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Adolescent Visual Voices: Discovering Emerging Identities Through Photovoice, Perspective and Narrative

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ADOLESCENT VISUAL VOICES:

DISCOVERING EMERGING IDENTITIES THROUGH *PHOTOVOICE,*

PERSPECTIVE AND NARRATIVE

A Dissertation

Submitted by

Ann Mechem Ziergiebel

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ADOLESCENT VISUAL VOICES:
DISCOVERING EMERGING IDENTITIES THROUGH PHOTOVOICE,
PERSPECTIVE AND NARRATIVE

Ann Mechem Ziergiebel
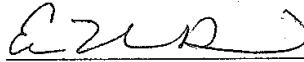
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*In the judgment of the following signatories, this Dissertation meets the academic standards
that have been established for the Doctor of Philosophy degree.*

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ABSTRACT

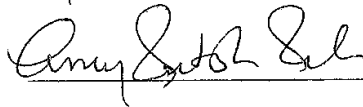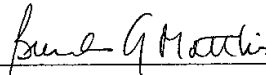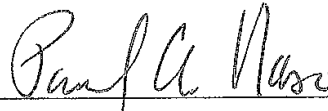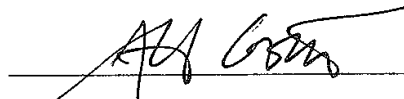This qualitative multicase study seeks to create dynamic pedagogical space - meaning making capacities encouraging multiple types of participation - where adolescent voices are privileged. Opening pedagogical space sits at the intersection of feminist standpoint theory, critical consciousness and social constructivism. Disturbingly, space supporting the inner lives and voices of students is shrinking in current educational environments, partially due to prescriptive curricula and rigid standards. The rationale for this study emanates from the researcher's (as co-participant) educational journey and professional experience at the middle school and higher education levels. This study's purpose explores, "what happens when space is created for middle school students to engage in *photovoice* participatory action research with narrative self-construction and perspective taking?" The writer's assumptions comprise thinking around photography stimulating renewal of classroom space for imagining, sharing lived experiences and exploring alternative possibilities. Participants include 15 middle school students across two case studies situated in voluntary after school programs. Participant sites constitute a suburban middle school and an urban University in partnership with community outreach. Qualitative methodology, including a *photovoice* participatory action hybrid model, informs the two cycle analyses: visual content analysis codes photographs through frequency counts leading to meta-themes while thematic narrative analysis examines discussions and narrative self construction through In Vivo coding leading to meta-theme

construction. Framed by three guiding questions, findings are advanced and through reflection and synthesis, the following analytic categories emerge supported by the conceptual framework – pedagogical space reveals strengths; diffuses power; and explores identity. Researcher assumptions are challenged as participants use pedagogical spaces to showcase, "here's what I am," rather than, "here's what I long to be." Conclusions gleaned from findings include: photographs are multiliteracies opening channels for communication, comprehension and cultural diversity; and middle school students seek power neutral opportunities to explore identity, demonstrate what they know, and engage in topics they care about. Recommendations support classroom habits integrating new literacies, museum components, bi-weekly autobiographical narratives and reflexive memo writing. This research contributes to the fields of adolescent identity, disciplinary literacy, feminist theory, participatory action research, secondary education and visual arts.

Keywords: identity, In Vivo coding, middle school, narrative self construction, perspective taking, *photovoice* participatory action research, thematic narrative analysis, visual content analysis

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To Jane, Janie and John

In loving memory

ADOLESCENT VISUAL VOICES: DISCOVERING EMERGING IDENTITIES THROUGH
PHOTOVOICE, PERSPECTIVE AND NARRATIVE

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Chapter One: Introduction

(Photograph 1.1: O'Maley Middle School Academy, *The Sketchbook Project,* by Ann)

***This is one of the photographs I shot and shared as co-participant in this
study. The Sketchbook Project captures a framework providing space for
adolescent visual voices to emerge – voices speaking about a photograph in
discussion and narration. Consider the voice of the actual photograph – what
stories do you hear from this image?*** (Memo 1.1: Ziergiebel, 1.10.2015)

Overview

This study employs *photovoice*, a participatory action research tool, along with
visual content analysis and narrative thematic analysis, to investigate the pedagogical
spaces created for 15 middle school students in voluntary after school programs. These
situated spaces foster multiple types of participation and transform ways of knowing and
doing. My research is rooted in two case studies examining the following middle school

sites: a suburban *Innovation Schools* initiative - O'Maley Middle School Academy,

Gloucester, MA; and an urban community partnership – The Girlhood Project, Lesley

University, Cambridge, MA, partnering with locally based Tutoring Plus. As *photovoice*

facilitator, I seek to join my adolescent participants in exploring image, perspective and

narrative.

My inquiry places cameras in participants' hands, allowing them to assume roles

of co-researchers with responsibilities around image (what photograph to take),

perspective (what view points to consider), and narrative (what story to tell). This

participatory action empowers participants as seers, knowers, and creators to open space

for sharing ideas and concerns about their experiences - the essence of *photovoice* (Wang,

1999). Opening pedagogical spaces sits at the intersection of feminist standpoint theory,

social constructivism and critical consciousness. Supported by this theoretical

framework, I choose to explore these spaces as a co-participant.

I explore pedagogical spaces privileging equitable discourse, narrative writing,

art-making, and perspective taking - a community of learning (Gee, 2009). While

teaching at the middle school level for twenty-three years, I became passionate about

developing a community of learning where voice is prized for all students. My

interdisciplinary background in English/language arts and social studies encourages big

ideas, essential questions, and student inquiry – platforms where student voice is

supported. However, encouragement does not go far enough. I realize the notion of voice

can be riddled with white privilege ideologies. I understand that my own sociocultural

perspective can be projected into my classroom pedagogy and protocols. Further, I

witness individual student schemas (cognitive frameworks) silenced by high stakes testing and misinterpreted curriculum frameworks.

Thus, I embark on my research journey to create spaces where learning is co-constructed, and collect and analyze data guided by the question, "what happens when space is created for middle school students to engage in *photovoice* participatory action research and narrative self-construction with perspective-taking?" This chapter begins with my research context – perspective-taking, narrative self-construction and *photovoice* participatory action. Following this context are the problem, purpose, research methodology, research question and guiding questions, definitions of key terminology, positionality, assumptions, rationale and significance, and an outline of this dissertation.

Research Context

I contend that middle school students, as a group, are experiencing a form of oppression due to the silencing of their voices and rejection of their cultural context – the shrinking of pedagogical spaces, a problem that this study seeks to explore. I introduce perspective taking, narrative self-construction and *photovoice* participatory action - frameworks for opening, voicing and understanding (I expand my theoretical framework in Chapter 2).

Perspective taking. Middle school classrooms with diverse populations are nurturing communities when perspective taking is practiced and celebrated. Educator Gehlbach (2013) defines perspective taking as "understanding the thoughts, feelings, and motivations of other people" (p. 119). However, inhibiting factors towards perspective taking can often be present in the most stimulating classrooms. Negative motivational factors for perceivers include: perceivers have too much on their mind or are contending

with too many distractions (cognitive load) for perspective taking; perceivers feel

sufficient conviction that their point of view is correct and they do not need to engage in

perspective taking; and perceivers lack the energy to engage in perspective taking as

targets are so familiar or present no interest (Gehlbach, Brinkworth, & Wang, 2012).

Fortunately, Gehlbach et al. (2012) believes that adolescents who appear unmotivated to

engage in perspective taking may be encouraged through an alternate pathway – different

individuals will be motivated by different factors.

My thinking on perspective taking draws from the theoretical framework for

understanding the social development of self, articulated by psychologist Mead (1934).

The ability of an individual to take the attitude of another toward herself/himself allows

the individual to become self-aware – in Mead's (1934) words, *reflexive*. This study

examines reflexiveness as it cultivates the development of self-awareness. Reflexiveness

is fostered through the use of language to communicate and through the ability to switch

social roles. By switching roles, an individual takes on the perspective of the other person

in that role, including the perspective a person has of herself or himself. Piaget (2007)

adheres to this social-relational approach contending that egocentrism is the failure of

perspective taking. This failure to coordinate others' points of view with one's own

prevents an individual from designing intellectual constructions between the individual

and her/his environment (Piaget, 2007).

