in the outside collaborators. The second section is about how the *people of knowledge-power* have been affected or changed through their discourse or involvement with the study community. These findings are supportive to the research question regarding change in the outside collaborator. The third section of the chapter covers several variables that emerged as important in effecting change, presentation, duration and location. These factors helped to influence the process in which the probability of change occurred.

Research Biases

The research started with a preconception (Gadamer, 1991, Ricoeur, 1981). Gadamer uses the term prejudice to describe a research preconception. He is not referring to “prejudices” like racism but to what might be called our prior hermeneutic situatedness. Gadamer understands prejudice as both unavoidable and necessary. The more technical term like “prior hermeneutical situatedness” reminds us that we never come to the world, including the world of research with total ‘objectivity’. Gadamer and Ricoeur do not understand this pre-judgment as closing us off from the world but as the ‘tools’ that open the world to us and to new possibilities. Both conceive learning (and in this case, research) as a ‘hermeneutic circle’. Our pre-hermeneutic situatedness enables us to engage and to interpret the world. (Ricoeur claims that both explanation and understanding are interpretive processes.) This hermeneutic engagement leads to interpretation, and interpretation can lead to a new hermeneutic situatedness, to new learning and to new prejudice and so on. There are two ‘prejudices’ that are important in this project; first that we can never escape our hermeneutic situatedness, we are always interpreting, and that open critical discourse praxis (openness to the Other, and doing critical public sphere dialogue-reflection) are necessary to help maintain the openness of our hermeneutic situatedness and for the public sphere to exist.

The hermeneutical cycle is the movement within the knowledge types of Park, representational, relational, and reflective. The dynamic of interactions with others challenges or reinforces ideas of our representational knowledge. As we engaged in discourse that is open to the Other, we create relational knowledge. When our knowledge is critically analyzed through a process of action-reflection we help to create reflective-critical knowledge. Critical-reflective knowledge has the ability to reveal truth and to become emancipatory knowledge. This cyclical knowledge process of reflection-action-reflection needs the hermeneutical engagement process for the change to occur.

In our interactions with others, some type of impact occurs (Gadamer, 1991). The impact maybe insignificant and might not be consciously noticed (Polanyi, 2006, 1996)⁸. While the interaction may be negligible, leaving little or no impression, it may alter the representational knowledge that we hold, or it may engage the people in the interaction to other forms of knowledge. It is with that understanding that I believe we do have impressions in any encounter and those impressions form knowledge. Knowledge in this context means the ability to think, to act, and to feel in new ways (Brookfield, 2005, Mayo, 1999, Giroux, 1992). I conducted my conversations-interviews asking if and how the person has been impacted by his or her encounter with the Grand Bayou or their story. The conversational process invited people to reflect on their relationships with the GB (people, place and event). The interview process enabled the respondents to conceptualize and articulate what they learned and to make meaning from their interactions.

The learning or conceptualization was not always about the Grand Bayou. The recall process often helped a respondent remember a PAR event in his or her own experience. After I finished an interview with a professor, he asked for a little more time to recall an event, “You know, I have done a form of PAR, I forgot about it. It was in grad school when I received a small grant to do oral histories at a middle school in a small community. I worked with the students and they loved it. They came up with all sorts of stuff themselves. All I needed to do is give them tools and be a cheerleader” (Ac 15 10). Ricoeur would say that by creating the narrative, the story of their relationship or encounter, they have created meaning for themselves (Ricoeur, 1991). For some, the narrative is short and without much effect; for many it was a

⁸ Polanyi argues that “We know more than we can say” (1996). “We learn more than we know” (Krajewski, 2005).

reflection of Freirian ‘post- or re-conscientization’. An example of such ‘post-conscientization’ is when two professors felt empowered to hire students to work with them as collaborators on projects. This is the experience of one student and professor:

I have recruited an undergraduate. She’s a single mom, as old as I am. She’s a non-traditional student and has two small boys. She is the first person in her family to go to college. She is struggling with a lot of those choices and just having a very difficult life. She’s a minority resident and has lived in the community her whole life. I think that what happened for her, and we’ve only been working together for three months, is when I hired her as an undergraduate research assistant, is that she has realized how much she knows. And so for her in particular, being able to go to community meetings and being able to see three researchers giving a voice to people who have the same experiences as she does. They (her community) look like her, they talk like her, they have the same experiences she has, and she is seeing her experience and her concerns (in her work from her own community). She’s seeing how they link to and can actually be acted on with help from, in collaboration with, not help in a condescending way, but partnership with people who may be traditionally outside of that community. And I think for her, it has shifted what she wants to do, which is cool but scary at the same time, right? I don’t want to totally corrupt them. But I do think that there’s something interesting that happens there with students when they feel like “oh, wait a minute, I do know”. And it does change the way they interact in classes. (Ac 4 08)

The above academic started with the assumption that all the collaborators are valued first as humans, and as credible co-teachers and co-learners and not simply as research objects, informants, or talking data sets. She saw that the student and the community have the ability to find solutions to real problems and it can happen when there is true discourse. This premise holds that respect for the other person and their knowledge is central and many times needs to be created and cultivated. The discourse that results in creating knowledge that changes and transforms those involved will in turn result in action and thus impact the systems to which they relate (Fischer, 2003, Park, 1997, Fals-Borda, 1991, Gaventa, 1993, Horton, 1990). The people who attend professional workshops and conferences are ones who usually want to learn from others, so in that there is a bias as well, the desire to learn from others. Given these preconceptions, I started with the premise that some type of impact took place. This impact

might have been experienced negatively, positively or gone unnoticed; even so information can be obtained that can help people engaged in PAR understand the dynamics that create or inform knowledge for transformation.

Change and Knowledge Typology

I went [to the Grand Bayou] and started on the road of learning how to educate.
(Ag15 09)

Using Park’s three knowledge types, interviews were coded to determine if there was evidence of representational, relational and/or critical-reflective knowledge demonstrated. Using these knowledge prototypes, the research question asking if change occurred in the outside collaborators can be answered “Yes”. There is strong evidence that not only was there change within the person’s base of representational knowledge, there was also significant change in relational knowledge as well as in reflective-critical knowledge. Only one interview indicated no change or knowledge of change, leaving sixty-four interviews that reflected some type of knowledge change. The following table gives the approximate percentages of the respondents that share experiences that fall within the various types of knowledge.

Figure 1

<u>Park’s Knowledge types - Interviews Indicating Knowledge Within the Three Typologies</u>		
<u>Representational</u>	95%	<u>facts and figures</u>
<u>Relational</u>	>50%	<u>how those facts and figures are made personal-relational</u>
<u>Reflective</u>	~ 20%	<u>actions for addressing macro and micro root-cause-problem</u>

The 95% figure represents all but one of the 65 respondents, demonstrating some type of representational knowledge that was a direct result of their encounter with the GB. For many, it was simply a better representation of coastal land loss and the impacts of the multiple hurricanes. Others mentioned such representational knowledge that included policies related to recovery, community social structures and economic changes. A student gave such example of this type of representational knowledge stating, “The meeting demonstrated that the local knowledge of community members is an invaluable resource that is often underutilized and/or unknown to government decision makers” (S 2 10).

The percentage drops in the relational knowledge typology. Relational knowledge involves dialogue, the exchanging of ideas. There isn't always time or opportunity to engage people in this type of dialogue. I did not screen the respondents as to the type of exchange or encounter with the Grand Bayou residents, so the exchange may have been while the respondent was in a workshop session or in a classroom when the Bayou residents presented. Thus the lower percentage does not imply a lack of understanding on the part of the outside collaborators. Here is an example of a relational knowledge-learning shared by one student:

They are in my mind- they continue to be in my mind- they are in the back of a lot of the work I still do. I often think about the sharing, the giving, the generosity of the people and their grass roots thinking and their grassroots approach to life and the land and their appreciation of the land. That was another one of those tiny seeds within me that they helped developed and brought about, we learned together. (S 1110)

A profound example of dialogue in relational knowledge is (which for purposes of anonymity, the quote cannot be shared, only its essence) when an academic realized that what he or she had been observing with the Grand Bayou residents was forming or reinforcing a prejudice that was far from accurate. When realizing the gravity of the misrepresentation of the representational knowledge that was formed through the series of brief encounters, the academic cried and was "humbled". The academic confronted her prejudice and understood herself with a different perspective. She now exhibits a different passion and awareness that will probably influence her work both now and in the future.

Critical reflective knowledge development is a goal that is strived for in Participatory Action work. It is the change, not just in what we know and how we know it, but the critical application of that knowledge to our lifeworld. It is the new awareness or as one respondent said, it is the 'yes' or the 'wow', when we no longer can do or be as we were the moment before. All has changed. An academic was moved to say that all work needs to be directed to human rights and social justice. This is part of that statement, "but it (relationship) also reminds us of the need to work social justice into everything we do, and they remind us that who it is that we are generating knowledge for. And who we should be generating knowledge with. And it is a much broader and more diverse group of people than maybe what we commonly think" (Ac 8 10). This person's words are a statement of commitment and are evidenced in their work and

life. “Vanilla policies that leave a very large proportion of the population out in terms of getting any sort of benefits from those policies. This hurts resilience and can be harmful. I am committed to working for change at all levels, and I will fight to make it happen” (Ac 8 10).

Boundaries, walls, barriers and crossings

The second section will explore the observed patterns of change to better understand how the patterns can be applied to Freire’s conscientization and problematization of participatory research and to the work of Habermas’ public democratic discourse. How or where did the change in the outside collaborators that was impacted by their exposure to the Grand Bayou, happen? Section two will explore a prevalent theme that emerged from this study; the outside collaborators who were involved or exposed to the participatory action project demonstrated some type of border-crossing (Giroux, 1992). The visual recall is the first type of border crossing explored. The types of border crossings will be discussed through two primary layers of analysis, knowledge typologies and levels of public engagement. The various issues that the border crossings represent have a correlation to Park’s knowledge types and to Freire’s conscientization and problematization.

When using Park’s knowledge typologies in the coding of data, several themes emerged that had multiple ways of manifesting itself. The interaction and dialogue created by the ability to have conversation indicated that old boundaries, borders or barriers with people were being challenged and deconstructed (Dussel, 2003, 1996). Some of the outside collaborators learned more than instrumental or representational knowledge⁹ such as new information regarding land loss and hurricane recovery. The data revealed changes in people’s perceptions as well as in their agencies, in their ideologies (Brookfield, 2005), and in their pedagogies to engage students, communities and the way they conduct research. The metaphor of border-crossing used by Giroux (1992) is the best description of what transpired. As defined in this dissertation, border-crossing stimulates leaning and change while honoring the worth of each person. It is not about assimilation of the ‘other’ to fit into the totality of one’s lifeworld (Levinas, 1992). This was noted in such phases that reappeared about visual representation in the words of ‘the face’ or ‘face- to-face’, or ‘they became the face of the policies we make’. These types of representations in the data were indicators of something fundamentally significant happening in the respondents.

⁹ Representational learning included better understanding of coastal land loss, types of coastal communities and various other data about the coast.

The “private” spheres, understood as the silos built and maintained between sectors of society (in the academy, government, and social arrangements, for example) limit access to them by the people who are often the most at risk from political, economic planning, and decision making. They have little or no access to these private, privileged spheres of influence. Some of Habermas’ critics argue that the exclusion of women in a gendered-bias society prevents discourse from being truly open, thus preventing public discourse (Benhabib, 1990).

Fanon warns that for some people to become part of the hegemonic public sphere (viewed by the dominant society as public but it is in reality exclusive) they risk their identity of self and history by giving it up in the hegemonic society. Those excluded have had their own identities held in a private sphere of protection, because of historic regimes of colonization deeming the colonized as subaltern. The strife for inclusion in a hegemonic sphere can create a dual consciousness. This is experienced when the entrée into another person’s lifeworld means hiding or abandoning who and what one is. (Fanon 1961) The concept of having to mask, to hide or to abandon oneself has been explored by Dubois in his work on double consciousness and in Lifton’s work on doubling (Dubois, 1953, Lifton,1993).

Budd Hall states, “Community-based participatory research tells us as scholars and researchers that the ideas of poor women, indigenous peoples, workers in hotels, and the homeless in Michigan count” (Minker and Wallerstein, 2003 p. xiv). Scholars can help find ways to break silos, to break open the private sphere through the inclusion and border crossing of people from all sectors of society.

The learning/teaching, teaching/learning events that occurred between the outside collaborators and the Grand Bayou residents are evidenced in this study and give insight on border crossing. The movement from being on the outside of the private sphere to entering into discourse within a semi-public sphere¹⁰ (the world where the Other is fully accepted in his/her ‘Otherness’) (Dussel, 1986, Levinas,1969) was through the relational knowledge built on the interactions between the Grand Bayou (as people and place) and the outside collaborators. As the private sphere became the semi-public sphere the opportunity for discourse and knowledge sharing across boundaries, barriers and, walls occurred. For some there was indication of

¹⁰ I created a category of semi-public to help reflect the challenge of change from a private-only status to that of totally public. As critics of Habermas’ public sphere have noted, due to societal exclusions of gender, race and class, what some may call a public sphere may not be for those who are forgotten. The semi-public sphere becomes the place where inclusion begins to happen but is not fully realized.

awareness of issues and for others the awareness became conscientization. Many respondents in their initial interaction with the community wanted to fix problems or avoid problems with various standardized solutions. After discourse and analysis, some people were confronted with alternatives to old patterns of addressing, in this case, post-disaster issues. They went from problem-solving to problematization. Here is an example of one person's response when she realized that policy doesn't fit all dimensions of need and can actually have negative affects on various communities.

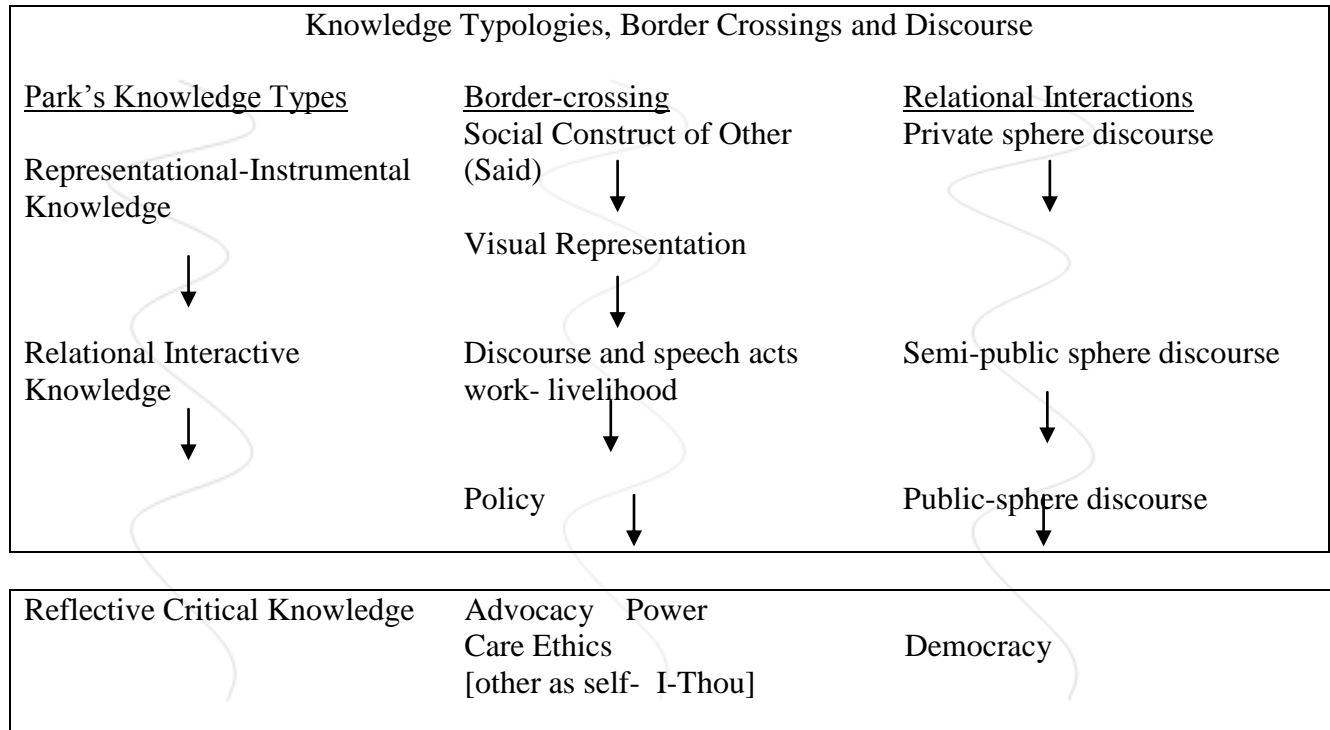
I still don't have a clear idea of how we as a nation should deal with this? On one hand we can't set national policy based on the idiosyncrasies of a certain group of people in a certain geographical area. On the other hand, what's this all about? (Ag 13 08)

Since this interview I have had several other conversations with this person regarding their concern over national policies that did not work at the local level. She mused stating that we are so quick to say, "all disasters are local" and then tell them "here are the homogenized one-size-fits-all policy and guidelines". Such reflection over a several-year time period was an indicator for me that she is truly struggling in her role to find appropriate solutions within the barriers of policy.

The borders, barriers, boundaries and walls that were broken, crossed or transcended occurred in various ways,. Some were small and others were quite profound. For some people, the change may have been slow to occur. "I'm beginning to learn, how to, or the importance at least, of communicating in two ways. It has led to some collaborative efforts with other agencies and universities" (Ag 15 09). Because border-crossings can be influenced by time and exposure, these elements will be dealt with in more detail in section two of this chapter.

The chart below will help to illustrate the discussion that will follow.

Table 8



The vertical flow of border-crossings begins first with the pre-conceived knowledge then precedes to the breaking of that pre-conceived knowledge or prejudice. Starting at the top middle of the chart is the social construct of the Other as voiced by one student, “I felt closer to Pocahontas” (S 7 10). The border-crossings progress vertically down the chart towards ‘other-as-self’, “Just to be in their presence is joy” (Ag 9 11). Barriers, boundaries and borders are crossed, creating significant learning opportunities for change in the way that the respondents understand and do their work. A professor stated that they will never teach the “same old way again” but will only use PAR in all of his work so that the community can be front and center (Ac 23 07). For many, the change process begins in the awareness derived in the face-to-face encounter: “It makes it real”.

The face-to-face conversation with the “Other” helped in opening the discussion on issues. People were able to exchange their own knowledge perspectives of an issue and at times even spar. For Habermas, the sparring types of exchanges, the sharing of differences and seeking appreciation for other views, marks what he calls discourse ethics (Habermas, 1990). An exchange took place between an emergency manager and a Bayou resident about the correct way to evacuate for hurricanes. The Bayou resident concurred that the manager was indeed

correct about the community's evacuation protocols (evacuating early by vehicle) but proceeded to share the obstacles that could make it impossible even if the evacuee had a vehicle and wanted to evacuate. The emergency manager had not sufficiently thought through all the possible variables of risk when he declared that the official method was good for everyone. The emergency manager experienced that there was a possibility of local knowledge contributing to 'evacuation knowledge'. The relational work had to be done with face-to-face exchanges.

For some, there was a relational 'wow' of conscientization that was manifested in critical knowledge-building. "It was profoundly moving to discover that the people have passion and knowledge about their situation. They are not just yelling or screaming about wanting something" (Ag 12 07). The 'wow' was when the outsider ceased to be a 'fix-it person' or tried to 'find-the-right-solution' and became a partner with the community in problematizing and solution-seeking. An active learning/teaching, teaching/learning emerged in critical action/reflection – problematization such as the agency that was taught by the GB on the utilization of maps for community discussions. At the end of the spectrum is the "Other as Self" relationship (Habermas, 1998, Ricoeur, 1992).

Brenda Phillips, in her recent sabbatical, interviewed the Mennonite volunteer teams that worked in the Gulf of Mexico region. Phillips was conducting the interviews as part of an evaluation for Mennonite Disaster Services. The housing construction teams she interviewed that worked in the Grand Bayou community expressed a profound change. At the beginning of their work assignment, the volunteer teams often questioned why the community should be rebuilt. By the end of the week, the volunteer was 'made' family (Phillips, 2011). A similar pattern of change was reflected in the university volunteers whom I interviewed. "So often we are the ones who come in to give to the others, but in this place, we are the ones who are receiving" (Ac 26 11). The awareness of new knowledge built and manifested, is built from the critical praxis of reflective knowledge, that leads to emancipatory knowledge and a new framing of our representational knowledge base (Fischer, 2003, Forester, 1988). Chris Argyris (1994) calls this type of double loop learning, a change not only in method and procedure but a change in basic values.

Change is often more of a "gestalt" experience or a wavering within us of the various evidence from all our sources of knowledge experience. The typologies are not rigidly confined, nor is the interaction between them neat or sharply divided. The diagram's curvy vertical lines

indicate that there is not a clear demarcation between the categories. The types of border-crossings include various social issues including race, power, class, regionalism, and gender. These types of prejudices or misrepresentations were confronted when the outside collaborator had engaged in conversations and in various types of shared experiences. The center list in the above chart gives the experience types of border-crossings that correlate to Park's knowledge typologies.

The sub-sections that follow elaborate on the types of border-crossings that were noted in the data: visual representation, discourse and speech acts, work and livelihood, policy, advocacy and power, and other as self.

Visual Representation

"All real living is in meeting." (Buber, 1958)

The encounters between the outside collaborators and the Grand Bayou often started with visual representation, either seeing the community members or the physical community setting. Visual encounters often heavily influence how we perceive the Other. One person who had been to the Grand Bayou community many times in his capacity as an agency representative had a perception of the community as something quite different than it really was by what he experienced visually. He had seen garbage strewn on the sides of the canal leading up to the community as well as a good quantity of beer bottles and cans both in and along the marsh. His assumption was that the community did not care about the environment and that there was a real issue with alcoholism. When he was informed that the community does not drink alcohol and that it has been petitioning the Parish government for a refuge bin for the sports fishers who leave their garbage, his perception changed, and he is now an advocate often interacting with the fishers of the community. The positive change took place in the confrontation of his visual misconceptions.

If we do not have personal encounters with people from different locales, lifeworlds, cultures and livelihoods, we are more apt to accept how the other is described by media, story, or literature. An academic talked about his preconceived notion of the bayou community based on movie images and folklore. "I had a different perception of what I was going to see and who the people are in the swamps. I was humbled and embarrassed by my stupidity. The 'swamps' were not swamps, and the people, not some 'backwater' folks from some movie; the people were warm, gracious, hospitable, knowledgeable and welcoming to me, the dummy that didn't know a

thing about wetlands” (Ac 26 2011). The barrier of prejudice was broken in the face-to-face encounter and exchange.

The visual, face-to-face encounters were mentioned frequently in interviews, often in the context that the GB made the experience real. “It is easy to ignore a problem, but the people showed us the problem directly” (S 17 2011). The community has expertise that was perceived by the outsiders when the community was able to share their experiences in the role of teacher regarding their land and culture. “The time at the bayou far exceeded any expectations and was the most exceptional learning experience in my history at ____” (S 15 2011).

The learning experience was made real through their face-to-face encounter. The Other is an equal or a partner in the learning process. The Other is not an object or a subject that the professional or academic has to give voice to; the Other is a capable human with the ability to articulate his or her voice (Levinas, 1969). People learned from their exposure to the physical setting of the bayou. For many, the marshes became real, and beautiful when they could be seen from the water and in the waterways. People were able to experience the area with all their senses, not just with a map image or photograph. “I have seen the marsh from a totally different vantage point. It is beautiful. I have experienced it and can begin to understand why the people here love it so much. The water flows, the grasses sway, the wind caresses and the dolphins play all in the ‘front yard’. I would fight for it too.” (Ac 13 09)

Discourse Styles, Language Usage and Speech Acts

“I didn’t know that the people there are so articulate.” (S 8 09)

The outsiders often used the word ‘language’ in their interview/conversations as they described their experiences of the encounters with the GB people. They were not talking about language as words or dialect. For our purposes, they were meaning ‘discourse.’ Discourse as defined by Apel (1994) Habermas (1987) and Ricoeur (1991) is about the complexities of communication actions which involve language as words and syntax and is inclusive of gestures, place, specific word-games rules, élite-subaltern communication rules (Scott, 1990), magical and mystical words, technical terms, and the ‘appropriate’ jargon of the private sphere code. “He (the shrimper) was able to navigate through the marsh looking for signs of shrimp while we all jabbered and watched the sunset. He told us about the marsh through all the things we experienced that night” (S 4 09). The outsiders often spoke [often with amazement] about the GB people’s ability to “learn the language of the professionals”.(Ac 9 10). One outsider pointed

out that the GB people seem to do a better job of learning the professionals' languages than the professionals did of earning the language of discourse in the GB. "They come with their set of expertise and then are challenged with learning the jargon of all these academics, if we [academics] only worked as hard learning about communities as they have worked at learning our idiosyncrasies so that they can help educate us, just imagine what we could accomplish" (Ac 12 09). The language/discourse "crossings" helped foster additional boundary crossings to help academics better understand the complexity of community knowledge, power issues, advocacy and care ethics.

There were several ways that language¹¹ (discourse) was talked about in the interviews, language (discourse) between academics and academics, language (discourse) between academics and practitioners, language (discourse) between 'professionals and lay community members, language (discourse) of the private sphere becoming language (discourse) of the private sphere. Understanding narrative as a speech act (Searle, 1968 Ricoeur, 1981, Habermas, 1971, Rush, 1996) helps in revealing the intent of the communication act. Critical theory alerts us to the subtle and possibly systematic way in which social action and social actors may be deceived, misled, and mystified (Herda 1999, Forester 1988).

"We shared or did a presentation together, and it was real neat. We (professionals) talk about emergency management systems, and they put the face of what the impact of people are confronted with, being without things that are necessary for life's existence. And just to see what people have to go through from the loss, and then to hear their story and their interaction with the systems to resolve issues and how frustrating that can be..." (Ac 5 09). This academic was talking about our discourse (emergency management systems) and the "neat" thing that happened: the discourse was opened in the communication with others and made the discourse richer and more meaningful.

Monk interprets Wittenstien word games as the discourse rules we use to communicate with each other in various settings, formal and informal. These rules prescribe ways of communicating that can create barriers or borders that slow, distort and end communication. Border crossing takes place when the borders are crossed, when the rules are broken with new voices and the new voices enter into the formerly closed context of dialogue (Monk 2005). A

¹¹ When the interviews talk about language, it is more than the vocabulary of the discussion, it is discourse as defined earlier in this section.

bayou participant sang to Gilbert White during an evening tribute to him at a NHW event. The evening was billed as a community sharing event but the “rules for community sharing” were held by the arrangements committee. The singing was not on the pre-determined agenda and was seen by the coordinator of the event as an intrusion. The singer believed that “community sharing” meant ‘sharing when the spirit leads you,’ was sharing from his heart what he thought the event was suppose to be about. We learned later from a family member that it was the highlight of the evening for the honoree. The breaking of rules and the honesty of giving to the honoree fostered a lasting relationship with the family (S 3 09,10).

Work and Livelihood: Activities of discourse-experiential knowledge

“Pulling up shrimp makes me understand better their knowledge” (Ac 25 09).

The experiential knowledge process (Dewey, 1929) can be a strong determining factor that contributes to the verity, the scope, the scale, and the robustness of data collection and of data analysis, enabling a person to move from “facts and figures” about wetland loss that includes along with instrumental scientific and technical explanation knowledge, understanding (verstandigung) of the full meaning (Verstehen, embodied, relational, and personal, economic, environmental, and spiritual) of the loss. This kind of holistic knowledge is more likely to lead to action (Chambers, 2005, Brookfield, 2005). The interview conversations showed that hearing and being part of the discussions about wetland stressors with the people who live with those stressors “made the issue real” for the outsider. One student noted the way the interaction made the learning process real after a week-long alternative spring break session at the bayou.

I took away a sense of community and a sense of real humanity. Seeing and experiencing their connection with the water and land contributed to us learning so much and has irrevocably changed my perspective since that experience. I can say that on behalf of my whole group [many are environmental science majors], that we went in to fix and we came away knowing that we were there just as much to learn. (S 8 10)

The complexity of the coastal land loss issues was better understood when the outside collaborators worked along side the bayou community members. For example, several folks went shrimping with a community resident and witnessed the local knowledge of the fisher. They gained an appreciation for the complexity and inter-relatedness of ecological and social systems the shrimpers’ have to negotiate to do an evening’s fishing.

I realized it wasn't just dropping nets and pulling up shrimp. It was much more complicated. It was that all of what we are is like a big complicated ship that is pushed and shoved by outside forces of nature and economy. To understand the complexity is to have the experience of manning the ship and knowing all those external forces. We did that when we went out that night and shrimped. We were the ship in all of its complexities. (AC 25 09)

There is evidence that awareness and a deeper understanding comes through the sharing of the Other's work/livelihood (Ashley, 2009). In the introduction to *Immersion: Learning About Poverty Face-to-Face*, Robert Chambers states that "...immersion can take many forms... An almost universal feature (of immersion) is staying with the poor community, as a person, living with the host family, helping with tasks and sharing in their life" (Chambers, 2009, p. 9). In immersion "the visitor is immersed in daily life, leaving behind the baggage of role, organization, and importance..." (2009, p. 9). Immersion as described by Chambers, Ashley and the other contributors is a living-with and working-with experience. The outsider lives in the community as a person, not as a researcher, policy-maker, or student. The outsider immerses himself or herself to cross the boundaries of roles, and institutions to be a "person-in-place" (Giroux, 1992). One agency person stated

Where Chambers is talking about the importance of actually living with the people and working as the people, so it has been, and I hate the words, but it has been kind of an immersion. But not the kind of an immersion where you come out of the water and you shake yourself off and you go about your business.

There are immersions where you never come out of the water. And this one feels like an immersion where you never come out of the water or at least you never dry off and go back to where you were. (Ag6 10)

In Park's (2001) terms, it is when people relate to the life, history and world of the community they reclaim or learn their popular knowledge. Freire might have called this embodied consciousness-raising. Although the 'immersion' for some of the outsiders into the Grand Bayou lifeworld was less time extensive, some did get the opportunity to experience the life and work of the bayou village. Some of the outsiders found it very difficult to, for example, shed their professional roles and relate person-to-person. For others the experience of the work and world of the Grand Bayou was transformational.

When people came to the Grand Bayou their awareness of the complexity of issues was made real when they were on a working shrimp boat hauling in shrimp. Engaging in the real work of the community brought people face-to-face with the intricacies and complexities of the environmental, social and economic conditions that the community faces. For example, a non-bayou person might assume that a shrimper fills his tanks with fuel, goes out into the bay and drops his nets, much like a recreational fisher goes out and drops a line (Ag 14 09). The experience of being on the boat and doing some of the work that is required on the boat gives a tacit awareness of the fishers' TEK. The outsider discovers the multiple layers of knowledge that are needed by the fisher regarding the water conditions, the movement of the shrimp, the procurement of the proper supplies, the sorting and cleaning and preserving of the shrimp for their distribution and the negotiating of the sale of the shrimp at the dock. "And most of this activity happened in the dark of night!" (Ac 25 09). The shrimper is involved in every cycle of the shrimp commodity. Not to know the environment, the boat and its ability, the issues of human variables such as the supplies, deck hands and marketing, could lead to financial ruin. The Grand Bayou TEK knowledge is what Polanyi (2006, 1996) calls tacit knowledge, a knowledge learned through experience. The Grand Bayou TEK is also embodied knowledge, a knowledge that is part of the person stemming from his or her inseparable relationship with the environment.

The analytical skills involved with the complexity of subsistence livelihood are honed for community survival. Experiencing that type of intensity of knowledge is different than hearing or reading about it. The representational knowledge of something or someone became real and relational in the experience of the activity. Through shared relational experience and new understanding, the outsider has gained new knowledge. The knowledge acquired through representational and relational knowledge will help better equip the outside person to engage in reflective critical analysis and problematization. A student noted after a boat ride down the bayou, "We both came together as strangers, with only a small understanding about the other's world" (S 12 09). Through the active engagement of the other's world, it becomes de-mystified or understood.