Reflecting on both Mead and Piaget's understanding of child development, I

assert that adolescent interactive conduct is a source of knowing – understanding more

about themselves and others. Mead (1934) refers to the self that arises in relationship

with others as *me* – starting with a child learning to take the views of all family members.

Referring to this knowing as "the generalized other," Mead (1934) states that learning to take the view of the family - a system of viewpoints – cultivates the ability to know the family's view of herself/himself. Over time, a child approaching adolescence learns to take the view of many "generalized others," including at a societal or global level – thus increasing self and other awareness (Mead, 1934).

I approach perspective taking with a strong belief in reflexivity and co-construction – that I may learn as much from others as they learn from me. As I continuously work on unpacking my own prejudices and opening up space for my own perspective taking, I draw from what Hansen (2011) refers to as listening *with* others. This new listening connects to his idea of *cosmopolitanism* – the stance of global citizenship. A cosmopolitan perspective expands our capacity to be open to seeing the world as others do and hearing their ways of thinking and knowing (Hansen, 2011). I hear this cosmopolitan stance when Kwane Anthony Appiah states, "We can learn from each other's stories only if we share both human capacities and a single world" (Hansen, 2011).

Opening, expanding, listening, thinking, perspective taking and knowing is the synthesis I seek for myself and adolescents in communities of learning – the spaces where perspectives are cultivated and voices are heard. Accordingly, I offer narrative self-construction - the telling of stories reflecting individual student schemas - to accompany perspective-taking in widening classroom spaces.

Narrative self-construction. Telling stories can be scary, risky, and make us uncomfortable. As Yugal-Davis (as cited in Riessman, 2008) states, "identities are narratives, stories people tell themselves and others about who they are (and who they are

not)." We may become uncomfortable because identity is revealed as our story is being told. Yet, stories serve purposes, several being: remembering the past; persuading a skeptical audience; entering into another's perspective; and mobilizing others into action (Riessman, 2008). Further, Ricoeur (1991) sees dynamism present when narrative identity is revealed. This dynamism fuels our search for self – who am I and who am I not. I am excited about discovering what happens when adolescents are given space to make meaning through telling stories.

The formation of a story that organizes events from the past, persuades, engages in perspective taking, and calls people to action may contribute to the rich work of adolescent identity development. Supporting the connection between narrative inquiry and identity development is feminist theory - the premise that the experience of all human beings (social locations) is valid and must not be excluded from our understandings (Reinharz, 1992). Thus, I examine narrative inquiry as identity formation – making sense of one's life (Mishler, 2010).

Further, I draw from Freire (2001) that narrative inquiry develops a critical consciousness and creative power in both the participant and researcher (as *photovoice* facilitator, I am a participant). Postmodernists argue, as well, that you can only know something from a certain position and this knowledge is not binding. My past experiences as a middle school English/language arts and social studies teacher and mother of four adolescents (a classroom without walls!) connects me to the postmodern orientation of researcher as interpreter, describer, and discoverer. Whether in the classroom, living room, or lacrosse field, all my ideas regarding race, gender, class, ability, sexual orientation, and other axes of identity must be challenged and given space for reflexivity

– self-reflection on my own biases (Chase as cited in Luttrell, 2010). I am aware that with each choice I make as a postmodern researcher, something is lost and something is gained, these trade-offs being the "nitty-gritty" (Luttrell, 2010, p. 4) of reflexivity. My own reflexive practice is ongoing as I attempt to continually examine my life experiences, passions, beliefs, and assumptions.

Scanning myself for biases speaks to yet another ideological influence on narrative inquiry – critical theory. As I attempt to account honestly for my stance, I am aware that social organization privileges some at the expense of others. As a critical theorist, I contend that research should strive to empower the powerless and pay attention to the intersectionality of multiple systems of oppression and discrimination (Crenshaw, 2004). The theoretical underpinnings of feminist thinking, postmodernism, critical consciousness and critical theory contribute to the meaning-making of personal narrative exploration – making sense of events and experiences through storytelling.

Photovoice **participatory action research.** *Photovoice* (Palibroda, 2009) - the telling of stories as they relate to photographs – relies on participatory action for its research orientation and uses the art of photography to stimulate voice (Wang & Burris, 1997). Participants use cameras to take and display photographs, blending images and words to enhance understanding integrates inner knowledge with outer expression. The space between inner knowing and outer expressing may well be the origin of voice. Maxine Greene (2000) maintains that voice is how we identify ourselves and choose our identities in relation to the principles of freedom, equality, justice and concern for others. *Photovoice* empowers its participants to share ideas, concerns, and stories that help them become "aware of themselves appearing before others, speaking in their own voices…to

bring into being a common world" (Greene, 2000, p. 68). Greene (2000), Palibroda (2009), and Wang and Burris (1997) concur that giving voice to personal perspectives and listening to others' stories reveal real life experiences and empower individuals.

Framed in feminist, constructivist and critical consciousness theory, *photovoice* participatory action research is rooted in the belief that "people ought to participate in creating and defining those images that shape public discourse" (Wang, 1999, p. 191). Feelings of empowerment arise from the multiple roles (seer, knower, creator) individuals undertake when using a photographic lens to share a story. *Photovoice* participants gain valuable skills in reflecting on the realities of their lives, are supported in seeing both sides of an issue, and are encouraged to educate others about these realities. The history of *photovoice* illustrates the development of this rich technique into a Participatory Action Research (PAR) method. Participatory action ensures that *photovoice* participants are empowered to take part in collaborative research working for community change and lasting personal growth.

This study combines the rich domains of narrative exploration, perspective-taking and *photovoice* participatory action, discovering what happens to adolescents when pedagogical spaces open. Open space for meaning making is vital to learning for middle school students due to the silencing of their voices and rejection of their cultural context – a problem that this study seeks to explore.

The Problem

This study seeks to create dynamic space for students to become participant researchers revealing life experiences from behind a lens. The tension in this endeavor concerns the creation of space, a community of learning where adolescent voices are

privileged. Disturbingly, in current educational environments, space supporting the inner

lives and voices of students is shrinking (Palmer, 2007). Teacher and activist Palmer

(2007) believes the excesses of No Child left Behind (NCLB) – a United States Act of

Congress signed in 2002 reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act –

have shrunken pedagogical spaces that value experiences and voice in classrooms.

NCLB's (2015) core is designed to drive broad gains in student achievement and hold

states and schools accountable for student progress. However, according to Palmer

(2007) and teacher voices across the nation (Nieto, 2015), two significant initiatives –

annual testing and state report cards – translate into unrealistic teacher accountability and

the strangling of classroom creativity and voice. The result – prescriptive curricula and

rigid standards closes spaces of discovery. While curriculum frameworks published at the

state and federal level offer clear models for content delivery, school district

interpretations can stifle teacher practice closing spaces for student voice and schemas

(Michie, 2015).