The crossing over into the work world or livelihood of the other can help break barriers of intimidation, prejudice and misunderstanding. As core academics in the project we brought the community folks to the UNO offices and facilities. We shared a variety of resources that are

available on campus that could be tapped by the community for their PAR work. The outside collaborating team also included the Bayou community in meetings, in classes and in our homes. It was important for us to de-mystify ourselves by showing who we are both personally and in our work setting. An academic noted that “ As we let people into our lives and space, not the ones that we usually have in our associations, it is hard not to feel compassion for them and share a better understanding of each other.” (Ac 22 08).

Pictures: At the Grand Bayou pulling in oysters and at NHW doing a poster presentation



Photo credit: K. Peterson

Outside collaborators helped community members with their organizational and legal tasks. This experience helped the outsiders experience the complexities (seasonal time demands, weather-determined activities) and the challenges of meeting the criteria of foundations and local government codes that the community has on a daily basis. The complexity of negotiating a non-profit was as complex as the example given about shrimping. Often the outsider assumes everyone has access to phone, Internet and electrical systems that function. The outside collaborators experienced the conflict in lifeworlds, the way a community functions, the conflict between what is requested or demanded by funding organizations.

A funding organization requires a 501(c)(3) non-profit status, which requires a board and a formal system of finances. A community that is based on mutual sharing and a consensus decision-making style has difficulty conforming to the demands of a funder be it private or governmental. A hegemonic Western organizational structure demanding a community's conformity to its funding protocols, is not only alien to the culture, it is offensive.

Learning can take place when the outsider is enmeshed in the work challenges of the community. Learning becomes internalized so that it informs all other aspects of the relationships, both internally and externally with the community. The outsider is changed. Without such an immersion, the person's knowledge tends to stay representational. "Everyone comes and wants to fix us" (GB 9 11). There is a tendency to suggest solutions to pieces of the representational puzzle, that once experienced the complexity of the system becomes real and is no longer just a puzzle piece to move to another spot. "You need to be in the trenches with people side-by-side or you can't see it, you can't see what needs work and doesn't, how theory doesn't match up, or how these policies, plans and FEMA guidelines and all that stuff just doesn't work. You got to be there" (Ac7 10).

Policy

Several outside collaborators talked about the Grand Bayou's 'story' and 'their narrative' as being important in the work that they do with policy formation and implementation. To push for policy change in many cases was to push against resistance to help for the Gulf region. An agency woman who spends much time on Capitol Hill in legislative matters stated, "You know that I have also been in discussion on the Hill of Congress in which, and I think people say some rather uninformed and despicable things about south Louisiana and you know I have built upon insight that you have had [in this project]" (Ag 2 11). From the interviews we know that at least four people have used the Grand Bayou story to push for policies that would be favorable to recovery efforts and for pro-active funding measures in coastal restoration projects. One agency person said that the Grand Bayou residents are the face of every policy that is written.

We had a friendly chit chat at lunch one day. Somehow it's had an impact. I haven't seen that lady for two years but I recognized her instantly. I remember her story. They are the imaginary picture on top of my computer telling me that I can do better. Every time I write a policy, they are facing me. (Ag13 09)

These outsiders often cited the power of the stories and the advantages they have over just using data. Emery Roe in *Narrative Policy Analysis: Theory and Practice* states that "The key practical insight of narrative policy analysis is this: stories commonly used in describing and analyzing policy issues are a force in themselves, and must be considered explicitly in assessing policy options. Further, these stories (called policy narratives) often resist change or modification even in the presence of contradicting empirical data, because they continue to

underwrite and stabilize the assumptions for decision making in the face of high uncertainty, complexity, and polarization” (1994, p. 2).

I think the two meetings that I’ve had with members of the Grand Bayou community have been very memorable. What they represented, in terms of genuine community engagement, is that they’re real people. So just to interact, to hear him sing, to eat the dried shrimp and just to hear things in their own voice makes a difference. I mean, I know that in certain situations, I use other people’s stories to make my arguments with policy makers. (Ac11 11)

Power and Advocacy

An academic expressed the leveling process for the academic as a life-changing moment. He referred to it as a “gotcha” moment, when an academic finds that there is a need for both the equality of knowledge and the person with whom it is exchanged.

I think it helps reinforce to those who do understand that it takes not only a tremendous energy effort, dedication and sacrifice on the part of the people in these communities, but if they ever understand their jobs in the institution they are in (academy, agency, institution), it is going to take the same thing from them. I suppose for some it is a ‘gotcha’ moment, when they finally realize that the people they think are their clients are actually not their clients and they are not some [academic] invention. I don’t know if or how many lives have been changed by being in with them. (Ag9 09).

They have become politically very aware. They have moved from being an isolate, is the word I would use, and not well articulated in the greater American society to learn all the joints, the ankles the knees, the pelvis, of articulating themselves into the body politic and all the way up to Washington and they have raised a bigger voice. (Ac3 11)

A few of the outside collaborators shared that they understood one of the appropriate roles for an academic, researcher or policy maker was the role of the advocate. The concept of advocate is commonly used among liberation theologians, philosophers, and activists. The idea of advocate is traced to the Greek word *paraclete* which can be translated as advocate, counselor, or even helper. Its fullest meaning is best translated as ‘standing with’ and ‘standing before’ (Dussel, 2003). Through the relationships that have developed over the years through the

attendance at the Grand Bayou at the NHW, there is a growing number of people of power and persuasion that are advocates for the Grand Bayou.

Academics use methods of advocacy in their support of friends through collaboration and support through sharing resources including reviews for grants, journal articles, and promotions. Advocacy can also be a major border crossing when it validates another person or community to participate in a community or discussion of power. Advocacy may be the ultimate in validation when it is an advocacy of equality, and the one that might be the loudest 'speak-act'. An agency director stated, "some level, if you're talking about things that affect real people, you also have to understand who those real people are and be able to understand how you relate to them" (Ag9 08).

One academic understood this concept of advocacy well. He is from a similar community where the relationship to water is central in all that the community does and is. As he would describe his roots as a water person he recognized that the Grand Bayou were also people of the water. The times he went to the community he said that to be with the people, to understand the people, to be an advocate for the people he had to "Stand in the water!" (Ac 1 09).

In the past six years of intense involvement by outsiders in the Southeast Louisiana region due to the multiple disasters, we have witnessed a variety of 'participatory' models. A key difference to critical participatory action research is that it strives for the conscientization that is about advocacy. It is not another technique to co-opt the public for the purpose of a project or program (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). One respondent commented about this issue of participatory research, "it's not just *participatory research* that just rolls off your tongue like rhetoric for most of us. I think here (Grand Bayou project) it's actually being done. You know a lot of times we try to do it, but we don't" (Ac 2 08).

Oneself as Other- Care Ethics

Emmanuel Levinas (1969), Nel Noddings (1984), Enrique Dussel (1996), and Paulo Freire (1996a) all comment that joy and/or hope are/is seldom included as a powerful and important element for emancipatory change. Each of the writers speak to the element of work that ferments social change as an element that embraces and celebrates life. It embraces hope and imagination and the optimistic belief that we can enhance the best of humanity. All write about the importance of joy as a liberating force in human and community life. A number of

outside collaborators commented on the joy and hope that they saw when they had an experience with the GB people. The outside collaborators who visited with the Grand Bayou residents in the village often commented that they could see the pain on the face of the people as they talked about what is happening to the land but also reported their amazement and awe at seeing the joy and hope expressed by the GB people for their place in the land. Their joy and hope gives others hope and thus motivation to keep on addressing an ever daunting issue. An agency director who knows all too well that the political struggles are as intrusive as the salt water claiming the land mass of the bayous states,

well I think that as we roll forward and we look at the massive restoration project and I couldn't speak about it today but you know its in another pivotal moment in which we can continue to do the same wasteful things we have been doing, or are we to be informed by new approaches and new paths? I am not optimistic but I am hopeful.

(Ag 2 11)

When the collaboration includes friendship and advocacy for each other, then neither party is subject or object (Harrison, 2001). The respect that this engenders helps all involved to understand more fully the totality of the issues being addressed because they are more willing to 'stand in the water' with the research, work and advocacy. This might be the ultimate in border crossing. "In enjoyment, things are not comprehended in terms of ends; they are embedded in the environment from which we are compelled to loosen them. The environment [and the Other that is part of it] cannot be reduced to a system of operational references" (Wyschogrod, 2000, p. 67).

Creating places or contexts that help to honor the other and to elicit joy, may be one component of everyone's work where we need to be more attentive. In this type of creative context a teaching-learning-caring took place. Listen to the dialogue:

Engaging her at the conference was on an intellectual or knowledge building basis as equals? Yes, absolutely. Well I think as equals, or she was, if you are trying to set up roles, she would have been my informant in terms of thinking about that. So I guess I was her student and I think because my background is not in disaster management, it has been multi-organizational coordination and organization development, that is how I got into this work, was to look at the coordination and inclusion of the non-profit sector into the disaster management. So being somewhat uninformed about broader

questions about disaster management and some of the issues particularly in the community of recovery and the community and in that case in particular I remember her talking a lot about was how issues of mitigation and what puts community at risk and what are some of the social justices issues associated with that and all those are things that because I don't have. It was something that I studied as a background in disaster management world, very new, she was very much in a teaching role in that regard (Ac17 10). "I think that, probably we ought to keep in mind as we do this sort of thing, we need to put a certain value on a simple concept of joy. (Ag 9 10).

Private, Semi Public and Public Sphere

"From the 1950s through the 1960s and the 1970s, in the prevailing orthodoxies of development, professionals had the answers. In general, we were right and we were the solution. Poor and local people were the problem, and much of the problem was to be solved by education and the transfer of technology (Blackburn, 1998, p. xiii).

An ongoing criticism of our modern world is the way we have compartmentalized life, including academic and professional life. With the increased specialization of specializations, with their own technical languages and protocols, crossing borders is more and more difficult, and the public sphere grows smaller and smaller. The full engagement of the public by the government or the academy is often times very limited.(Fischer, 2000, Forester, 1989). As the public continues to be excluded, what should be a public sphere of government or the academy is a closed private entity, a private sphere. The attempts by agencies and the academy to include the public have had mixed results; either the people of power that are part of the private sphere are invited to represent the public or there is a low level involvement of "the people" at public hearings (Cook & Kothari, 2001). The town hall meetings such as those in the northeast United States region, have become antiquated in many regions of the country as more emphasis has been put on technical expert planning (Kunde, 2007). Instrumental and technical knowledge in a closed system or private sphere run the risk of being only representational knowledge void from the knowledge or ownership of all stakeholders (Gaventa, 1993, Habermas, 1991).

Much of people's professional life is spent in a variety of private spheres. Professions require the right credentials and the learning of the correct discourse game-rules. Many of our academic meetings are conducted in the private sphere and require the proper credentials to attend. Some require invitations, registration fees, screened memberships and the proper introduction or connections. As facilitators in the PAR process, the core team helped the GB

residents cross the borders and boundaries into the private sphere of professional academics and policy makers. The border crossing assistance included our professional and academic credentials, our network connections, our access to funding, and our personal histories with conferences and workshops of the private sphere.

Our history with the NHW enabled us to help to maintain invitations and the funds for the Grand Bayou's full involvement at the workshop. The borders that were crossed by the Grand Bayou from their private sphere and the NHW's private sphere were opened to create a semi-public sphere. The Grand Bayou participants interacting with the NHW participants created, in Park's terms, relational knowledge-sharing and -building. It is in the building of relational knowledge that the private sphere can be expanded for the inclusion of others through the crossing of borders and boundaries. This expansion has not become, in what Habermas would term, the public sphere because it is remaining only partially open and therefore not truly public. I am terming this transition as a semi-public sphere since the discourse no longer lives in the realm of either the private nor the public spheres.

Evidence of this type of border crossing occurred when an academic asked several colleagues in the New Orleans area if we had ever met a community named Grand Bayou in Plaquemines Parish. The academic was impressed by their knowledge and their expertise regarding coastal issues. She had met several Grand Bayou residents at a national meeting and wanted us to know of their expertise as a resource for our work. This indicated to me that the people of the Grand Bayou were being recognized for their own expertise and not as a connection to either myself or an extension of CHART. The Grand Bayou residents were in their own right in the discourse of disaster problem solving.

Planners such as Chambers, Fischer, Forrester and others, are proponents of participatory action methods that will help form the necessary dynamics for participation of communities in the public sphere (Fischer, 2000, Blackburn, 1998, Forrester, 1989). The public sphere rarely is achieved but is the goal of participatory action as it strives for critical reflective knowledge through public discourse. Freire, Fals Borda, Park and others have often referred to this optimum state as radical democracy (Fals Borda, 1991, Park, 1993, Freire, 1973). Although he does not use the term "public sphere", Paulo Freire describes how the concept of the public sphere is used in this research.

It further requires an intense faith in man (sic), faith in his power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in his vocation to be more fully human (which is not the privilege of an elite, but the birthright of all men. Faith in man is an a priori requirement for dialogue: the “dialogical man” believes in other men even before he meets them face-to-face. . . . Founding itself upon love, humility, and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequences. . . . Trust is contingent on the evidence which one party provides the others of his true, concrete intentions: it cannot exist if that party’s words do not coincide with his actions. Nor yet can dialogue exist with hope (Freire, 1973, pp. 79 - 80).

Presentation, Validation, Duration and Exposure

Section two discussed the changes indicated by the outside collaborators through the use of the metaphor of border-crossings. These changes were juxtaposed to Parks knowledge typologies to understand the type of change happening in the three knowledge types. The use of hermeneutics, while helpful in understanding the borders crossed and their process of conscientization in creating the public sphere, still does not give us adequate information on the variables that influence the process. This section will explore the variables that seem to influence the learning process or change of the outside collaborators: presentation of place, validation of residents, duration of exposure and the context of exposure.

I analyzed the changes that were indicated in section two in several different ways, one of which was the amount of time spent with the Grand Bayou and the quality of that interaction. I wanted to understand what the variables were that in this case helped to produce the largest possibility of reflective critical knowledge. The importance difference between these conditions and the ones in section two are that these can be manipulated in future applications of critical PAR whereas the earlier ones cannot.

The variables indicate that the place of encounter makes a difference in the outside collaborators perception of the other, but place alone is not the only influence. The length of time and duration of exposure are as well significant. The way in which people are validated influences border crossing and change in perceptions. The last variable explored is the community experience of the outside collaborator whether the outside collaborator comes from a community that is similar or dissimilar to that of the person with whom they are interacting.

The initial process of finding these variables was to look for the types of change and how quickly they occurred. I then plotted how the person was engaged at the location and how he or she was introduced to that particular location. The inconsistencies that emerged in this process indicated that there was a difference between those who were from communities that are similar to the Grand Bayou community and those who are from a community very dissimilar. I call this difference in the following chart as similar and non-similar communities. I offer the following chart as part of the findings regarding these variables. Discussion will follow.

Table 8

<u>Presentation of Place</u>	<u>Validations of Residents</u>	<u>Duration of Exposure</u>		<u>Context of Exposure</u>	
		NS*	S**	NS*	S**
Community of Need	As Citizen	X	↓	(GB)	↓
Community of Competence	As Citizen-expert	X	X	(NHW)	↓
	As Citizen-teacher	X	X	(NHW+GB)	(NHW/GB)

*Non-Similar Community to Grand Bayou **Similar Community to Grand Bayou

Presentation of Place

The variable of place is about how the community was presented to and by the outside collaborators. Some people came to know of the GB location through spring break work projects,. For others it was through “fact-finding” tours or trips regarding devastation of the oil spill and Katrina and the subsequent storms. Yet others were presented to the community as a place where they could understand the systemic issues of coastal land loss. The framing of the presentation of the community helped to determine the border-crossing.