Another strong voice articulating the shrinking spaces in our current educational

environment is Diane Ravitch (2010), who publicly and emphatically discusses her

disaffection from the testing and accountability movements she previously endorsed. As

Assistant Secretary of Education and Counselor to Secretary of Education Lamar

Alexander (from 1991 – 1993), she contributed to the writing, research and policies that

framed NCLB. Ravitch now denounces this federal act and equates current Education

Secretary Arne Duncan's *Race to the Top* program as a nasty extension of NCLB – "all

bad ideas" (Ravitch, 2011). She comments,

Our schools will not improve if we value only what tests measure. The tests we

now have provide useful information about students' progress in reading and

mathematics, but they cannot measure what matters most in education... (Ravitch,

2010, p. 226)

So, what does matter most in education? In our current educational climate of

high stakes testing, Palmer hopes for and values in the lively tensions contributing to

creative pedagogical space. He states: space should be bounded and open; spaces should

be hospitable and "charged"; space should invite the voice of the individual and the voice

of the group; and space should honor the "little" stories of the students and the "big"

stories of the disciplines and tradition (Palmer, 2007, p. 79). Other current notions of

space include valuing diverse cultural spaces and standpoints (hooks, 2010). Gender and

women's study activist Brown (2009) creates spaces for Black girls to be, to feel loved,

to dance. Further, Brown (2009) shares a more vivid vision of space:

A privileged outlaw space. Those inside the cipher are central, so it claims an

insider rather than an outsider consciousness. The best way to describe the

term, one popularized by the Five Percent Nation, is that it indicates a

mystical and transcendent yet human state, that it creates a vibe amid a

community; as well as a spirit of artistic production or intellectual/spiritual

discursive moments. (Perry as cited in Brown, 2009, p. 107)

Further defined, feminist pedagogical space calls for four critical themes: voice

(rotating chair model for discussions); mastery (individual contextual construction of

social knowledge); authority (feedback and conferencing); and positionality (individuals

lived experiences are valued) (Watson, 2008). Palmer (2007), hooks (2010), Brown (2009) and Watson (2008) describe spaces that share leadership between authority and student. However, my experience convinces me that opening up spaces using image, discourse and story diminishes all power from leadership – the leader becomes co-researcher and participant. Thus, participatory action research encourages authentic, reflexive and reciprocal spaces that currently remain in the margins of traditional classrooms. These spaces evolve into places where participants actively: hear all voices; co-construct knowledge; minimize dominant/subordinate relationships; and acknowledge individual values and beliefs.

In Chapter Two, I share the critique by literacy scholar Elizabeth Moje, speaking at the 2013 Literacy Research Association (LRA) conference, regarding current thinking on the classroom domains privileged by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These domains include: disciplinary literacy; vocabulary; discussion; digital literacy; multiple texts; and writing to learn (Ippolito, Lawrence, & Zaller, 2013). Moje (2013) passionately offers an outlier domain – the realm of imagination – which, when included in classroom space cultivates risk, discovery, and creativity. Creating spaces using image, discourse and story is the action of this study. My own past and present educational environments inform my current pedagogical purpose.

Positionality: My Emerging Identity

The girl I am trying to save is me. This rescue is not, as I once thought, for my two daughters or the hundreds of adolescent girls who have sat in my classroom. My own

discouragement, brought on by gender bias towards awareness and growth, is still going on today as I journey through the Lesley University Doctoral Program.

I was introduced to gender bias when I was fifteen, my first year of Newton High School. The year was 1965. I was excited about Mr. Bailey's Algebra II class. I knew my linear, quadratic, and exponential functions and I was looking forward to tackling statistics and probability. My sophomore math class, however, proved to be a unique challenge - not due to content or computation but because of my persistent feelings of frustration and discouragement with how I was treated. Contrary to what I believed at the time, being the principal's daughter was not the source of this treatment. I was in a classroom that did not value girls' asking questions and seeking new pathways towards solutions. Furthermore, at the instigation of Mr. Bailey, bias towards me and other girls increased the more we offered correct answers to problem solving The boys were encouraged to join in the behavior.

I still remember that class, even the room number, 3314, for two reasons: there I would meet the boy I eventually married, and from then on I would carry forward a bruised intellect. John, who would become my husband of 36 years, was witness to this damage. My favorite subject, math, was the scene of my intellectual bruising and contributed to my daily discouragement. Merging with my intellectual discouragement was a sinking identity. I started wearing black and losing weight. I wanted to be invisible. Talking to friends about these feelings, I discovered frustration and discouragement occurring in girls across all disciplines. Paths of questioning and creative thinking seemed to be closing for us.

Nearing fifty years later, I continue to seek and research spaces for questioning and creativity as a pre-service teacher educator at Salem State University, Salem MA, and a doctoral student at Lesley University, Cambridge, MA. Attending my first event as a doctoral candidate, the speaker I had the honor of hearing was education scholar, Diane Ravitch, talking about her new book, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (2010). She offered a public repudiation of positions she once staunchly advocated. I remember being moved to tears. I also remember having many questions. Is it okay to question your way of knowing in such a public space? How do we know what we stand for if we keep changing our stance?

Classes at Lesley University were beginning in two weeks and I remember feeling a bit unsteady in my white, middle class, female teacher perspective – unsteady in my own beliefs and assumptions, both personal and professional. Here I am, twenty-eight years in education, twenty-three teaching middle school, and counting. I am regrouping from immense personal loss (the death of my daughter, Jane, and husband, John) and leaping to new ways of knowing. Additionally, I feel confusion around my sociocultural identity – do I understand my own beliefs and assumptions enough to be free to comprehend the realities of others? Ravitch was modeling humility towards the nation and empathy towards school children while discussing her disaffection with the choice and accountability movements she previously endorsed. I find her journey inspirational.

My lifelong journey to understand my own beliefs began my sophomore year in high school, as previously shared. I thought I had a math identity but the overt gender bias in Mr. Bailey's math class bruised my intellect and silenced my voice. This bruising and silencing stuck for many reasons and I continue to struggle in these two areas –

scholarship and advocacy, forty-nine years later. Fortunately, during my first year in the

Lesley Doctoral Program, I was introduced to feminist philosophers who speak to

struggling women. In reading philosopher and educator Minnich (2005), I examine

dominance systems, from Euro-centricism to Social Darwinism to privatization. Minnich

(2005) teaches me that knowledge is derived from responsive, complex thinking with

lenses that check for bias, prejudice, assumptions and half-truths.

Another feminist philosopher, Sandra Harding (2005), addresses complex

thinking through her standpoint theories, practices intending to change how research is

done and also change the political end that it serves. Standpoint theory poses new kinds

of questions and debates regarding the fundamental qualities of both science and the

nature it studies. For Harding (2005), these changes in discourse emerge from the lives of

people who are exploited, calling into question the legitimacy of the dominant systems

that Minnich (2005) investigates. Both Harding (2005) and Minnich (2005), along with

Ravitch (2010) encourage me to re-examine what happens in classrooms when the

values, behaviors and knowledge patterns of minorities clash with the values of the

majority culture.

This cultural conflict and my personal intellectual bruising and sinking

identity compelled me to explore my research question, "what happens when space is

created for middle school students to engage in *photovoice*, participatory action research,

and narrative self-construction with perspective taking?" I am learning from other

thinkers that the consequences of sociocultural conflict and the closing of pedagogical

spaces in the classroom may range from subtle misunderstandings, silencing of oral

discourse, poorly articulated written discourse, loss of identity, to the withdrawal of

students from the educational system altogether. I am challenged by the thinking of Lisa

Delpit (1992), urban education leader, who reminds me to speak the truth about

dominance structures and their consequences. She quotes an African American educator

as he inspires a student with a similar sociocultural perspective to his - "you must do

twice as well as white people to be considered half as good" (p. 299). As a liberal white

educator, I am becoming aware of the reality for this particular teacher and student and

the multitudes experiencing similar inequities.

Actually, Delpit (2005) is calling me out when she discusses sensitive teachers

who conclude that teaching a Dominant Discourse to students who are members of a non-

dominant, oppressed group would oppress them further. Under the guise of empowering

their most disenfranchised students, these teachers (including myself) may balk at

teaching Dominant Discourse foundational features (grammar, phonics, fluency) thinking

their students are being liberated by de-emphasizing Dominant Discourses. Delpit's

(2005) message, along with education consultant, Rick DuFour (2004), is that teachers

must urgently remediate, actively support and creatively build knowledge of the

Dominant Discourse through content literacy with all students. Dufour (2004) reminds

me to consider *whatever it takes* - longer school hours, longer school years, restructuring

classroom time, robust family and community communication – to provide equity of

opportunity for all students.

In my practice of teaching I am confronting my assumptions that students of

minority discourses may feel that their primary identity is being denied by being taught

the Dominant Discourse. I continue experience tension around the teaching of status

discourses and the rules required for admission into the Dominant Discourse while

opening spaces for relational cultural discourse. I open myself up to an about-face, inspired, in part, by the courage of Ravitch's (2010) new thinking, and thinkers I meet through my Doctoral Studies. I am excited about deeply exploring my three domains of *photovoice* participatory action research, perspective-taking and narrative self-construction, informing me of the power of communities of learning that value the opening of pedagogical spaces to impact all students.

In Ravitch's (2010) title, *death and life* are symbolic for me. I see a resurrection in her thinking, a rebirth of a comprehensive high school that uses interdisciplinary, collaborative and multicultural approaches for engaging and motivating all students. She is calling for a renewed commitment to both equity and quality. I intend to go forward with my study of "adolescent visual voices" as I reexamine the seeds of my discouragement due to gender bias. I want to write about and encourage creating spaces for adolescent emerging identities while re-voicing my own sociocultural perspective. I seek to work on bringing a metacognitive approach to my assumptions, understanding that the more strongly I know my own beliefs, the more open I become to change and understanding the beliefs of others.

My Purpose: *Photovoice*, Narrative Self-Construction and Perspective Taking

My intentions in pursuing the cultivation of adolescent voice through pedagogical spaces embracing *photovoice*, narrative self-construction and perspective taking are influenced by my own experiences as a learner. This journey began 49 years ago when I lost my voice in Abner Bailey's 10th grade algebra class, as shared earlier. Coming up against one truth, one authority, and one objective method leading to knowledge, was crushing. This feeling of defeat ignited in me a determination to challenge and overrule

patriarchal oppression throughout my secondary education, post-secondary education, and early in my middle school teaching career.

My thinking on gender inequity and patriarchal dominance began to intersect with other cultural characteristics when I became a social studies teacher/coach on a middle school humanities team. While teaching at O'Maley Middle School, Gloucester, MA, the energized and diverse student population (including recent immigrants from Brazil, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Viet Nam and Russia) quickly revealed my middle class white privilege - my tainted lens on being and thinking. The intersection of social class, race, ability, and sexual orientation, along with gender in my students' experiences exposed my limitations and biases towards student schemas (cognitive frameworks) other than my own. As my limitations around cultural diversity were exposed, I began to design interdisciplinary curriculum units connecting images with perspective and place (themes of geography), hoping to discover commonalities in student experiences. I sought common classroom discourse through art (be it a watercolor, photograph, collage, or pencil drawing) – an aesthetic I personally found welcoming.

This welcoming stems from deep artistic roots. As a child, I was inspired and encouraged by my mother, Jane Norton Mechem, and grandmother, Ann Harris Norton, both talented artists working in oil, mosaic, and stained glass. In addition, I spent many afternoons with my two great-aunts, Peggy and Dorothy Norton, both significant contributors to the iconic and well-known Folly Cove Designers. Presently, I am engaging in art as a way to process family tragedy. Brush stroke by teary brush stroke, the act of creating a watercolor helps me work through sorrow and be surprised by joy.

Art and art-making engage in the unfamiliar, triggering a full range of emotions and responses. And most importantly, art grants permission to wonder.

Therefore, spaces to wonder and imagine are the individual and collective territory I choose to explore in this study. At present, my pedagogical intentions begin with unpacking my sociocultural perspective. As a feminist thinker, I accept the standpoints or perspectives that shape my understanding of the social spaces I study. I draw from critical pedagogy (Freire, 2001), committing to dialogical reflection and action to overcome relations of domination. Advancing this revamping of traditional education, feminist pedagogy (hooks, 1994, 2010; Reinharz, 1992) rethinks the role of scholarship, challenging existing regimes of power, and advocating that the researched becoming the researcher.

Further, critical and feminist pedagogy leads me towards participatory action research - a balance between researcher and participant where questions and content are co-constructed. Consequently, as a participant facilitator, a new understanding of my own identity is emerging.

Research Question and Guiding Questions

As stated earlier, the purpose of my research is to unpack my own biases, discover spaces where learning is co-constructed, and describe adolescent emerging identities. My research question explores, "what happens when space is created for middle school students to engage in *photovoice* participatory action research and narrative self-construction with perspective taking?" I find grounding in the research of my domains guided by the following questions:

- How is perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescents grapple with creating a community of learning that values all voices?

- How does the integration of autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives?

- How might *photovoice* – as a participatory action research method – help adolescents imagine an alternative possibility and make meaning of life experience?

These guiding questions inform my methodology as I begin to develop relationships at my data sites. Further, an understanding of the terms below provides a platform for my exploration of *photovoice*, perspective taking, and narrative-self construction.

Definitions of Key Terminology

Codifying - the process of identifying and sorting data (photographs and narratives) into categories of meaningful issues, themes or theories (Palibroda, 2009)

Community of Practice (Learning) – frameworks where cultural models can be shares through stories, practices and procedures – culture becomes a composite repertoire created by the interaction, borrowing, imposing and brokering among its participants (Wenger, 1998)

Co-researcher – *photovoice* participants are co-researchers along with the a *photovoice* facilitator – together, they make decisions about the focus of the project, collect and analyze data, create new knowledge and share findings with others (Palibroda, 2009)

Data – consists of the photographs, taken by participants, group discussions, and narratives from *photovoice* (Palibroda, 2009)

Identity - as explored through storied narratives, sense of self (or identity) is fluid, "always producing itself through the combined processes of being and becoming, belonging and longing to belong (Yugal-Davis as cited in Riessman, 2008, p. 8).

Marginalized Groups – groups of individuals who are most excluded from public discussion and who have limited access to centers of influence and power – through *photovoice*, community members from marginalized groups are able to have their voices heard (Palibroda, 2009)

Narrative – organizing life events into various kinds of stories, often about the self and the changing self (self-construction) (Riessman, 2008) – *photovoice* employs group discussion and narrative writing as research data points (Palibroda, 2009)

Pedagogical Spaces – arises from the work of sociocultural theorist,Vygotsky (1978), describing the emergence of human development from collaborative cultural contexts – classroom spaces encouraging multiple types of participation while promoting an awareness of "self" as acting in a community of practice (Brown, 2005)

Participatory Action Research (PAR) – a method of collaborative research that involves increased understanding of an issue of concern and aims at improving conditions through individual and group action – *photovoice* is a form of PAR (Palibroda, 2009)

Perspective taking: understanding the thoughts, feelings, and motivations of other people (Gehlbach, 2013)

Photovoice Facilitator – an individual having the skills necessary to facilitate the form of

PAR called *photovoice* – a co-researcher with *photovoice* participants (a person who

agrees to take part in *photovoice* (Palibroda, 2009)

Standpoint Theory – an epistemology arguing that all knowledge is constructed in a

specific matrix of physical location, history, culture, and interests (Sprague, 2010)

Story and narrative: used interchangeably, a discrete unit of discourse with a sequential

and temporal ordering (Riessman, 2008)

VOICE– an acronym for Voicing Our Individual and Collective Experience – this

acronym is used during discussion to remind participants to think - not only about their

own life experience, but about shared life events and conditions (Palibroda, 2009)

Exploring and living with these terms in my research gives voice to my emerging

identity and provides a framework for my qualitative methodology.

Current Methodology

Pilot studies inform my current research focus involving qualitative analysis of

two dynamic case studies: suburban O'Maley Middle School, Gloucester, MA, and urban

Girlhood Project, Cambridge, MA. However, I did not begin my research journey with

the lenses I now employ. During my first year of doctoral studies, I was exploring gender

dominance, partly due to my own silencing in Abner Bailey's sophomore algebra class

(mentioned earlier) and my observations as a middle school humanities educator,

inquiring, "what happens to middle school girls on the way to math class?" Probing the

efficacy of single-gender classrooms, grounded in the seminal works of Pipher (1994)

and Orenstein (1994) - both sounding the alarm about the traumatic experiences of

adolescent girls passaging through adolescence - I found myself stuck. Instead of separating genders and denying racial, ethnic and cultural truths, I became deeply excited about exploring the intersection of social class, race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, along with gender, through the creation of pedagogical space – a resurrection of many voices. Voice is at the heart of my two pilot studies (shared in Chapter Three): *Personal Narrative Exploration: Creating Critical and Self-Reflective Learners and Practitioners*; and, *Girls, Media, and You*.