Two examples of the community represented and perceived as a community of need are in two very different situations with very different sets of people. The first was a group of college students that came to the community as part of a spring break program. Even with advanced preparation with the group of students with materials about the community (representational knowledge) and the discussion with a professor regarding participatory work, they seemed predisposed to understanding the community as one that needed fixing. Many university work service programs have at their core a desire for the students to do something

good for someone else during a break from their studies. This predisposition of choosing an area of the country that is perceived as needing fixed as a result of destruction from Katrina overpowered the advanced work that was done on campus to explain a co-equal process of learning/teaching. The students in their interviews talked about their desire to ‘fix the problems’ of the community when they first arrived and by the end of the week with persistence, teaching and interaction of the community members, the students learned the competency of the community. The idea that a person coming into a community, not knowing the community would think that they could fix the community gives little credence to the ability of the residents to know or understand their own situation. After several days, the students began to understand the complexity of the issues and their innocence in thinking they were going to fix things in a spring break week. Their awareness of the community’s expertise was evidenced when the university students returned to their campus and raised funds to bring community members to the university to speak as experts during an Earth Day, week long celebration.

The other example of the community that was perceived as one of need and lacking capacity was from a group of bio-diversity foundation representatives. A group of foundation members meeting in New Orleans desired a ‘fact finding’ tour of the wetlands to witness areas of land loss. They asked to see the area around the bayou village and to be escorted on a fishing vessel. The arrangements were made for a fisher and a resident to accompany the group as well as myself. We were able to interpret to the representatives causal effects of the loss of land. When we returned to the dock, the comment was made that they would obtain a scientist to discern what were the real issues and causes for the loss of land. The group then proceeded to make arrangements for payment as if it were only a launch for hire. Several months later, the organization was approached for information about pertinent foundation resources that might be appropriate in addressing the environmental degradation concerns resulting from the BP oil spill. The foundation liaison felt the community and the area had little or no capacity in which to use their level of expertise.

The dismissal of expertise of the local community by that particular group stands in contrast to other groups that specifically came to learn from the community and to witness the land loss first hand. The groups that came to the community with an expectation of learning something were engaged by people who had been exposed to the expertise of various members of the community at professional settings. Some outside collaborators, after developing a

relationship with the Grand Bayou, brought students, board members or their organizational network to the community to learn from the community. In these types of engagements, the community was engaged as a teaching entity with expertise and the outside participants talked about their learning experience. Many of the people and their organizations have continued to engage the community's expertise for critique and commentary on coastal restoration projects as well as for giving testimonials in Washington DC.

Validation of Residents

Validation for professionals is often contained in their credentials; degrees, honors, titles, positions which are used to describe them. To the extent that a person's credentials are validated within various academic or private spheres, they help to determine that person's validity of participation in the private sphere. An example of this type of validation is a person's membership in academic associations and the power that the associations have in bestowing prestige upon the work of their members. This power can be used for privilege in procuring resources that are not as easily available for those less validated.

Subsistent communities with traditional ecological knowledge have a different type of validation from academic communities. People are validated because they are part of the community, because they are family and they honor their relationship to family and community (Gb 2 08). They are respected for their skill and abilities and are expected to teach and share their skills and abilities so that the knowledge is passed on (B 9 10).

For a member of the study community to be validated at a professional or academic meeting it was important for an academic to validate the community's expertise by inviting and presenting along side the community member. People frequently mentioned that they first knew of the Grand Bayou through one of the core outside collaborators such as this academic, "The first time I heard anything about it was in Denver, maybe 2003 or 2. It was through [several academics] that wanted to collect ephemeral data. Then others started talking about it. It was catchy" (Ac 20 09). The panel at the NHW in 2004 was also mentioned as a place that people first gained knowledge of the community, as was mentioned by this academic, "It was here at the Boulder Workshop when there was a session, and I saw that there was a second session the following year and so I just became a follower" (Ac 4 08). At the close of the first workshop that the Grand Bayou attended, the director of the Hazards Center thanked the Grand Bayou participants for being present and through their presence, added to the richness of the workshop

event. This academic was drawn to the session because of her historical connection with the Gulf of Mexico:

I was just drawn in by the fact that there was this participatory action piece. More intriguing to me was this community. And as someone who grew up in Texas, which is next door to Louisiana, I was like totally clueless about gulf coastal communities. And so it was fascinating to find out about the mix of the Creole culture and the Native American culture and the ocean farming economy and then more about the sort of the involvement of local people and their knowledge about the environment, being valued by, I guess, the multi-disciplinary group that had been pulled together. (Ac11 08)

The value we gave to the community and the honoring of the people validated it for others. “I have a feeling that the Grand Bayou people will be pretty well known as a result of being here as a community being attached with CHART” (Ag16 08).

Being present with the Grand Bayou people and modeling a collegial style with them was an important method of validation. It impressed several of the respondents to rethink the way that they developed workshops so that they would include community experts in all phases of the workshop planning, implementation and evaluation such as this person who works with public health, “We have got to take ourselves and our tools out to the community and see if they even work, by first asking them and one way we can do this is to design all our meetings and workshops with the people as the core designers. You know if the people were involved with more of everything that we now do by ourselves, we might just learn something” (Ac 5 09). The validation process was only to open the door for access to the professional or academic meeting. The Grand Bayou soon gained credibility on its own strength and expertise at being able to go “toe-to-toe” with experts. This academic states, “There is definitely a sense and a growing legitimacy. There were eyebrows raised at the very beginning, but a growing sense that what they bring is important and that there should not be a hazards workshop without them” (Ac2 10). The community was seen as a group of human beings, not as subjects or informants by the workshop attendees. As equals in participation, the community members were recognized in their own right as contributors to the disaster dialogue, as one academic put it, “they were my teachers” (Ac 17 10). By virtue of their continuing invitation to the workshop they were affirmed and validated by the director and became for some part of the inner circle as described by this academic, “it just feels like they have become part of the hazards community in a very

short period of time” (Ac 9 10). “They are one of the few groups that have attended that actually represent a community that is recovering. I think most of the time it is practitioners and academics that are here and so the fact that they are actually here is a breath of fresh air, and they keep coming back” (Ac6 10).

Duration of Exposure

Non-similar outside community collaborators are people who are from communities quite different than that of the bayou. Tönnie’s comparison of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft are helpful in this understanding of differences. The non-similar community people are for the most part from Gesellschaft, modern communities. Many of them are academically trained with credentials and status and with that status have types of power. The similar community collaborators are those who are from or still a part of a Gemeinschaft community where the worth and value is placed primarily on community networks and family connections. Traditional fishing, coastal communities are part of this type of integrated Gemeinschaft community.

Change in knowledge and/or behavior in some collaborators was quick while in others it was longer in coming. When sorting through the interview data, those who were quick in their conscientization with the Grand Bayou, were more apt to be people who are from a similar type community, whereas the people who had various degrees of growing awareness were more apt to be from a non-similar community. Duration of contact in conjunction with the other variables were more often present as factors of change for the non-similar outside collaborator.

One collaborator was unsure of our participation with the community feeling that the burden of change needed to be on the community to move. That person, several years later, was interacting with the community to better understand the dynamics of communities in and outside of the levee system. A few years later, she helped to fund and to facilitate an outreach program that included community engagement. She states “I started on the road of learning how to educate. I support a lot more community engagement now” (Ag 15 09). There were some outside collaborators who were helpful from their first introduction to the community in providing avenues for the sale of the community’s shrimp, thus providing higher income for the shrimpers. Arrangements were made to pre-sell shrimp to friends, to family and to fellow faculty members out of a professor’s garage in a city several hours away from the bayou community. The direct help extended to the sharing of other resources that the community could use, including a wood planer and wood for a school bus shelter. He remained committed to the

contribution of resources for the community including colleagues with specialized coastal modeling skills and students to help to facilitate some of the modeling work with the community. In both cases, the people became engaged and grew in their understanding of the difference in participatory methods from a typical service learning or in-field research. The latter person became an advocate with the community in a situation in which a colleague was conducting archeological digs against the community's wishes. Advocacy and financial support continued with this particular person until he left the region. The former person continues to participate in 're-imagining' coastal work through her position in the state. In both cases, there was learning that happened over duration of time and in multiple settings. They have both become learner-teachers, teacher-learners. Coming to coastal meetings to speak to issues or to Boulder helped to make or reveal the community members as "teachers".

Similar community collaborators were often discussing issues and doing problematization with the Bayou community within minutes of arriving at the Grand Bayou. Said an agency person, "the men took to the boats and asked about availability of petrol and the relationship with the docks. They were at home in the environment" (Ag 3 10). Duration of time only enhanced their interaction, ties and commitment. Examples of similarly shared experiences include community members of fishing villages in the Caribbean (sponsored by Organization of American States), a pastor and fisher from an indigenous coastal region in Mexico, Alaskan natives from various coastal communities and many others from similar global settings. The affinity the people stated that they had with the bayou community was strong. One collaborator from Newtok looked over the marshes and said "it was like he was looking over his community back home" (Faerber, 2010) Words such as "solidarity" and "family" were often used to describe their connection. Some of these connections were those of people who had academic knowledge and of others who had traditional ecological knowledge. All had political efficacy (based on their presence in the States and their affiliation with sponsors), and offered conversations that were learning-teaching, teaching-learning in nature. One man was stunned but happy to learn that the United States had villages like his in his home region. His representational knowledge of coastal United States was of places such as Los Angeles, San Diego, or Miami. His representational knowledge of indigenous communities was likewise very limited, and again he was delighted to know of the diversity of native tribes throughout the region. The agency person from Mexico stated, "This is like my village, some of our boats are bought but most of them are handmade. I didn't think people here still had boats like this, I

thought they were all yachts like the ones they show on TV” (Ag 26 09).

Context of Exposure

Non-similar community collaborators that experienced both the Grand Bayou Village and Natural Hazards were more apt to indicate knowledge change that was transformative/reflective. There was a significant difference for those who experienced the residents only at the Grand Bayou or at the NHW. Experiencing only the Grand Bayou community was not as much of a catalyst for reflective knowledge as those who encountered the residents at the NHW. The people who had minimal contact such as an hour class at a university showed the least amount of knowledge integration. Their responses reflected representational knowledge mostly regarding wetlands and policy. The interview data showed that the more interaction people had in multiple settings the more the outside people talked about qualities that would indicate relational knowledge and/or reflective-critical knowledge.

Similar community

For the similar community participants, the context of the encounters was fairly insignificant because they were able to build and share knowledge and have mutual discourse (Ac 13 09). Their responses were similar if they met at the Grand Bayou village or at a meeting elsewhere. The relationship that was established and trust built through conversations were more important than the context and the strongest determinant for mutual learning. However, visiting the Grand Bayou served to affirm the relationship and contributed to the building of knowledge. “Being present at the Grand Bayou was an affirmation of mutual experiences [of similar type communities] and added to the richness of people’s conversation and understanding” (Ag 4 09).

Duration

Duration was similar to the context in that the similar communities understood issues and problems with very little exposure. One community woman commented about the OAS delegation that the people ‘got it’ without having to ask the typical questions about why people would want to live in a marsh and live a subsistent lifestyle. I was able to interview several people that were not part of the sixty-five interviews used for this study, who were from similar communities. Their comments were almost identical, ‘we see ourselves in their situation, we know the challenges.’ They would add that the circumstances may be different or the causation of the problems different but the fight for their voice to be heard is much the same. “I think that

because they were coming from areas where a lot of these Caribbean islands have had to deal culturally with these issues without really any government interaction, they just dealt with it every time on their own. So I think it was something that they could relate to (the lack of assistance following Isadore and Lili)” (Ag 3 10).

Non-similar community collaborators were not as fast to pick up on all the nuances as did the similar community collaborators. This can be attributed to the time it takes to cross-cultural and language barriers. The barriers that were mentioned in the first half of this chapter take time to bridge or to break. It is a testimony to both the outside collaborators and to the community residents that so many of the outsiders are strident in their conscientization of issues and are committed to working on them either in their own locale or with the bayou region.

The duration of time is a factor in this research in that the community, as it gained resources and agency, was able to attend numerous professional and academic meetings. The community members also lectured at several universities and their related communities. The opportunity to have interactions with the Grand Bayou community by outside collaborators was increased over time. An agency official stated that,

It is amazing, I am talking about the longevity of it. That it has gone on, because the ... grants are six month grants. Now obviously in six months you can't develop that rapport, you can't develop that kind of relationship in six months. I know we had a couple of extensions on it and so on but that even makes the accomplishment even more amazing because, unfortunately most grants are one shot deals. And you know, you gather some ephemeral data and they use it to try to get a bigger grant or they write up some thing that ends up in some obscure journal afterwards. No. That you are still doing this work, you are making me more proud of this thing, of the grant.
(Ac20 08)

It is necessary to be critical about the changing dynamics between the initial PAR project team and the community. The roles of the outsiders and residents changed both at the Natural Hazards and at the Grand Bayou. The first several years at the Natural Hazards were spent establishing a language and a comfort level for participation. Note that there were different representatives from the Grand Bayou over the years. Several of the team members including myself have a continual working relationship with the Grand Bayou community both during the NSF grant period to the present. The relationship has evolved from the first days of building a problem-solving participatory action collaboration to one that has fostered a collegial working

relationship as well as close friendships. The multi-year relationship of the PAR team has been instrumental in helping to develop and to create other projects and network relationships and research.

It is important to describe the shifting dynamics to more fully understand the interrelatedness of the project to outsiders such as those connected with the Natural Hazards Center or other outside venues. A comment was made regarding the presentation that was made at the Natural Hazards workshop the summer of 2004. Three members of the Grand Bayou were presenters along with members of the PAR-NSF team.

But this was a special session and I was very impressed with the poignancy of the story and the lifestyle issues that came up and the long-term planning from the standpoint of the community members as well as from the scientist and the planners but I think what most impressed me was that the scientist and the planners got more out of their dealing with the community members than the other way around. That it was sort of a, like really eye opening for them to realize that there are people at the end of their plans or at the end of their science or at the end of their research and so there seemed to be like this patting each other on the back of recognizing that ‘wow’ we can participate with the community. (Ac21 09)

The building of the collaboration to address the community’s post-disaster recovery and risk concerns has fostered additional resources, joint research projects, and the growth and deeper understanding of the dynamics of PAR. One respondent talking about her own work post-disaster stated, “Our relationship has deepened since the film ended” (Ac7 10). This appeared to be similar to the experience of the team members as well. “It was as if the concentration on the work took time away from building relationships” (Ac7 10).

Not all relationships in the collaboration matured. An observation made by a community member was that the community residents often see some outside people only in the context of their “task” and they didn’t stay around to “just be” (Gb 4 10). The contribution made by several team members was minimal. Their interaction was minimal and didn’t allow for the creation of relationships.

From my perspective as a participant observer and facilitator, for those who have stayed with the community and have helped expand the project to multiple communities, we may be walking with a bit more humility and critical awareness of the immense work it takes to honor

the community, the process and to not personally burn out. Those initial perceived pats on the back are probably more like hands to rub ointment on the calluses.

Summary

Understanding what happens to the people in power while exposed to a PAR project can help in developing the appropriate dynamics for change in future projects for appropriate inclusion of community members. This is not only important for the fullest possibility of inclusion of and for the support of the community in a planning process but also for the mutual learning that can transpire. It is through that mutual knowledge building/sharing that possible new directions or solutions can be created that will more adequately address the root causes of a problem and help in imagining the resolution of that said problem. As revealed in this case study, PAR can be a viable model for a people-inclusive problem-solving process. It will take time and commitment of resources and the challenge that all participants are in it to learn.

The spheres of influence that contain policy makers, academics and practitioners can be opened through PAR. In opening the spheres of research, planning and implementation, different voices will add to the discourse and knowledge building. How the person will change in the discourse is not something that can be predicted; how we manage a participatory process with the identified variables may help in conscientization and problematization for and with the community.

Using care in choosing the types of settings and interactions in which discourse takes place is significant as it is in devising the ways in which all participants are validated. These variables were not something I was especially mindful of when participating in this project nor even for some at the beginning of the research. I was usually careful as were others in the core team both within the community and the outside collaborators to provide good hospitality and meeting space for gatherings but we did so out of the 'good practices' of meeting facilitation and friendship. The findings from this research will help me and I hope others to be more mindful of these aforementioned variables in helping a participatory process be as robust as possible. The final chapter will address the implications of the findings that can enhance a PAR project.