Three domains of study emerge from my pilot studies - *photovoice* participatory action research, perspective taking and narrative self-construction - vibrant spaces for voice and authentic identity exploration. Thus, my current research captures these domains while expanding visual content analysis (around images) and cultivating thematic narrative analysis (discussion and narration around images). My research explores two sites: a suburban middle school voluntary after school program (O'Maley Middle School Academy, Gloucester, MA: 4 participants); and, an urban middle school voluntary after school program (The Girlhood Project, Cambridge, MA: 11 participants). The 15 participants range in age from 11 to 15 and gather voluntarily for organized after school activities. I spend 12 weeks at each site including 4 to 5 weeks of data collection, celebrating the relational development between myself (*photovoice* facilitator) and participants (co-researchers).

Informed by qualitative research, I create two case studies employing within and cross-case analysis, as each site powerfully informs my study. My qualitative methods of analysis are dynamic and reflect the multiple data points (photographs, discussion, narrative self-construction) emerging from the pilot studies described above. I draw from

Luttrell (2010), Reissman (2008), Rose (2012), and Saldana (2009) as I approach the photographic images, videotaped discussions and scribed narratives. Rose (2012), as stated earlier, provides a critical approach to visual analysis: she urges the researcher to take images seriously; think about the social conditions and effects of visual objects; and consider your own way of looking at images. I choose to center my visual analysis on the image itself, believing there are multiple layers of meaning in a single photograph – intentions, choices, and narratives (Luttrell, 2010).

Further, while examining the photographic image, Luttrell (2010) and Rose (2012) suggests analyzing content and its compositional modality. However, *photovoice* methodology is less concerned with compositional analysis and psychoanalysis than with what Foucault calls an 'inspecting gaze' (Lutrell, 2010, p. 224) – images that orient us to what is normal, inevitable or desirable. In addition, I combine visual content analysis with thematic narrative analysis (In Vivo coding – using actual participant terminology - being the first cycle of this analysis) while coding for themes and patterns in discussions and narratives (Riessman, 2008, Saldana, 2009). My findings connect to my guiding questions and encourage synthesis leading to analytic categories and ultimately, conclusions. Finally, I compose analytic memos (Saldana, 2009), encouraging reflexivity for understanding and further inquiry. Creating pedagogical spaces that stimulate image-taking, perspective-taking and narrative self-construction requires focus and vision while my own dynamic research stimulates constant examination of the assumptions I carry.

Assumptions

I bring four assumptions to my study generated from past experiences, current educational practices and heuristic thinking. My first assumption is premised on the

epistemological triad – the knower, the known and the process of knowing requires space

for voicing, risking, failing and risking again. I contend that participatory action values

this space and diminishes power. It fosters co-creation of knowledge leading to

understanding. My second assumption is guided by visual content theory – a critical

approach to visual images taking into account social, compositional and technological

modalities (all three are important for understanding). I believe that deeply embedding art

and art-making into communities of learning increases participation and engagement,

while deepening thinking, language ability, writing skills and visual literacy. Continuing,

my third assumption speaks to knowledge being culturally constructed and relational in

nature. Knowledge relies on student schemas (cognitive frameworks) being cultural

framed, as cultural context is naturally relational and essential for understanding

(Vygotsky, 1978).

Finally, the missing domain of imagination, my fourth assumption, celebrates

the six domains - shared earlier, in current classrooms restructuring around the CCSS

framework. Yet, I maintain the need for this missing domain – imagination - the vital

space where wondering is cultivated through cultural context, voice, creativity and

inquiry. These four assumptions place me at odds with dominant school discourses

around meritocracy and assessment as I seek to join my adolescent participants in

exploring image, perspective and narrative through safe and open spaces – thus, valuing

all voices.

Rationale and Significance

My study is theoretically and methodologically informed by participatory

action research, a research orientation where participants are research partners in the

production of knowledge while researching the social world (Bergold & Thomas, 2014). The rationale for this study emerges from my lived experiences encouraging me to create open spaces for adolescents where voice is prized, learning is co-constructed, and choice is valued. Commanding cameras, participants share images, discuss choices, and make connections to their lived experiences – all seeds of identity development. Telling stories through photographs promotes perspective-taking, as visual content finds roots in participant cultural context.

Art-making (taking photographs) is fun, creative, and courageous. Adding story to and discourse around these images is empowering. Understanding how identity emerges and exhibiting the lived experiences of participants contribute to a body of work I refer to as "adolescent visual voices." May they always find space and forever be valued.

Outline of Dissertation

This first chapter (Introduction) begins with my statement of intention. I follow by contextually situating this study in three domains: participatory action using *photovoice*; perspective taking; and narrative self-construction. I offer the problem in the current field of education while connecting to my positionality and purpose, rooted in personal story and experience. I precede my current methodology with guiding questions and definitions of terminology. Informed by my two pilot studies, *Personal Narrative Exploration: Creating Critical and Self-Reflective Learners and Practitioners*, and *Girls, Media, and You*, I share the evolution of my methodology and research scope. Further, I position this study by articulating my assumptions, rationale and significance. As

photovoice co-participant, I include analytic memos throughout this document,

encouraging reflexivity and participant positionality.

Chapter Two (Literature Review and Theoretical Framework) reviews literature

that situates this study in the context of previous research and current scholarly material

relating to perspective taking, narrative self-construction and *photovoice* participatory

action – the influences on my work. Further, I develop a theoretical framework drawing

on theory, research and experience. My framework illuminates relationships within my

guiding questions and plays a major role in analysis of findings.

Chapter Three (Methodology) presents my methodological design and introduces

my rationale for qualitative design research. Further, I discuss visual content analysis,

thematic narrative analysis, case study methodology, participants, site context and data

points - photographs (participatory action), videotaped discussion (perspective-taking)

and scribed narratives (narrative self-construction). Additionally, I share learning gleaned

from my two pilot studies, *Personal Narrative Exploration: Creating Critical and Self-*

Reflective Learners and Practitioners, and *Girls, Media, and You,* while providing IRB

approval and offering ethical considerations.

Chapter Four (Findings) showcases my qualitative methods of case study analysis

– visual content analysis and thematic narrative analysis - reflecting multiple data points

of photographs, discussions around the images, and scribed narratives. My findings

evidence artifacts from all data points revealing the shape, depth and scope of

pedagogical spaces. Outliers are presented and discussed. Further, this chapter offers

synthesis of guiding questions and findings leading to analytic categories. I conclude by

addressing assumptions from Chapter One and offer a summary of my analysis.

Chapter Five (Conclusions and Recommendation) reveals trustworthy conclusions

and actionable recommendations for my own teacher educator practice. These

recommendations engage the domains of *photovoice* participatory action research,

perspective-taking, and narrative self-construction, along with the fields of adolescent

identity, disciplinary literacy, feminist theory, participatory action research, secondary

education and visual arts. Additionally, I put forward further research and revisit

limitations (presented in Chapter Three). "Adolescent visual voices" shape my final

reflection as I honor their surprises, truths and personal impact. And, lastly, I share