Researcher Bias

Hermeneutics is a discipline that is historically derived in the Western world from theology. It has been passed down to the academy and claimed as its own. I stand in the

training and heritage of those who have been trained in critical hermeneutics. My seminary professor, Charles Brown, a theologian-ethicist and African American Baptist, was a student of Howard Thurman and friend of James Cone (1970). His framing of society came from the critical sociology and theology of the Niebuhrs and Thurman. I was also trained in critical analysis by Brown's colleague in my undergraduate work at University of Puget Sound, utilizing theories of Robert Coles, John Holt, Morgan, John Dewey, Paul Freire and actually being taught by Ivan Illich. Freire, Fals Borda, Habermas all come from a hermeneutic that derives itself from liberation theology or some variation of it. His grandfather who was the president of a reformed Lutheran Seminary influenced Habermas. The Seminary is linked to both to the Scottish Enlightenment to many of the Frankford School sociologists. Because of their faith traditions and because they saw the inconsistencies in the work of those traditions they push against those inconsistencies. They did not abandon their faith for a new secular religion in the academy. Instead took the ideas of the worth of humankind and applied it to critical conscientiousness and to the understanding of discourse. Because we know the inherent flaws in any system or theory we become even more diligent in critical hermeneutics, thus critical theory is extremely appealing in that it offers the user an historical contextual critic, an analytical critic, and critically understands how these are appropriated.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

This concluding chapter will address some of the conditions that can help and hinder border crossing and border pedagogy. As revealed in the data, the change in the outside collaborators did occur in significant ways that were influenced by several variables. The chapter sections include the introduction, the shifting roles of the outside collaborators and of the residents as border-crossing, facilitation of PAR, the creation of borderlands, place and embodiment, the Grand Bayou as a borderland, Natural Hazards Workshop as a borderland and the GB and NHW as a borderland together and then finishing with border barriers, place sense, ethics of praxis and future possibilities.

Introduction

Disasters have pasts, presents and futures, whether they arise from events that people consider to be sudden, such as earthquakes, or those, such as droughts or toxic exposures, that occur unperceived over long periods only to be recognized well after their initial manifestations. Eminently social, disasters are worked out in complex interactions and discourses in which the needs and interests of many involved individuals, groups, and organizations are articulated and negotiated over the often extended duration of the entire phenomenon (Oliver-Smith and Hoffman 2002, p. 12).

If one concedes that risks and vulnerability are socially constructed, then risk, vulnerability reduction, and resiliency can be socially constructed as well. The root causes that form vulnerability to natural and technological hazards include land use patterns, exploitive economic practices, environmental degradation and social/political practices that marginalize and silence people. These root causes (Fullilove 2005) are the types of socially-constructed issues that can be addressed pre-event, and the community in so doing, may lessen the impact of the hazard. When the community addresses the root causes of a disaster, its people are strengthened. Their strength contributes to the enhancement of their capacity and resilience and that of their entire environment (Eade 1997, Walker & Salt 2006). The processes of identifying the root causes through conscientization and problematization and of embracing their resolution through

study, action, and reflection-praxis calls for knowledge building of all participants/stakeholders of the community. The PAR model for a community's active involvement in the entire process is a considerable paradigm shift and represents the function of PAR as understood by Park. Participatory research has the ability to connect with this capacity to envision a freer world that lies dormant in the oppressed consciousness of subjugated people (Park, 1993).

This research has shown that the engagement in the PAR process does impact the academics, policy makers, agency practitioners, and others who engage in the process and/or have significant contact and discourse with community people who are part of a PAR process. It adds to the literature about the impact that PAR has on the outside collaborators who generally instigate the PAR process and shows how their involvement in PAR has helped in border-crossings. As described in chapter 6, the outside collaborators changed, and many of the changes were unanticipated in the research. I have referred to these types of changes using several metaphors or theories including Giroux's border-crossing (1992), [Gadamer's (1991) confronting of one's own prejudice], and Ricoeur's (1981) work on hermeneutics. In these concluding remarks about this research, I will share more fully the ideas developed in the previous chapter about border-crossing and extrapolate those crossings into what I call the building of borderlands.

It is in these borderlands that the semi-public sphere and discourse ferment and develop and can, if nurtured, emerge in a full public sphere with full public discourse. It is in these constructed contexts that relational knowledge can develop and lend itself to the development of semi-public spheres. I contend that the working components for this emerging borderland are a way of doing participatory critical PAR and a way of understanding the dynamics of change/learning. Change and learning, understood here as facilitated by building borderlands, can be achieved by utilizing Park's knowledge typologies, while paying astute attention to the process, the facilitation, the ethics and the physical context of formal and informal gatherings.

Shifting Roles of Outside Collaborators and Residents as Border-Crossing

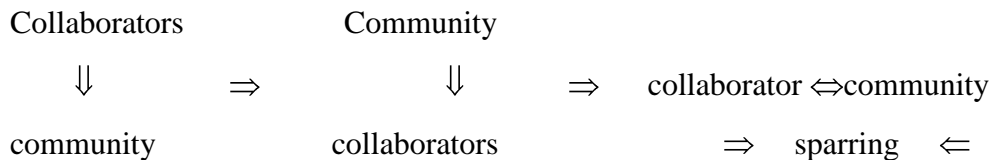
In the first two years of the PAR collaborative, the outside collaborators acted as mentors or guides for community members, helping them to navigate regional and national meetings, organizations and other resources. The mentor/student roles reversed as the outside collaborators

spent more time in the community. The community members became the mentors or guides for the outside collaborators, sharing their local knowledge and traditional ecological knowledge. In some professional training programs, this type of learning process is called “shadowing,” wherein the learner shadows the mentor to experience the process and gather pertinent learning experiences (Schuman, 2006). The community and the outside collaborators have been in both the mentoring role and in the shadowing role. What has emerged from the dynamic of learning from each-other (relational and representational knowledge types) is the ability to do critical analysis with each other. One colleague often uses the expression that we can “spar” with each other over ideas and concepts. It is in this sparring and analysis that critical-reflective knowledge is created and experienced. The ‘sparring’ or engagement process is a participatory critical analysis (PCA) and the essence of the public sphere.

The diagram below illustrates the shadowing process where representational knowledge is shared and relational knowledge is formed. Out of this dynamic flowed the critical-reflective knowledge dynamic of sparring or going “toe-to-toe” as one person stated in her interview.

Transition of shadowing to co-collaborating

Table 10



Part of what the collaborators did in mentoring the GB residents was to share their knowledge of the private spheres of discourse and of the work worlds of the academic, of the policy maker, or of the agency head. The process was to ‘deconstruct’ private spheres, public meetings, and conferences to help folks to understand their inherent structures and power dynamics. This deconstruction could include such things as preparation for the meeting by obtaining full reports for review, doing background reviews on the leaders or resource people, or learning what funding sources are involved with the projects. All of the above activities are common habitus for ‘professionals’ but are not part of the lifeworld of the GB. By engaging in these activities, the GB learns the discourse rules of the “professional meeting culture.”

The roles reversed when the collaborators shadowed the community and became the students. The Grand Bayou taught the collaborators about a siphon project that did not

accomplish its desired outcome to build land mass. The collaborators were brought into the knowledge process of the community's TEK to understand the integration of various knowledge types. The "siphon" experience resulted in conscientization and problematization of the issue.

The reflective learning process from meetings was enhanced over the years as the community members became familiar with the types and varieties of meetings. Attending meetings together became a mutual learning experience. Doing reflection afterwards was a helpful learning experience for both the outside collaborators and the community members and offered a greater understanding of the implications of the meeting for those doing the reflection. bell hooks (1984) argues that the community that is living on the edge has developed a particular worldview that perceives and discerns from a different perspective than those who are not on the edge. The perspective from those who are on the edge is critical in helping others to understand and to de-construct the predominant discourse at public meetings.

After a public meeting, the three PAR collaborators, two outsiders and one community member went out and discussed the meeting and dynamics over tacos. The discussion was reflective and rich in critique of the meeting dynamics and the content because the three people's perspectives were shared. The exchange is an example of the community-collaborator change from shadowing each other to a relationship characterized by sparring, debate, reflection and joy—all indications of multiple border crossings at the levels of representational, relational, and reflective knowledge.

The community-collaborator relationship is creating critical reflective knowledge. This work enables discussion and disagreement on issues in an egalitarian way, which according to Habermas (1987) is a mark of the public sphere. An agency person talked about the role shift and the conscientization of the residents and outside collaborators by stating,

The real increase in this whole thing is the changing role of the Grand Bayou folks. You might say they went from what was perceived as a 'people-of-need,' to educators and more. As their abilities to communicate with the outside increased so did their ability to teach. (A 6 10)

Bardolf reminds those who would use PAR that it is a slow and complex process:

PRA [PAR] is not a standalone methodology. It is never an end in itself, because it is always serving some other purpose. It has to be part of a systematic approach to achieve a development objective, and is only one of many steps taken in a project cycle and development process. Understanding its place and timing in the process,

and how it should be designed to fit in with everything else, is critical for it to be fully useful (Bardolf, 1998, p. 20)

The systematic approach referred to by Bardolf will be explored as part of the conclusions to this case study. Part of that systems approach of PAR includes the change in my role as facilitator, border-crossings, ethical practices, and creating safe places for border-crossings [borderlands]. Place and embodiment will be discussed following the section on the creation of borderlands.

Border Crossing and Border Pedagogy

PAR is about ‘movement’ and ‘crossings’ from one understanding to another understanding. Border pedagogy is the context, process, content, and structures used to facilitate the crossing of borders. The movement and change that takes place as a result of PAR can be considered to be a border-crossing. The critical metaphors or theories that best help to interpret and to make useful the findings in this document are Henry Giroux’s concepts of border crossing and border pedagogy. Border crossing helps address the issue of how a researcher or policy maker discovers his or her own theory, method, value, and place prejudices (Gadamer 1991) when these are so deeply buried in our life world (Habermas 1987, Seamon, 1979).

Border crossings and border pedagogy by both the residents of the GB and by the outsiders were critical for the changes reported by the outsiders. Border crossing is defined in this work as the crossing from one way of understanding and interpreting to another, for example, from one culture to another, from one theoretical and methodological concept to another, from a construct of ‘place’ as ‘site’ to a construction of ‘place’ as dwelling-in, or from a definition of the ‘other’ as ‘informant’ or ‘client’ to ‘inter-subjective’ partner (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973, Habermas, 1987). It can also mean to dwell with a certain degree of comfort, understanding, and appreciation in a place that is not one’s own.

Giroux says that the first task of border pedagogy requires our critical recognition or deconstruction of our ontology of being part of hegemonic power. This is done through relational knowledge building and critical analysis. A border that dominates or brings hegemonic power over the Other or over a culture is a form of transgression and can be challenged to correct the balance power (Giroux, 1992). Park asserts that folks become their own force/presence not through popular knowledge or hegemonic knowledge but through

participatory research that produces people's knowledge, their own imagined ways to do things, from reclaiming past and history. language, culture, stories, lore, and skills (1993).

This first task involves relevant representational or instrumental knowledge and reflection upon one's values and ideological and prejudicial assumptions and is best accomplished through relational knowledge, discourse with the Other who inhabits the same-side-of-the-border and the "other" who inhabits the other-side-of the-border.

Facilitator -Animator

The facilitator in the PAR process is a challenging role and is not limited to one person. The Spanish word used by Freire to describe the person who helps manage a PAR project translates into English as animator. Animator in the context of doing PAR is creative, responsive and flows easily between the realm of the community and the connection of resources. The term when used with some of the collaborators in this project had a negative connotation, that of manipulation, such as that of a puppeteer. I changed from using the word animator to facilitator though the term does not capture the flexibility and creativeness needed to perform the position well. It is important to use terms that do not alienate the people involved.

An understanding of, and commitment to the facilitation process is fundamental to a PAR process. Facilitation is both an art (Chambers, 2002, Weisbord, 2000), and a demanding science (Wenger, 2002), for which considerable training and experience are needed (Friedman & Yarborough, 1985). My own training includes Movement for New Society, Gadfly, and the University of Colorado's Non-profit training program.

The facilitator does influence a project, and so it is crucial that his or her role be fully understood in any project. The facilitator, especially one from outside the community, needs to understand that the research is not primarily to advance his or her own personal knowledge, not to promote personal ambitions, nor to satisfy curiosity; rather it is to facilitate a problematization process at the direction of the community. A facilitator is not an objective observer or observer/participant but is an active, fully engaged member of the group (Park, 1993). The facilitators of a PAR project, usually have been privileged with experiential knowledge or training either through academic or professional sources. The diversity of training and education given by others to the facilitator is now the gift that the facilitator shares with others.

Because PAR differs from traditional academic research in that it starts with identifying an issue instead of a question or hypothesis, some skill sets that are vital to PAR may not be used

in other research activities. Paul Friedman and Elaine Yarborough (1985) identify eight roles or tasks that a facilitator/educator, and in this case a PAR facilitator, may need to fill in the facilitation process. Those roles are that of a catalyst, a counselor, a consultant, an informant, a resource-link, an advocate, a coach, and a planner. In critical PAR work of conscientization, problemization, and the solution-seeking process, the facilitator will likely play all of these roles and shift among them. These skills are not part of 'normal' research activities of collecting and analyzing data. Hall suggests that PAR be taught at universities so that critical theory, methodology, and functional skills can be gained before entering the field (Hall, 1993). Mentoring the skills through shadowing would add to the person's ability and growth. With such a variety of skill sets that will be called upon during a project, especially complex, large-scale projects, it is imperative that the facilitator is not understood as just one person but as a variety of people who can step into and out of the role or roles as the skills are needed.

Facilitation can change from that of creative animation (planner, catalyst, advocate) to observer learner (informant, resource-link) to a critical inter-actor (counselor, consultant, coach). My own critical reflection at the beginning of the project had to be introspective and self-critical, becoming aware of my own prejudices (Gadamer, 1991) and to the ways and degrees I was involved in the project. This is directly related to the Declaration of Principles [a sample copy is in the appendices] mentioned earlier and a fundamental principle of PAR and critical praxis (McLaren & Nathalia, 2007) This critical self-reflective process is continual and is geared to the conscientization and problematization of issues and the examination of methodological and ideological assumptions.

The facilitator can coach the people involved to learn each other's languages or discourse game rules, worldview or prevailing habitus (Hillier & Rookby, 2005) in order to get to the knowledge-playing field. This is a trust building process and a skill building enterprise that creates communication competence, attributes of the public sphere (Habermas, 1991), and a communicative community (Apel, 1984). Trust-building takes time and is necessary for partnerships and knowledge building. Six Southeast Louisiana communities who had started the process of collaborating on coastal resiliency issues together before the BP oil spill were able to come together with speed and trust following the events of the April 20, 2010 Deepwater Horizon catastrophe. Together, they demonstrated what six communities could do, where other communities with little or no history of participatory collaboration could not. The speed and

multiple levels of cooperation and solution-seeking needed after the BP oil disaster challenged the progress of the PAR process and demonstrated the state of the PAR collaborative as successful responses were observed. This type of multi-community collaboration is referred to as ‘multi-site’ PAR and has been used in both small and regional scales (Fuller-Rowell, 2009). The time taken at the beginning of the PAR process can benefit a community with effectiveness and efficiency for other issues, not just progress on the initial issues for which the PAR process was initially implemented.

The extra time PAR takes is often questioned, particularly in professional cultures that seem to value efficiency over effectiveness (Hummel, 2008). Taylor and Kent (1994) argue that the extra time it takes to build trust and to have the participating community as fully involved as possible from the inception, implementation and monitoring of the project, is more than made up for by the quality of the outcomes, or products, such as developing a fishing cooperative or creating legislation for land conservation, and in cases where harm is perceived, the avoidance of drawn-out litigation.

The PAR literature that most adequately discusses the role of the facilitator is in trainer guides such as those by Hope and Timmel (1984) and Pretty et al. (1995). Although excellent training guides, they are based on the assumptions that the training and resource development will be in the community. They focus on the means by which the facilitator brings resources to the community as well as on those by which the community is helped to discern its own resources and assets. Asset-based community assessment (Kretzmann & Mc Knight, 1993) is helpful when deciding what type of resource, including people, to bring into a community. Asset-based community assessment can be part of the ongoing PAR process and helps to inform the process when deciding the types of workshops, conferences and professional meetings to attend to either enhance or to supplement existing assets.

The GB people requested, that the resource people have a ‘good heart’ and abilities that are pertinent to the community’s goals. In order to accommodate the resources needed, it was decided by the community and the core outside collaborators to have the community residents go to meetings where the resources were. The aforementioned literature did not address the issues that are pertinent in helping a community to enter into, and participate in the world of resources outside of the community. Some of this exchange was mentioned above in the way collaborators and community members shadowed each other. But the type of entrée into the world of

resources in this case was much broader and more complex than I have seen discussed in the literature.

Developing the reach of the Grand Bayou community evolved with the project and has strongly supported outsider collaboration. As the capacity of the community continued to expand to encompass many public arenas, the mentoring or shadowing process as it is called in the academy, lessened as the community's facilitation and leadership increased. The broader scope of resources the community wanted to tap included borders the community was not encouraged or permitted to cross in the private sphere (spheres that required the credentials of either the facilitator or one of the other outside collaborators to access). In the vernacular of contemporary immigrant border issues, it takes a special kind of border-crossing-coyote to enable crossing into some professional arenas¹². The settings included academic meetings, conferences, university forums and agency meetings. The shadowing-mentoring process continued in these locations so that the residents felt comfortable in bringing their expertise into the discourse. The entrée was initially validated by the credentials of the outside team, but as the community people became involved with the discourse, they were there on their own merits and credentials, and real border crossings began to take place. Developing the process of connecting the community to the places of outside resources and political power was a way of not only garnering the tools and information the community needed; it was also a way to develop the places for discourse and learning, creating or re-creating a borderland, such as the Natural Hazards Workshop or with classes at UNO.

The facilitation of this process has to be carefully planned so as to make for the best of learning by all parties. The community members attending a meeting should not be, as one academic stated, a curio; they should be legitimate, learning/teaching-participant members of the meeting (hooks, 1988). Care was given to the logistics of travel, of child care, of pre-conference briefing, and of financial resources. One meeting that was planned shortly after a storm that destroyed a potential attendee's home required that suitcases, clothing, and documents all had to be secured before the person could travel. Many people with whom I live and work with do not have bankcards or financial accounts. When facilitators are making arrangements with

¹² Daniel Christopher-Smith speaks about the need for more coyotes and cites people like Nelson Mandela, Cesar Chaves, Harriett Tubman and Maggie Kuhn as examples. Youtube: Daniel Christopher-Smith-Coyote retrieved April 1, 2011

community members, care needs to be extended for things that are usually taken for granted in the general public and in the lives of professional meeting organizers. Arrangements for rooms, car rentals, air travel and conference registration usually require the use of credit cards. The facilitator needs to be part of these arrangements so that attention can be placed on the meeting and not on the financial burden or awkwardness of the logistics. Limited finances and difficult logistics can prevent some communities from considering participation in resource meetings much less imagining them as a border crossing.

Facilitation needs to be attentive to cultural values of the local community when attending conferences and meetings. What may be appropriate meeting behavior for one group, may not be understood as appropriate for another. When attending a conference in San Francisco, a friend with a “good heart” met two community members at the Oakland airport, a much easier airport to navigate than the San Francisco airport. I arrived before the others to secure rooms and arrangements at the hotel and to make sure that the bayou residents would feel welcomed, safe and secure when they arrived. I helped arrange alternative sightseeing events that affirmed the values of the residents as opposed to the ones that were promoted by the city and would possibly be offensive.

Cynthia Cook-Kent (2003) helped me to understand that having community members attend meetings, especially ones where they would be in the world of the “other,” attendance is made easier for the community members if several can attend together. This means of course, more money needs to be raised to facilitate the attendance of three people, but it is extremely valuable in developing the comfort level needed for participation and discourse. Funding was secured for the community residents to go out into the “communities-of-resources”, which included academic and professional meetings, and conferences addressing issue specific items, such as conferences on coastal restoration, on housing, on social enterprise, on disasters, and on issues of water and Native Americans.

A number of criteria were cooperatively developed to help guide what resources would be sought and what meeting would be attended. The development of the criteria helped in the evaluation process of what meetings and resources would be most valuable to the goals of the GB. Considered were the quality, content and applicability of meetings or events, who from the community would be best to attend the conferences and which outsider might go along as coach/mentor, who would be presenting at the conferences and if there would be opportunity to

interact with foundation representatives. An unexpected learning for the facilitator in this process was about the role of children in the attendance of meetings.

Often children in communities that are marginalized by the majority or dominant culture see their community as not having as much worth or value as the dominant society or the one that is differently portrayed on TV. When children were able to witness their parents being respected for their knowledge and that their knowledge was important, it helped build self-respect for themselves and for their culture. The New Mexico Museum curator reported on the increased respect the children on reservations had for their families when they were able to be involved with a traveling teaching-museum of Native culture and life-ways. Similar results for immigrant children have been noted by the Chicago's Field Museum when the museum developed intergenerational learning programs that helped to affirm the children's cultural heritages (Marchi, 2005). Building children into events in multiple settings is helpful and important for the passing on of knowledge and for the children's increased respect for the importance of traditional knowledge (Hart, 1997). Children were encouraged and welcomed in every part of the PAR project. The picture below shows one of the young facilitators helping to take notes at a meeting held at UNO in 2004. The team brought paper, crayons and markers for her entertainment, but she decided to pull a chair up to the flip chart and told the student facilitator that she would take over, and she did, at 2 ½ yrs of age. She took 4 sheets of notes, carefully writing what everyone shared, what type of knowledge this produced for the group, and what types of knowledge she was learning.

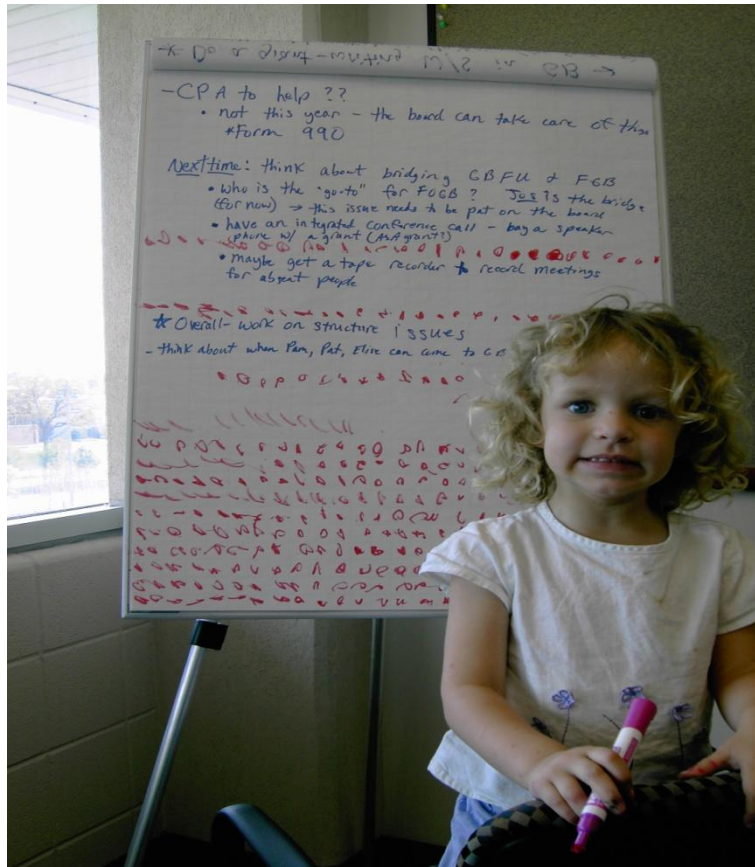


Photo by K. Peterson

Facilitation was sometimes very difficult. Some people who wanted to be part of the PAR project did not share the core values of PAR and wanted to us to “fix” what they thought to be problems. They thought they knew what the problems were, what the people needed, and how to meet those needs. I was in a difficult position: I was caught between not wanting to include some of the fix-it folks and not appearing that the outsider-PAR team was in competition with other approaches or was ungrateful for their “help”. A situation came about that was very difficult for both the community and the outside team members when several people asserted themselves over the community with answers and projects. This situation resulted in the outside collaborators and the community having a painfully difficult meeting over the differences in approaches of the outside resources people. Conflict resolution should be a part of the skill sets the team can call on for help during a project. The conflict did result in a critical consciousness about PAR but not without a price. Freire does talk about conscientization as a process as painful as childbirth. (<http://www.freire.org/>)

As discussed previously, PAR is time consuming. The facilitator can greatly help the process by coaching others to be facilitators from the onset of the project. With multiple facilitators, the process can expand more easily. The facilitator/ animator/ coach can help to spur imagination of a border pedagogy that brings together voices that can learn from each other, to create knowledge. The knowledge created helps to problematize to address root causes of marginalization, to stop insidious destruction to cultures, communities and environment. The border pedagogy assumes that the participants are willing and able to learn, share and solve issues (Smith, 1999). I would highly recommend shared facilitation of at least two people at all times and for the facilitation to shift through as many collaborators as possible. This can help to maintain transparency as well as enhance leadership abilities of all the members of the project.

The awareness of potential stress that the project is having on the community and its resources can be mitigated by the team. This was a concern in the Grand Bayou project, so the outside collaborators supported the efforts of a graduate student to secure a grant to cover such expenses as toilet paper and bottled water. The work takes time, people's time, to participate in the project they should be compensated in some meaningful way, such as meals prepared by others or the outside collaborators taking on some of the community's work that is set aside as a result of the project. One academic in this project built a school bus stop shelter for the children, knowing that the local carpenters were heavily engaged with boat repair. Immediate needs should not be overlooked while the work of knowledge-building takes place. As a result of having multiple leaders and facilitators, the community has the ability to engage others to work with it on specific projects.

One respondent talking about her own post-disaster work in a community close by state "Our relationship has deepened since the film ended" (Ac7 10). This appeared to be similar to the experience of some of the outside team members. If there is a choice of doing a task or building a relationship the facilitator should err on the side of building the relationship. Through the relationships, many tasks can be accomplished.

Ethics will be discussed later in this chapter, but I will conclude this section by saying that the facilitator has to be at all times ethical and transparent. Building on Goulet's ethical stance, the praxis of ethics in the context of PAR is not an individual enterprise but a community discourse about how and why to be and to navigate in a community setting. PAR does not justify research only for the sake of knowledge, it must always seek a timely, concrete, useful

positive outcome for the people involved. The praxis of ethics in the context of PAR is not simply about the personal and professional behavior of the outsider, facilitator, or researcher; it is also concerned with the whole enterprise from the conception of the value of the project, through the impact of all of the components of the project, to the consequences of the action and the moral and legal ownership of the results. PAR, research-as-Other research, is not morally, economically, and politically neutral or abstract but always has real impact on real people and real environments. As one academic stated, knowing the people of the Grand Bayou, “makes real the implications of our research, good and bad” (Ac 16 09).

The following is a summary of the ethical issues of the facilitator that should be addressed in the Declaration of Principles that is created with the community and delineates the facilitator’s role.

The facilitator is one who has relevant information and skills to aid in the conscientization, problemization, and solution-seeking process and can share the history of the experiences of people being addressed in the context of PAR. The facilitator may have important representational and instrumental knowledge that is relevant to the situation and may have the skills to enable the creation of relational knowledge. The facilitator may have the abilities to help the PAR participants create the knowledge that comes from reflection and has an ethical obligation to be as aware as possible of all of the dynamics, motivators, and possible consequences of the PAR endeavor.

The facilitator has a moral responsibility to share possible consequences the community may not recognize and understand that communities sometimes practice within them similar kinds of marginalization and oppression as does the larger society. The facilitator must see any publications as secondary, should inform the participating communities of her/his intent to publish, and give the community the opportunity to review any written material with the right to make editorial revisions and additions.

In summation, the praxis of ethics and the ethics of praxis in the context of PAR are not passive indicators of moral and professional behavior; rather they are dynamic and ongoing discourses and praxes that do not exist to justify action (or the lack of action) but to demand that the “other” is always seen and heard. PAR is a praxis of learning (Hall, 1993).

Creating a Borderland

“It is a place that I can speak from the heart” (GB 2 11).

... [Border pedagogy] speaks to the need to create pedagogical conditions in which students become border crossers in order to understand otherness in its own terms, and to further create borderlands in which diverse cultural resources allow for the fashioning of new identities within existing configurations of power. (Giroux, 1992 p. 28)

According to Giroux, the second task of border pedagogy is to create the context and conditions for border crossing to happen. As in critical PAR, border pedagogy creates conditions so that diverse cultural resources can help redefine and reconfigure power (Giroux 1992). Habermas would argue that this is done through the development of public discourse, and Park would add the development of relational knowledge.

There were two locations in this study that created the pedagogical conditions for border crossing and that fit the definition of borderlands in this research: the Grand Bayou and the Natural Hazards meeting. The dynamics of these locations can help PAR projects to develop the type of places and locations that can do border work. It is important to understand that a borderland is not just a site (physical or virtual); nor is it just a set of proceedings but a combination of place and events (Kindon et al., 2009, Ricoeur, 1991). I will regularly use the term borderland/event to try to capture the dynamic. An important finding is that the impact of borderlands and borderlands themselves are complex, often counterintuitive, and change event/locations where place, histories, ideologies, prejudices, and experience meet the “other”. This means among other things that an analysis of impacts and predictions of future consequences is difficult and that research and reflection remain to be done before we can have a clearer understanding of the dynamics involved in borderlands and border crossing. To cross into a borderland, it appears requires some type of familiarity, comfort, and safety.

It was assumed, for example that the dwelling-place of the Grand Bayou people would be the most powerful source of conscientization, problemization, and change. The interview reveals that some outsiders were able to be in that location only in their professional or academic role, collecting data or investigating policy success. Many of the outsiders were not able to understand the “Otherness” of the community in the community’s own terms, unless they had experienced the GB people previously or were introduced to the GB people as expert teachers. To be introduced as experts helped to create border crossings in which diverse cultural resources allowed for the “fashioning of new identities within existing configurations of power” (Giroux,

1992, p. 28). The outside collaborators were often not able to shed their professional role and be just a person when at the Grand Bayou until there was a mutual sharing-learning experience such as a seafood boil. There is evidence that the outsiders had difficulty getting beyond their own personal questions and their reaction to the “strangeness” of the place. Comments were often made about the community of what the outsiders perceived to be poverty. These social comments about poverty caused some people to want to either study or fix the problems they perceived existed instead of just being with or attend-with the GB people.

Place and Embodiment

Border pedagogy makes visible the historically and socially constructed strengths and limitations of those places and borders we inherit and that frame our discourse and social relation (Giroux, 1992, p. 28). Border pedagogy de-centers as it remaps. The terrain of learning becomes inextricably linked to the shifting parameters of place, identity, history and power (1992 p 30).

The way people experience or don't experience the connection to place and to the embodiment of the environment is a barrier to knowledge development. The place of the Grand Bayou is more than geography, it is place embodied by the residents. The ontology of the community's worldview is intricately tied to the total environment, whereas most outsiders are disembodied from place (Relph, 1967). People experiencing “border crossing” at the Grand Bayou often did so through experiencing shared work on shrimp or oyster boats. This is a fundamental cultural/ontological difference between most of the NHW community and the GB people and this is the cause of misinterpretation by the outsiders of the community. A question often asked, more in the way of a suggestion, of the GB is captured in this academic's question, “Aren't there other places you can go or move to?” (Ac 19 10). Which was responded to by a GB resident by saying, “We are the people of the Grand Bayou. To live elsewhere is to be someone else and to die to who we are now” (Gb 2 07). This was a key border crossing issue and a major contributor to the general lack of understanding and appreciation or prejudice of people-of-place by the academic and policy communities. This is not a recent phenomenon but has been an historical disconnect between different types of lifeworlds and values as articulated by Kollmorgen (1946) in his discussion of the French speaking bayou regions of Louisiana as people who do not want to embrace the modern.