current thinking on the opening of pedagogical space.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework
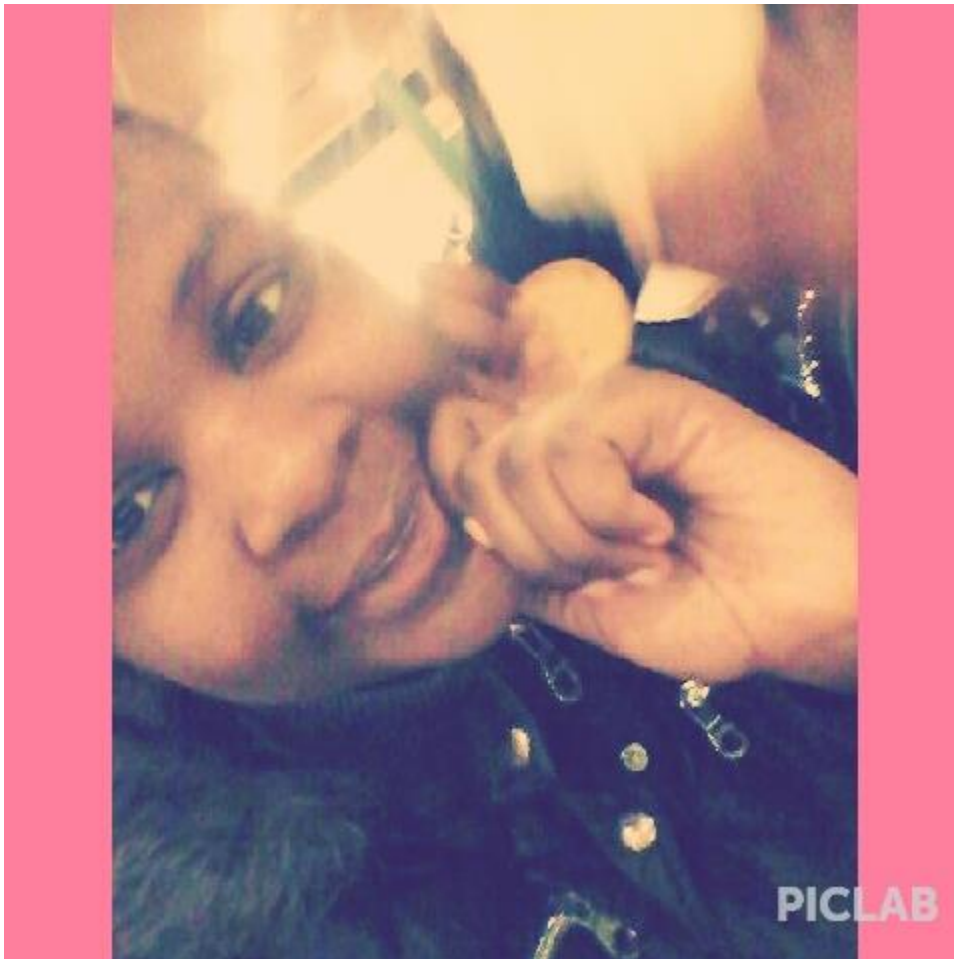
Photograph 2.1: The Girlhood Project, "Pretty," by Kiara

Literature Review - Overview

As an interdisciplinary study, my research spans the fields of adolescent identity, disciplinary literacy, feminist theory, participatory action research, secondary education and visual arts. This critical review of literature examines three key areas within these fields: perspective taking; narrative self-construction and *photovoice* participatory action. I am propelled on this journey by the problem identified in Chapter One - alarmingly, in current educational environments, space supporting the inner lives and voices of students is shrinking (Palmer, 2007). As stated earlier, the extremes of No Child left Behind (NCLB) – a United States Act of Congress signed in 2002 reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act – have shrunken pedagogical spaces that privilege experiences and voice in classrooms in favor of valuing the measure of standardized tests (Palmer, 2007; Ravitch, 2010). However, I offer a fresh examination of our current educational environment and a new domain of hope and release. Let me explain.

I turn to the work of educators Ippolito, Lawrence, and Zaller (2013) in their exploration of the newest iteration of NCLB – Common Core State Standards (CCSS) – learning goals outlining what students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade, regardless of where they live. Ippolito et al. (2013) identify six domains energizing current classrooms adhering to the CCSS: disciplinary literacy (the umbrella domain); digital literacy; vocabulary; discussion; multiple texts; and writing-to-learn. They contend that if content-area teachers carefully consider and apply strategies and approaches within these six domains, they can increase their students' access to and use of sophisticated content-area texts. However, I assert that there is a missing domain, one that opens classroom space for cultural connection, discovery, inquiry and creativity – the domain of imagination.

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I join literacy scholar Moje (Galloway, Lawrence, & Moje, 2013), who proposes just that – a new domain to accompany the six domains of: disciplinary literacy; digital literacy; vocabulary; discussion; multiple texts; and writing-to-learn. Attending a recent Literacy Research Association (LRA, 2013) session, I witnessed Moje's voicing of the need for a new domain throughout current classrooms – imagination. Her thinking supports the work of education and visual arts scholar Greene (1995), who argues:

> There are expectations that all young persons over time will develop the habits
> of mind that may enable them to take initiatives in the learning process, to
> become critical and self-reflective learners…it demands imaginative
> action…imaginative thinking about alternative social arrangements and the
> possibilities of things being otherwise. (p. 34)

The possibility of things being otherwise is the essence of the spaces I create and study in this research – pedagogical space – encouraging multiple types of participation. The problem of shrinking spaces fuels this work. I join other educators identifying this predicament while exploring the following pathways for releasing imagination – perspective taking, narrative self-construction and *photovoice* participatory action.

Perspective Taking

Introduction. As an educator, my pedagogical intention is to co-create individual and collective spaces with students – places which cultivate voice and celebrate perspectives. So what actually happens during this process of understanding another's perspective? Several definitions may help. Dray, Selman and Schultz (2009) state that perspective taking is "the capacity to understand and coordinate other points of view with one's own" (p.119). Furthering our grasp, Gehlbach (2013) adds that perspective taking

is "understanding the thoughts, feelings, and motivations of other people" (p.1). While it is widely accepted that understanding the thoughts, feelings, and motivation of others is important for successful relationships, I am intrigued by the role perspective taking plays in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. Drawing upon the definitions above, the following concepts speak directly to middle school classroom environments: interdisciplinary studies, capacity, reflexiveness, multiculturalism, imagination, and radical environments.

Interdisciplinary studies.

The O'Maley Middle School, Gloucester, MA, models interdisciplinary studies through their eighth grade unit - Place Influences Perspective. Eighth grade social studies, my former teaching assignment, commences each year with a review unit on the relationship between Massachusetts geography and history. Five themes of 'Geography as History's Stage' are reviewed: place, regions, movement, human-environment interaction, and location. In conjunction, English/Language Arts begins each fall with an introduction to a yearlong examination of perspective. ELA teachers model perspective as being embedded in all teaching and learning. How does place influence individual perspective? This overarching question spirals through history, economics, geography, literature, and art. Backward design takes us to topical questions connecting to both social studies and ELA content:

- How does understanding deepen when ideas and subjects are examined from opposite views?

- How does practicing perspective taking through the lens of art help us understand and adopt different perspectives in all our disciplines?

These topical questions encourage us to examine our content with energy and precision while remaining open to new student-driven connections. Math teachers practice perspective taking when analyzing qualitative versus quantitative data while the science department adds perspective taking to the hypothesis section of scientific method reporting. With our ELA and social studies content established by our school district, the CCSS (2010) guides us in analyzing different points of view {RL8.6} while using domain-specific vocabulary {WHST8.2} (CCSS, 2010). We heighten student engagement by bringing them into their community through: a local library in search of local authors (www.sawyerfreelibrary.org), an historical museum in search of local artists (www.capeannhistoricalmuseum.org), scenic attractions, and locally exploring themes generated by students as they make inquiries around their big idea (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

Big ideas that matter clearly get us all through the school day. They are exciting. Our big idea, place influences perspective, is the building material of understanding, while our daily lessons tackle topical questions. And art is a wonderful gateway to perspective. In Gloucester, Massachusetts, as in most communities, artists paint scenes that capture their unique perspective. Students discover that the paintings of Fitz Henry Lane, a renowned local artist from the mid-1800's, are a powerful entry into a big idea. Our students can view Lane's original paintings and then visit two sites along Gloucester Harbor where Lane's opposite harbor perspectives (looking in, looking out) are recorded in his work.

Figure 2.2: Looking In: "Gloucester Harbor from Rocky Neck." by Fitz Henry Lane

Figure 2.3: Looking Out: "Ten Pound Island from Pavilion Beach," by Fitz Henry Lane

Lane's shifts of perspective become visual maps of interpretation and observation. Domain-specific vocabulary in geography of relative and absolute location, physical and human characteristics, environment, movement, and regions can connect with the art concepts of luminism, realism, perspective, and vanishing point. Student sketches recorded on site become artifacts that can be exhibited as student perspectives are valued, revised, and critiqued. However, what perspective capacity – the ability to experience or understand something – are adolescents developmentally capable of?