Embracing of the modern for Kollmorgen, as it did for the above academic who asked about place, was code for “Change your ways and move on with life”. What was heard and experienced by the French residents in 1946 and for the GB today is, die to your way of life and change whom you are as a people and help destroy the environment that you now cherish. As a bayou woman said, “You are asking us to declare war on ourselves until the last piece of marsh is gone along with the people. Then we will have to move to Baton Rouge and clean your houses. I don’t want that and I don’t want my grandkids or their grandkids to do that. Don’t they know that when gone is gone, it is gone?” (B 10 09).

Place and the embodiment of that place as a concrete dwelling-in-place is central to the lives of the GB people and to other traditional communities in the Louisiana area. The dwelling-in-place of the GB community embodies the entire environment, the 360 degrees of the horizon (Buttimer, 2001, Casey, 1993). In constant view is home, the totality of the environment which includes all that dwells in it, the families, the boats, the houses, the visible and invisible landscape, the history and the future. In that dwelling place lives subsistence and a connection to all that has gone before and that which will come after. Sunrises and sunsets, storms on the horizon, birds in the distance, or dragon flies hovering over the marsh as far as one could see them, and a horizon (Casey 1993), make up the GB expanded horizon-to-horizon world-of-daily-experience; a world of experience decisively different from that of the majority of visitors to the Grand Bayou. The Grand Bayou residents will often talk about the elements of the bayou as being a physical part of them and their souls and psyches. For the GB people, livelihood, history, security, identity as person and community, understanding of the spirituality of the personal and cosmic, hopes and dreams (Freire, 2007) are all tightly tied to their place-world. The GB people speak of going out of their houses in order to be at home (Suzuki, 1987). For many of the outsiders, place is understood as incidental to their lives and they generally do not experience being deeply rooted in, defined by, or passionately committed to a place as described by this student,

You (in suburbia) don’t have the same natural ties to place. And that was the thing that was so important to this community. I guess I never necessarily felt similar ties to a particular place, where they are really fighting for their home. In other communities they maybe more used to thinking of picking up and going someplace else. There is not necessarily the same dedication to having to fix those problems because people will pick up and go someplace else. (S508)

Gesellschaft communities often have little relationship to place and understand place as primarily instrumental, about use of, or commodity, and not ontological, that is about dwelling-in and celebration of (Malpas, 2006). This fundamental difference in world-views makes it difficult for outsiders to understand the perspectives of people who dwell-in-place much less to consider what policies and programs might do to disrupt the synergy of dwell-in-place communities as was mentioned by one policy maker.

I still don't have a clear idea of how we as a nation should deal with this. Because on one hand we can't set national policy based on the idiosyncrasies of a certain group of people in a certain geographical area. On the other hand, what's this all about? You know, it's about helping people. What good does it do to come up with some grand scheme that leaves the people out? I'm not clear right now in my mind how this should all get addressed. (Ag 13 09)

Outsiders regularly made statements such as this particular student, "Why do they stay there?" and "Why are they so committed to the restoration of a swamp?" (S 4 09). These comments show how deficiencies can be revealed by using the three knowledge types of Park. Included in this relational knowledge (which is usually subconscious) is how to think about, feel about, and be in the environment and with the people. The outsiders came to the GB with representational knowledge of environmental and biological sciences, business skills, policy analysis, economics, anthropology and a host of others sciences and used the lens of that knowledge to define what they perceived as problems. They came to the GB with representational knowledge shaped by movies, stories, politics, and urban legends beyond that of their academic training. These perceptions influenced the way that they encountered the Grand Bayou people and environment. People often talk about the movie *Deliverance*, or the television show, *Swamp People* as if the images they saw within is what they were expecting, as with this student as she commented that the Grand Bayou was "something outside of normal society, like seeing something on TV" (S1010). And when it is not, it is both confusing and enlightening as was articulated by an academic:

My prejudice was caught off guard. What I thought I was stepping into made me realize that I was a bloody fool, about my arrogance, and my ignorance. I was humbled quickly when the community members, I should say community professors, expounded on their knowledge of the bayous. (Ac 27 11)

Reflective or emancipatory knowledge takes form in the way the outsiders reflect on or interpret and understand their GB borderland experience. Chapter five has many examples of this type of separation and gained knowledge.

The importance of embodiment is picked up in the literature on the commons and on the use of TEK in co-management with the “commons” (Berkes 2005). Embodiment can be described as the encompassing of the particular context and ingesting it within one’s being or as one’s being extending into the environment. It is the sacred, and profound interconnection of person with the “other” whatever that “other” may be (Berkes, 2008). Embodiment in the context of the GB can be understood as a highly integrated life where work, place, spiritual, material, personal, communal are all interwoven and as the opposite of a compartmentalized or fragmented life. The Grand Bayou like many of the other traditional indigenous and historic communities of Southeast Louisiana is embodied in its extended family, its faith, its livelihood and the totality of its environment. As is often heard “down the bayou”, “I am a bayou (man/woman/child) and that is who I am”. This self description is ontological/relational about their being-in-the-world and being-with-the-world, and is not geographical such as I live in up-town, or political as in the municipality of __. People from other cultures who are water people have had an affinity to the communities that they have visited be they Pointe au Chien, Grand Bayou or Jean Lafitte, and state that they feel at home, but for non-water people they may be strange, perhaps even fascinating, but different worlds.

This embodiment which manifests itself in and through place is more than what is usually referred to as ‘place attachment’ (Altman, 1975). The importance of ‘dwelling-in’ and ‘placeness’ for the GB people and other historic and indigenous people is more than a psychological or physical dependence on an area. It is more than a fear for other places. It is more than fear of the outside (Low, 2003, Tuan, 1979) or a matter of comfort and routine (Freire, 1989, Seamon, 1979). The embodiment in and through place, is the understanding and honoring of the commons, and is a profound embodiment of historical, spiritual, cultural, and personal roots and identity (Lilburne, 1989, Seamon, 1979, Tuan 1979). The embodiment of the environment is what is often experienced by the outsiders as the Grand Bayou’s passion for the advocacy of their place in the environment and for the larger concept of the commons. The people care for their land and water as a sacred trust for their heirs, and their heirs’ heirs (Berkes 2008,1999).

The bayou community residents have shared their observations of those who live in mobile societies who are disconnected from their human family and environment. As one GB woman said, “we live this every day. When the heat index keeps climbing, we live it and deal with it. They, on the other hand, get out of their air-conditioned car and go into their air-conditioned home and turn up the AC and then write out a check to their favorite environmental group and feel good. We live it, and by living it we *know* it.” (GB 6 11)

Grand Bayou as Borderland

The physical site of Grand Bayou became a borderland. The borderland gave the people of the GB occasions to teach, to interpret, to observe, and to practice hospitality, as the art and science of practical and concrete care ethics (Noddings, 1984). Both the GB and the NHW are places and events that give and extend hospitality. Hospitality is likely a factor for successful border crossing. Hospitality contains a system of welcoming that provides protection and makes the border crosser feel safe. It gives permission so that the border crosser is welcomed to participate, and it provides potency that invites the border crosser to be powerfully present.

It was someone from the NGA or one of the contractors that was working with the National Governors Association when they were writing up their first set of guidance. They happened to come to the conference and heard about the Grand Bayou. It made an impression on them. And it [Grand Bayou story] made it into the guidance. Again, it was a concrete way of showing what true or genuine community engagement looks like. So it's had objective influences. (Ac11 08)

Hospitality is core in every event and activity at the Grand Bayou. A woman invited me to her home shortly after I became acquainted with the bayou, in an emphatic and kind manor she said, “Come over and sit on my porch and have coffee, yes we will have coffee. And if I am out of coffee we will enjoy the bayou and drink some cold water together” (Gb 11 03). Hospitality is a way of life in many of the bayou communities. It is through hospitality that I have seen many diverse people with varied opinions and politics, converse with each other. This has been apparent when I have hosted several thousand volunteer home-rebuilding workers in another community and in the hospitality given to a diverse group of national and international visitors at another. The meal, be it a shrimp boil, gumbo or just a cold glass of water, seems to be the leveler and gathering agent of people allowing and encouraging people just to be people. Buber would call this an I-Thou moment.

They took time out of their lives, out of their work, away from their animal trapping [livelihood income]. I couldn't believe the friendship extended to us, strangers, and their humor! I wish I could experience that in other places. They even had homemade refreshments for us. I can't imagine someone doing that, taking in strangers for an afternoon back in our neighborhood. (Ac26 10)

The involvement of the initial outside team has influenced the residents' PAR work and their access and exposure to other settings but, more importantly, it has increased the interaction of the Grand Bayou to a broader range of outsiders and visitors. The GB and the outsiders have had an increased awareness of the value of the GB people's TEK. This awareness helped all involved to know that one way of knowing is not superior to another but that all ways are part of a larger body of knowledge that enables issues be to imagined differently. Being able to imagine differently is a key indicator of one's ability to border cross. (Giroux, 1992).

The vitality and passion of the Grand Bayou residents' presentations, at both the GB and at NHW was often noted as does this academic:

She just knocked me off my seat. I think I'd had known about the project and it had a presence among the research community before I actually got to go to that session. But she was such an impressive speaker and a person, what she was saying was so outstanding. (Ac2 08)

The GB residents were skilled at learning the multi-professional discourse. That ability enabled them to interact and to critically analyze materials presented. Over the years as the GB residents continued to participate, borderlands were enlarged, recreated, and shared.

The Grand Bayou functioned as a borderland/event by breaking down the prejudices in the Gadamerian sense. A factor of lessening the pre-non-critical understanding and perhaps of some racial and class, and rural prejudices of the outsiders was to have the community introduced as having expert knowledge and the community as a teaching site. Barriers were also broken on the part of the GB as well, as a resident states, "I sat back to see if they were just a flash in the pan or if they were really genuine in their commitment to us. They are still here, and I am glad they are" (Gb 2 10). As prejudices on both sides were diminished, the co-collaborators, outsiders and community members could engage in conscientization and problematization together.

The outsiders frequently wanted to engage in instrumental knowledge based on problem-solving, but the GB folks were working towards emancipatory knowledge and pushed the

outsiders to a more significant exchange of knowledge. This exemplifies the difficulty of border crossing. It is an example of some outsiders becoming “organic intellectuals” and entering into the world of the GB, seeking solutions based on a process of conscientization and problemization (hooks, 1988, Gramsci,1971). The following is an example from an academic about the way conscientization took place through interaction with the bayou community:

Sitting on the floor and developing a map, we learned from the community. It really played a role in terms of us thinking through this ‘story board concept’ of how to use maps in an open way so that people are not intimidated by it so that they are ok in writing on it or cutting it up and using it. It was very, very instrumental to us in the design of one of our community based programs. (Ag14 11)

Some visitors were unable or willing to cross this border and remained in the fix-it mode of operation. The solution offered by one outside expert of ‘starting a business’ was an instrumental solution and not an emancipatory one; that is it did not solve root causes. It might have increased the income of a small number of people but it did not address the emancipatory or relational needs of the maintenance of culture and place, and the possible negative consequences for the community’s internal relationships. This suggestion was an intrusion and did not fit the community’s will and created discord in the community. It is an example of two different life worlds with different perceived goals and outcomes, with the dominant life world trying to persuade the other into its adoption. It would also be an example of a *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* conflict of individual benefit, *Gesellschaft* in a business over that of the well being of the entire community, *Gemeinschaft*. Some of the outsiders thought they knew what was wrong with the GB. Some outsiders stated that all the GB needed was to make their community parking lot area pretty. “We could have a clean-up day and show them how to do it” (Ag 10 10); and another thought that they needed to be organized: “I wanted to lobby for them or to drop everything and organize them. They could do so much more if they were organized” (S 7 10). What may seem to be good intentions offered by the outsiders did not address the root causes of land and cultural loss, which were the issues the GB wanted to address.

The Natural Hazards Workshop as Borderland

The NHW was in many ways the key place of border crossing for many of the outside collaborators. This section will describe in some detail how the NHW functioned as a borderland. The primary recommendation I would make from this case study is the attention and

commitment to the building of shared grounds for discourse be they meetings, conferences or workshops. The Natural Hazards Workshop is an exemplary model that can be used for others.

As mentioned in Chapter three, the qualities in developing such a context are many and include meaningful content that can be discussed openly, hospitality that allows time for building networks and relationships, relaxation and the diversity of participants for hearty conversation. The NHW has diversity as defined by the person's vocation or avocation, yet there is an informality that does not use titles but people's first names. There is a history carried by 2/3 of the conference attendees, while the other 1/3 are newcomers. The setting is informal with no dress-up events or banquets. Lunches are leisurely and promote table conversations. The big evening out is a barbeque.

There is an emphasis on people meeting each other which starts at the opening session with self introductions. Networking is encouraged as is sharing through posters, brochures, books and pictures. Imagination and vision are cultivated through the discussion format of the workshops. The staff of the workshop make an effort to know the attendees and address their physical needs as well as their intellectual needs while at the meeting.

I have been a professional meeting attendee for forty odd years. I know how to navigate academic, professional, and grassroots venues. In all my years of attending various types of meetings and conferences, I have found that organizations will cater to their own kind, be it either a professional or grassroots organizations. Rarely are there venues where professionals and grassroots can meet the other and have dedicated time for learning conversations. Grassroots conferences are beneficial for relational knowledge and for network-building such as the Housing Assistance Council. Likewise the Coastal Society is beneficial for the researcher and coastal professional. But rarely are there meetings that are designed and maintained for intentional borderland creation.

The type of discourse that developed at the NHW can be achieved in the context of other meetings. Imagine for a moment that each professional and academic meeting had a requirement that a minimum of 10% of their attendees are citizen-scientists and then increased the percentage over time. The next target could be that 10% of all peer publications include citizen expert-academic expert articles. After that is achieved, the peer review process would also reflect citizen participation. Citizen scientists or practitioners would be equipping themselves and their home communities with tools for action. They would be providing the professionals and

academics a ‘make it real’ opportunity to learn from citizen experts. Ten percent is a very low benchmark, but it might be a place to start until there is an even ratio of those who make policy or conduct research and those who are the recipients of the policy and research. Collaborations and participatory work could be easily facilitated with the various stakeholders having the opportunity to get to know each other’s worlds.

To assure the participation of local citizens additional funding must be secured or creative ways of insuring inclusion must be explored. Size matters. When a conference is large, more than 500 people, it would be helpful to have ‘hosts’ that can help newcomers from the communities navigate their way through the event. Because power and position are important, it would be more helpful to have the ‘hosts’ be people who are prominent in their professions. Some events have orientations for first time attendees. A key role of a PAR facilitator is to help to make the entrée into the conference/meeting as easy as possible so that the community members can devote their time to learning the language of the meeting as well as to meeting people. And, it is important that at least two local citizens, particularly if they are from indigenous communities, attend meetings together. The pre-existing relationship of a community “team” provides, security, encouragement, and comfort.

Grand Bayou and the Natural Hazards Workshop together as a Borderland

I have a feeling that the Grand Bayou people will be pretty well known as a result of being here as a community being attached with CHART. (Ag16 08)

In terms of conscientization, problemization, and emancipatory change, the GB and the NHW together seem to be a powerful borderland/event that provided the most opportunity for border crossing. In a counterintuitive way, being at the NHW enabled the GB people to become part of the contributors-to-the-knowledge-base as equal and informed participants; whereas at the GB, the Grand Bayou residents were seen generally as informants, as research objects, or as clients, unless the outsiders were from similar communities or had experienced the GB people at NHW. This meant that at the NHW the researchers and policy people did not see the GB people as informants or clients but as co-presenters, co-learners and equals. The outsiders who experienced both parts of what became the one borderland of GB/NHW were able to get beyond their role-borders and credentials-borders and were able to be with and learn with the people of the GB and be in-place place with the GB. Those who experienced the full borderland and

dropped their roles were able to pick up and increase their expertise in new, powerful and non-elitist “we are here to fix it” ways and became helpful advocates and solution-seekers.

Those who experiences one part of the GB-NHW borderland did not have this same learning experience. Many of those who only experienced the GB locations of the GB/NHW borderland maintained their why-do-people-live-in-places-like-this attitude, remained problem-fixers, and were easily overwhelmed by the situation of the GB. They had a more difficult time appreciating the value of the knowledge and expertise of the GB people .