Capacity. Perspective taking is a mighty goal for culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms, as shared above. So, what is the capacity for perspective taking in middle school classrooms? According to Selman's (Selman, 1980) empirically supported five developmental levels (0 – 4) of perspective taking, adolescents can hover between the final two levels, Levels 3 and 4, quite confidently. Examining these levels: Level 0 – the child has an egocentric view of self and others; Level 1 – the child realizes they have different inner, subjective states; and Level 2 – the child is able to take the other person's view and realizes the other person can do so reciprocally. Level 3 opens up third-person, mutual and coordinated perspective taking – allowing an adolescent to step outside any situation and adopt a third-person perspective on the interpersonal exchanges taking place. Finally, at Level 4, an adolescent positions one's own self-understanding in relation to that of others within this larger social network (Selman, 1980). Selman contends that at this level, adolescents can consolidate their own personal identities and begin to commit to a set of values to guide their own life (Selman, 1980).

Additionally, Gelhbach (2013) asserts that during these developmental stages in perspective taking – the adolescent years of 8 - 15 – capacity (ability) and motivation

(passion) are skills and affects that can be cultivated. With this exciting potential in middle school classrooms, several guiding questions naturally evolve: what strategies do individuals use to understand others; and what sources of evidence do people rely on when taking the perspective of others? Answering these questions may be crucial to determining the best ways to teach adolescents how to sharpen their perspective taking skills.

Gehlbach, Brinkworth and Wang (2012) identify two domains of perspective taking capacity: inferential - where perspective takers use extant (existing) information to try to make inferences; and information cultivation - where perspective takers engage in regulatory or active behaviors to try to garner information. Inferential strategies include: creating an analogy from their own experience that is presumed to parallel the target's (person of interest); using comparisons to identify differences and/or similarities that will aid in understanding the target's thoughts and feeling; drawing on background information from personal previous experiences (schemas) with the target or from other's reports about the target; and reflecting and ruminating on their interactions with the target (Gehlbach et al., 2012).

Using generalized schemas (mental codification of experience), however, may not truly represent the target's authentic self. Therefore, a second domain of abilities – information cultivation - may come into play, such as: regulating the target's attention to maximize conversation; increasing the number of communication modalities with the target; and eliciting more information from the target about their thoughts and feelings. Cultivating this capacity to coordinate other points of view with one's own may require what Hansen (2011) refers to as listening *with* others. This stance connects to his idea of

cosmopolitanism (derived from the Greek *kosmopolites*, which may be translated into citizen of the world) (Hansen, 2011). Global citizenship and community has been thrust on us and our students, challenging us to expand our capacity to be open to seeing the world as others do and hearing their ways of thinking and knowing (Hansen, 2011). Valuing a target's thinking allows adolescents to focus their minds, expand their spirits, and listen *with* new focus. Yet, how do we motivate adolescents to apply these capacities?

Motivators (*reflexiveness*). Social theorist Mead, a colleague of Dewey's, developed a theoretical framework for understanding the social development of self, arguing that the ability to take the attitude of another towards herself/himself creates self-awareness (Mead, 1934). *Reflexiveness* is the term he uses for this ability to take another-person's view – while fostering self-awareness (Mead as cited in Selman, Snow & Walker, 2012). Mead further asserts that *reflexiveness* is fostered through the use of language to communicate and through the ability to switch social roles – taking on the perspective of the other person in that role. This concept of *reflexiveness* begs the question, "what initially motivates a person to take the perspectives of others?" Gehlbach et al. (2012) provide research on motivators and that may be where to start.

Developing structures to cultivate *reflexiveness* and perspective taking capacities in diverse classrooms requires 'motivators,' Gehlbach's term for interventions to help improve the perspective taking capacities of classrooms (Gehlbach et al., 2012). Selman's (Selman as cited in Martin et al., 2008) theoretical framework, previously mentioned, of adolescent development of perspective taking abilities speaks to potential capacity but not to practice. In practice, Gehlbach et al. (2012) identifies multiple pathways for

adolescents to be motivated to engage in perspective taking. He maintains that

classrooms fostering the following factors create positive motivational communities of

learning: high stakes situations - where perspective taking means protecting the self or

others; relationship goals - where perspective taking helps maintain or repair

relationships; prosocial goals - where perspective taking helps or is desirable for the

community; and desire for self-knowledge - where perspective taking is an intrinsic

interest or is important for understanding how actions are interpreted by others (Gehlbach

et al., 2012). When embedded into classroom norms, these motivators become habits that

build communities of learning.

Middle school classrooms with diverse populations are nurturing communities

when perspective taking is practiced and celebrated. However, inhibiting factors towards

perspective taking can often be present in the most stimulating classrooms. Negative

motivational factors for perceivers include: perceivers have too much on their mind or are

contending with too many distractions (cognitive load) for perspective taking; perceivers

feel sufficient conviction that their point of view is correct and they do not need to

engage in perspective taking; and perceivers lack the energy to engage in perspective

taking as targets are so familiar or present no interest (Gehlbach et al., 2012). Fortunately,

Gehlbach et al. (2012) believes adolescents appearing unmotivated to engage in

perspective taking may be encouraged through an alternate pathway – opening up spaces

for cultural context and student schemas to flourish.

Multiculturalism. Our culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms are

energizing and complex. Adding the lens of perspective taking, through cultivating

capacities and motivators (reflexiveness), contributes to the renewed attention on

multicultural literature (Kim & Hinchley, 2013). Additionally, considering each student's

interests, prior experiences and perspectives often facilitates her/his ability to read

material that might otherwise be too difficult (Peregoy & Boyle, 2013). Multicultural

literature offering various perspectives, characters and dialogue that portray the culture,

oral traditions and that celebrates cultural significance expands capacities and increases

motivation (Peregoy & Boyle, 2013).

In their current publication, *Educating English language learners in an inclusive

environment,* Kim and Hinchley (2013) assert that building bridges in diverse classrooms

connecting students' old and new cultures invites all voices to engage. These bridges

span stereotypes, biases, and assumptions and welcome important perspective taking

motivators. Similarly, Greene (2000) maintains that learning is always about an

awareness of leaving something behind while reaching toward something new –

imagination. According to Dewey (1934), imagination is the "gateway" through which

meanings derived from past experiences work their way into the present. Further linking

Kim and Hinchley (2013), Peregoy and Boyle (2013), and Greene (2000), is Dewey's

(1934) assertion that "imagination is the conscious adjustment of the new and the old" (p.

272).

Imagination. Alternative possibilities – the fuel of imagination and the intent of

perspective taking – are rooted in art as well as texts. Dewey's (1934) claim, that

imagination is the "gateway" through which perspectives link past and present through

new possibilities, opens up space for visual, oral and written content. Thus, in a domain

of imagination, a new literacy (adding to disciplinary and digital literacy) flourishes -

visual literacy – introducing skills promoting problem solving, evidence gathering,

communication (writing, speaking, listening), and perspective taking. Fortunately, these skills are explicitly delineated by the Common Core Standards (Yenawine, 2013) and require active engagement with visual, oral and written work. Yenawine (2013) identifies Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) as student-centered discovery processes (I call these "spaces") that open up alternative possibilities for the student viewer. He introduces three guiding questions that can be used across all disciplines to deepen thinking and encourage imagination: "what's going on here and what did you see/read/hear that makes you think that"; "what more can you find"; and "are there other possibilities (Yenawine, 2013, p. 169)?" Aren't these same questions being grappled with through the lens of perspective taking?

Starting with art – a battle cry for perspective taking, imagination, and curiosity – encourages middle school teachers to apply VTS to all disciplines, categorizing thinking into observations, inferences, evidence, speculation, elaboration, and revision. Through art, the complicated thinking the Common Core Standards requires becomes a habit of mind, permission to wonder, and a chance to explore. Learning from complex disciplinary texts, learning from life, and learning from art constitutes real and substantial skill and knowledge. Imagining an alternative possibility through art engages and motivates students with their audiences, real and virtual, in opening space to envision change and new perspectives.