At least from my point of view, these kinds of meetings, you have all done something extraordinary and yet again this year, you have created this dialogue. I am hoping the other people, as you do the other interviews, will remember this as contributing in a similar way as I did, and that this is a major contribution to the way we do our work and improving the societal benefit. (Ag16 08)

Those who only experienced the NHW part of the GB/NHW borderland had trouble embodying the GB place-experience but were surprisingly able and willing to appreciate the GB people as knowledgeable experts in their our right. “It’s [meeting the GB and hearing about PAR] that really enhanced what I’ve been able to do in a number of ways” (Ag15 09). An experience that contains both settings is preferable for a full borderland experience over a partial one, but a number of important research questions remain.

Table 11

How do we determine what makes up a complete borderland?
What is the best sequence for visit experiences?
How can the pedagogical possibilities of borderland locations/events be predicted, designed?
What is a helpful representational knowledge content to provide?
What are the most productive relational pedagogies?
What are the best reflective processes for the greatest amount of conscientization, problemization, and emancipatory change?

Border Barriers

Francesca Cancian says of activist research that

...activist research often conflicts with academic standards. “Activist” research as I define it aims at empowering the powerless, exposing the inequities of the status quo, and promoting social changes that equalize the distribution of resources. Activist research is for women and other disadvantaged people and often involves close social ties and cooperation with the disadvantaged. In contrast, academic research aims at increasing knowledge about questions that are theoretically or socially significant. Academic research is primarily for colleagues.... Social researchers who do activist research and want a successful academic career thus have to bridge two conflicting social worlds. (Cancian, 1996, p. 188)

There are a number of things that obstruct PAR and border crossing and the construction of borderlands. There is a subtle but important difference in obstruction of border crossing and the obstruction of the construction of borderlands. The obstruction of border crossing involves the creation of blockages like closed invitations to conferences and background rules for participation, for example. The obstruction of the creation of borderlands is more complex and hegemonic in nature and is a fundamental denial of the existence of the Other. Human borderlands and the people who occupy them (Habermas’ public sphere and the shared life world are a good examples) are discounted (do not have usable or valid information), dismissed (are just self-seeking or emotional) and are colonized by the steering mechanism of power and money (Habermas, 1987). The people of the historic borderlands, also, discounted, dismissed themselves and give in to the colonizing powers and accept their place as subalterns (Said, 1978). They become like the colonizers (Fanon, 1963), discipline themselves in terms of the wishes of the colonizers (Foucault, 1997), or take the borderland and border crossings underground (Scott, 1990).

Positivism

Other obstacles that are pointed out by academics include support of positivism that admits only to quantifiable data as scientific and valid and real (Gadamer, 1991, Apel, 1984, Habermas, 1971). Budd Hall suggests that one purpose of knowledge for the academy is as a means of exchange for the academic political economy. A basic assumption of research in general, and positivist research in particular, for those who want to be seen as real scientists (Reason & Bradbury, 2001) is that the more objectivity the better. Although the possibilities of objectivity

are seriously questioned by the likes of Apel (1984), Freire (1974), Gadamer (1991), Habermas (1971) and Polanyi (1958) many scholars, some academic departments, and some funders of scholarly research are still stuck (some would say entrenched) in the positivist paradigm. PAR is theoretically and methodologically informed by the above and ethically informed by Dussel (2003), and Levinas (2006) and Ricoeur (1992) and a growing number of feminists and post-colonial ethicists such as Smith (1999) and Harrison (2001).

Academic obstacles

Tenure, promotion, peer recognition, research grants, and countless, smaller codes of privilege are accorded through the adding up of articles, books, and papers in “refereed” journals and conferences. Academics in the market place of knowledge know that they must identify or become identified with streams of ideas which offer the possibility of publishing and dialogue within appropriate and recognized settings (Hall, 1993, p. xix).

Half of the academics and several students interviewed mentioned the concern of tenure, publication, and grant support as reasons they had not previously engaged in PAR or were reluctant to do so. In most cases, they were willing to engage in PAR if the barriers were not present. Several agency people responded that they liked seeing the academics utilizing PAR and were themselves as agency staff engaged in some type of PAR activities.

Funding a potpourri of community resiliency efforts like yours is different. It takes on a fascinating spin and is something we can apply to climate issues. I can hear the theories in my head and then I see it being done. It needs to happen more.” (Ag 2 11)

Three barriers that were frequently mentioned by academics that would like to do PAR include 1) the difficulty of obtaining grant support for qualitative work; 2) the fact that bureaucratic mandates for tenure demands publications; and 3) the fact that the time commitment for one project may not produce needed publications or financial support. While universities are now increasingly encouraging their students to engage with surrounding communities through service learning, the role of the academy in society is still currently entrenched in the production of representational knowledge. Thus, to have many publications means the minimizing of time to any one research project, especially to PAR projects, which are time consuming.

Bureaucratic mindset

The work between the Grand Bayou and outsiders has not been as organization to organization but as citizen to citizen. The active work of the citizen is what we termed engaged

citizen and seems to defy the lethargy or stove-piping of bureaucratic practices. Hummel compares the bureaucratic mind set to that of general hegemonic society (2008, 1994). His analysis is helpful in understanding the blocks to border crossing. It is clear from Hummel's description of bureaucracy that research academics, policy making and the activities of NGOs and other organizations all suffer, at least to some degree, from the bureaucratic mentality. He describes the bureaucratic mind set as one that deals with clients rather than people, aiming at control, creation of information, and efficiency rather than relationships, and shaping and informing rather than communicating. (Hummel, 1994)

Hummel says, "In summary, bureaucracy changes the way human beings relate to one another as social beings. Bureaucracy replaces ordinary *social interaction*, in which individuals act by mutually orienting themselves to each other, by *rationally organized action*, in which individuals orient themselves to goals and meaning defined from the top down. Bureaucracy replaces mutually defined *meaning* of social action by orientation toward systems *functions*. (Hummel, 1994, p. 8)

Place-sense

As stated above in the section on Place and Embodiment, places matter. One of the border barriers that exist is that many people, including most scholars (including geographers) and policy makers have no awareness of their 'place-prejudices' That is, they are not aware of the assumptions that they make, even within the rigors of their scientific investigations, about the value of places, and how they discount, devalue, or dismiss certain kinds of places and relationships to places, while valuing, counting, and highlighting other places (Casey, 1993, Tuan, 1973).

Ethics of Praxis and the Praxis of Ethics

Ethics becomes a practice that broadly connotes one's personal and social sense of responsibility for the Other. Thus ethics is taken up as struggle against inequality and as a discourse for expanding basic human rights. (Giroux, 1992, p. 74)

Ethics, the study of theories of human conduct, is central to PAR. PAR can be understood as an ethic of praxis and the praxis of ethics that involves motivation, action and

behavioral consequences. At the heart of the work of Freire, Habermas, Giroux, and Park is a deep concern for democratic participation and the ethics of shared responsibility. Freire links ethics and hope (1996). Habermas focuses on discourse ethics as a way to create a real shared public sphere (1994). For Giroux, the purpose of ethics is to show how “different discourses offer a diverse ethical referents for structuring [a person’s] relationships with the larger world (Giroux, 1992, p. 74)”. Park understands ethics as a key to understanding human beings (2001, 2003).

What the various discourses on the politics of location have made clear is that the relationship of knowledge to power is as much an issue of ethics and politics as it is one of epistemology. (Giroux, 1992, p. 26)

To extrapolate from the Giroux quote, the various discourses of research and policy making may, in actuality, not be so much about knowledge increase or policy refinement as they are ethical and political activities that have critical positive and negative impacts on real people, communities, and environments. Or expressed another way, researchers and policy makers cannot so easily and unilaterally say that they, themselves, bear no responsibility for the intended and unintended consequences of their research or policy making.

Denis Goulet’s field of study was Third World development. His concerns, which he understood as ethical and political as well as instrumental and economic, included what kinds of aid are given to whom with what kinds of participatory involvement and what long-term human and environmental impacts. Goulet’s development ethics involve a multi-disciplinary approach that combines analytic sciences, applied sciences and normative sciences:

The raw materials of its reflection are supplied by two sources: the lived experience of those undergoing “development” and the numerous formal disciplines studying development. (Goulet, 1995, p. 3).

Goulet has several premises in his ethical research orientation that relate closely to PAR that include total integrated patterns of values, images and conscious profiles and the appraisal of value changes. The total integration of value in development is only when the community owns its own worth and is actively critical in the execution of the development work (Smith, 1999). The community has to be involved with the descriptions and the classifications of their roles and networks including their economic livelihoods (Goulet, 1995).

Future Possibilities

A basic principle of PAR is the action, reflection, research cycle. PAR is a continual process which combines elements of Argyris' 'double loop learning' (1994) and Ricoeur's hermeneutical circle (1981). Thus PAR is a continuing process of research, action and reflection which naturally leads to new research, action and reflection. PAR is a plodding persistence, a commitment, a vision as much as it is a theory, a method or a process. So we continue to ask: Can a model such as developed in this case study help to embody environment conscientization and problematization in actions for a healthier future? Can the PAR process continue to help to open up the private spheres of planning and decision making so that all can be heard? Opening up those spheres where we would rather hide from truth of what we have been privileged to hide, will be painful, so painful that we may want to go back home and forget that we had the conversation. But not having the conversation is not going to help in imagining and finding possible solutions.

A researcher came to New Orleans after Katrina and stated that he was so overwhelmed by the human suffering that he had to leave. The people of the world feeling the effects of climate change and of all the socially constructed disasters cannot leave unless it is to refugee camps. We are in this together; none of us are immune to crises or have enough money to buy clean water and air when it is all gone. The researcher who came to New Orleans and many others can leave but the people of GB, Jean Lafitte and other coastal communities do not have a "can-leave", they have a "cannot-leave" and a "won't-leave" but perhaps they will face a "must-leave".

So, while there is still water in the streams that hasn't turned orange from mining run off, or while there is still air that still can enter our lungs before burning them, we have to find a way to have local and global public discourse, using all the knowledge types that each carry. We will have to recover popular knowledge, traditional knowledge and bring every kind of knowledge to the table so we can discern together and vision together and act together to have a world to pass on to our heirs. We will need to develop a passion for place that comes only from a relation to place and to be a people of place in a shared common world.

Can this model of PAR illustrated in this case study help us to break open spheres of privilege, oppression and exploitation and help to democratize our wisdom, vision and voice? It is worth a try. We have had a glimpse, and the people who have had the experience are

testimony to the process. When all other systems fail, we still will have our voices that can rise up, speak truth from our ancestors and our hearts, to honor the other, Thou.

The crisis along the Gulf of Mexico is a crucible of the various conditions and issues that are indicative that others are or soon will be experiencing. Land loss, pollution of water ways and estuaries, fly-ways, population displacement and most importantly communities and the society's lack of appreciation of the residents' knowledge of these eco-systems is a growing reality. The inclusion of everyone's knowledge may not stop this fast changing coast line from disappearing but it might help in making more informed choices and decisions for things in the future. This case study indicates heightened awareness and motivation for action as well as a change in understanding the 'other' when border-crossings can take place and can make a difference.

We will need the best that representational knowledge has to offer and work to build this critical knowledge-base as well. We must learn to value the knowledge that can only come from relationships. We must learn to cherish the hard and painful work of critical reflection. But perhaps what we will need the most is what Paul Tillich, the first German professor to lose his teaching position under Hitler, is, the courage to be! (Tillich, 1986).

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Appendix 1: Declaration of Principles- a Community IRB

These principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR) are based upon the underlying concept that such research is a dynamic process in which all participants possess the courage to engage in collaboration, a goal of which is to balance the power differentiation between and promote the self-actualization of collaborating parties. Essential to the success of such collaborations is a commitment by the large partner organizations to engage the community in ethical, equitable, respectful, and socially responsible ways.

Openness and Honesty From the start, we strive to clearly explain the strengths and limitations of our participation, taking care not to make claims of results that exceed our true abilities. Such openness is intended to foster a true two-way relationship. We attempt to be transparent about our abilities and aims and open to input and advice from the community.

Clear Communication

Clear and inclusive communication among all participants is of the utmost importance throughout our collaboration. We intend to facilitate communication among all involved parties, and to ensure that individual roles as well as institutional roles are as clearly understood as possible. Open dialogue is essential for all partners and information must be dispersed to all members participating in the process. Due to the challenging nature of maintaining an open dialogue, it is necessary for collaborators to regularly self-assess the adequacy of dispersion of information to other members of the collaboration.

Commitment to Resources

Within the context of limited resources, UNO and _____ are committed to helping the community with any available resources at our disposal and locating other partners in community enhancement and resilience.

Commitment against Harm to the Community

No harm should ever come to the community due to financial, intellectual, or other negotiations

Appendix 2: Peter Park's Knowledge Archetypes

Park's three archetypes of knowledge include representational-instrumental, relational and critical-reflective knowledge types. Representational-instrumental knowledge is about things we describe or explain as objects of knowing. It is the type of knowledge we use when we make a statement that the earth is round or that the sky is blue or a fire is hot. It is an expression or declaration and can be understood as technical knowledge.

Relational knowledge is the understanding we have of others as human beings and partners in relationships. There can be a we/us or an I/Thou relationship with the other. The other is respected as an equal in the quest for understanding. Individuals and households are understood as being in community. In relational knowledge the "other" is no longer a subject or object but becomes and can be understood as inter/intra eco-system knowledge and is not necessarily limited to human interaction. It is in fact referenced by many as the intimacy with Gaia in various forms or ways.

Critical-reflective knowledge pertains to the realms of human values and ethics in which questions of right and wrong, good and bad, are raised. It speaks to our imagination and coaches us into thinking of how things ought to be, not how they are. It is normative, not necessarily in the sense of conformity but of righteousness of action, informed thoughtful reflections carried out in social contexts. It is sometimes called critical consciousness and may go against the status quo. Principled actions aimed at social change express and generate "reflexive knowledge." Reflective knowledge can be understood as principled or value knowledge (Park 2001, 1997, 1993).

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April 27, 2011

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Re: Box 2.1 in Participatory Action Research Approaches and Methods: Connecting people, participation and place

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Appendix 4: IRB Approval

*University Committee for the Protection
of Human Subjects in Research*

University of New Orleans

Campus Correspondence

Principal Investigator: Shirley Laska

Co-Investigator: Kristina Peterson

Date: May 2, 2008

“Transforming researchers and practitioners: The unanticipated consequences of Participatory
Action Research”

07 May 08

The IRB has deemed that the research and procedures described in this protocol application are exempt from federal regulations under 45 CFR 46.101 category 2, due to fact that any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Exempt protocols do not have an expiration date; however, if there are any changes made to this protocol that may cause it to be no longer exempt from CFR 46, the IRB requires another standard application from the investigator(s) which should provide the same information that is in this application with changes that may have changed the exempt status.

If an adverse, unforeseen event occurs (e.g., physical, social, or emotional harm), you are required to inform the IRB as soon as possible after the event.

Best wishes on your project.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Laird, Chair

UNO Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

VITA

Kristina Peterson is a graduate of University of Puget Sound and a current PhD candidate at the University of New Orleans where she is a researcher with CHART. Her professional and academic work is based in citizen participation problem solving as it pertains to reducing vulnerability and increasing community resiliency especially following disasters. For the past six years, she has worked closely with traditional and indigenous coastal communities in Louisiana addressing issues directly related to Hurricanes Katrina/Rita, Gustav/Ike as well as the BP oil disaster. Peterson engages in a Freirian participatory action model of research, which emphasizes the trust relationships and mutual knowledge building between community members and academics. Peterson has published on topics of gender, climate change, community resiliency and collaborative research protocols. She served as the project manager for a recent research grant with a Louisiana coastal fishing community to develop indicators of community resilience. She is a fellow in the Society for Applied Anthropology and was the recent recipient of the William Gibson Environmental award. Peterson lives in Houma, Louisiana where she pastors Bayou Blue Presbyterian Church (PCUSA). One of her current projects is helping coastal communities form a Gulf coast regional citizens action council (RCAC).