Radical Environments.

Perspectives are naturally expressed, to real and virtual audiences, through exhibition and performance, key components of backward design curriculum instruction (Wiggins & McTigue, 2005) framed in the CCSS. Wiggins and McTigue (2005) identify

six facets of understanding in their curriculum design for assessing student work in

performance and exhibition. Through performance and exhibition, understanding can be

shared and perspectives practiced. When someone truly understands, the following facets

are demonstrated:

- students can explain concepts in their own words

- students can interpret by making sense of text and experience

- students can apply by using and adapting what they know in new and complex

  contents

- students can demonstrate perspective by seeing their own and different points of

  view

- students can display empathy by perceiving sensitively and walking in someone

  else's shoes

- students can demonstrate self-knowledge by showing meta-cognitive awareness,

  reflecting on the meaning of the learning and experience (Wiggins & McTigue,

  2005, pp. 163-164).

Further, in an effort to increase learning and perspective taking, Ito et al. (2009)

expand digital literacies and introduce radical environments where student work can live,

grow, and travel virtually around the globe through a wide range of digital technologies.

Radical spaces are capable of showcasing facets of understanding (mentioned above) and

perspective taking that can contribute to cosmopolitanism (global citizenship, mentioned

earlier). These new radical spaces challenge our students to expand capacities to be open

to seeing the world as others do and hearing their ways of thinking and knowing (Hansen,

2011). Participation for all where perspective taking is privileged is the mission of
pedagogical spaces.

A powerful vehicle for digital exhibition of student perspectives is *The
Sketchbook Project*, a traveling library of sketchbooks created by anyone across the globe
who registers at groups@arthousecoop.com. Upon registration and a small fee,
subscribers (often students) receive a blank sketchbook (to be returned to *The Sketchbook
Project*) and the fun begins. Book content can vary and often includes: travelogues,
memoirs, narratives, atlases, almanacs, chronicles, sketches, documentations and photo
logs. *The Sketchbook Project* drives sketchbooks across North America for "on tour"
viewing before they become permanently archived in the Brooklyn Art Library,
Brooklyn, New York. Sketchbooks are also digitized and can be experienced by anyone
with an Internet connection.

A traveling library of student work, connecting to the understanding of how place
influences perspective, can engage the world and motivate learning. One click on the
sketchbook project website, www.arthousecoop.com/projects/sketchbookproject,
connects each student to their sketchbook on its digital trip around the world. Liz
Robbins writes in the New York Times, "For six years, the Sketchbook Project has been
offering intimate glimpses into the imaginations of its worldwide contributors" (Robbins,
2012).

Speaking further to imagination, Ito et al. (2009) identify three genres that
correspond to the differing levels of student participation and imagination in new media
practices: *hanging out* is primarily a friendship-driven genre of participation in which
adolescents spend their casual social time with one-another using local friendship driven

networks, often in the contexts of home and family life; *messing around* represents the

beginning of a more intense media-centric participation when adolescents take an interest

in and focus on the workings and content of technology and media themselves, tinkering,

exploring, and extending their understanding; and *geeking out* involves the more

expertise-centered forms of imagination-driven participation surrounding new media,

with high levels of specialized knowledge and a willingness to bend and/or break social

and technological rules. These new genres may create friction in schools as access to

social and commercial entertainment content can make teachers uncomfortable in

traditional educational settings. But, isn't creating tension, risk, and wonder the goal of

pedagogical spaces?

Conclusion. Being comfortable with new literacies (visual literacy and expanding

digital literacies) - the new spaces where adolescents are finding a voice - and creating a

space for perspective taking in classrooms may well be what Dewey was envisioning

when commenting, "imagination, more than any other capacity, breaks through the inertia

of habit" (1934, p. 272). When nothing intervenes to overcome the inertia of teacher

driven, test specific habits, there can be a sense of hubris and laziness, negative factors

for motivating perspective taking and active learning. Emily Dickinson (as cited in

Greene, 2000) declares, "The Possible's slow fuse is lit/By the imagination" (p. 22). She

knows, like Dewey (1934), Greene (2000), Moje (2013), and Yenawine (2013) that

imaging things being otherwise may be the first step toward perspective taking.

I feel excitement along with the chaos that accompanies the cultivation of

classroom space for expanding imaginatively into unfamiliar material. New material in

settings where perspective taking is a practice can be both cognitively and culturally

challenging. Gehlbach et al. (2012) offer us multiple pathways towards perspective taking while Selman et al. (2012) reminds us that adolescents fall into a cognitive framework that allows them to step outside any situation and adopt a third – person perspective. Yet, this remains hard, skillful work. I believe our cultural and linguistically diverse classrooms demand nothing less from us all.

Narrative Self Construction

> **Introduction.** The quest for understanding self envelops the world of adolescents, a world I inhabited, professionally, for twenty-three years (and as a parent with four children). Understanding self through story, organizing events from the past, remembering, wondering, and engaging in perspective taking contributes to the rich work of adolescent identity development. Educators and researchers Nakkula and Toshalis (2010), influenced by education theorist Vygotsky (1978), contend that authoring life stories is the productive imagining of self in a context. Powerfully articulating that individual psychological development is inherently a relational process, Vygotsky (1978) asserts that individual minds develop within the context of other minds by which they can be influenced. Stories are pathways for integrating the influence of others. Further, stories serve to integrate experience across time, becoming marked by core themes.

> This study opens space for imagining oneself in context and explores emerging identities and themes. Palmer (2007), Ravitch (2010), hooks (2010), and Brown (2009) raise the question, mentioned in Chapter One – should educators' roles be prescribed largely by subject matter, state-mandated curricula, and the standardized tests that hold them and their students accountable, or should educators think of their work in more relational terms? I am attending to the latter (relational) in this study. Influenced by my

professional middle school experience, Nakula and Tohalis (2010), and others in

following discussions, I explore the rich work of adolescent identity development through

stories. Stories open pedagogical spaces influenced by the following topics: emplotment;

paradigmatic cognition/ narrative cognition; and narrative essence.

Emplotment. How is a story developed? The concept of emplotment sheds light

on this imaginative process. Narrative scholar Ricoeur (1991) broadly defines

emplotment as a synthesis of heterogeneous elements – transforming many incidents into

one story. For Ricoeur (1991), an event is more than an occurrence or something that just

happens. We obtain an understanding of this composition through the act of following a

story. This is a complex operation for the reader, guided by expectations concerning the

outcome of the story and outlooks that are readjusted as the story moves along. The

synthesis of elements, often unintended circumstances, discoveries with unintended

results, leads to both concordance and discordance – for both reader and writer (Ricoeur,

1991). Herein lies the dynamism.

Speaking to this dynamism, I recently attended the seventh *Narrative Matters*

Conference, Narrative Knowing/Récit et Savoir (2014), organized at the Université Paris

Diderot, featuring narrative theorist and qualitative research scholar Polkinghorne. He

passionately concurs with Ricoeur (1991) that story is an *emplotted narrative* – a

succession of incidents forming a unified episode. Further, supporting the concordance

and discordance resulting from this composition, Polkinghorne (1991) reminds us that a

storied narrative exposes the complexity of human action through the interrelationship of

temporal sequence, human motivation, and chance happenings. Thus, tensions arise as

the story-teller perceives the connectedness of life and seeks coherence – a uniquely

human experience. And, coherence is generated from the structure of a storied narrative –

plot.

According to Polkinhorne (1991), plot is the structure through which people

understand and describe the relationship among events and their lives. Further, plots

function to configure events into a story by: delimiting a temporal range which marks the

beginning and end of the story; providing criteria for the selection of events to be

included in the story; temporally ordering events into an unfolding movement

culminating in a conclusion; and clarifying the meaning events have as contributors to the

story as a unified whole (Polkinghorne, 1991). Thus, the dynamism that both Ricoeur

(1991) and Polkinghorne (1991) celebrate is inherent in the process of discovery within

the *emplotted narrative*. Freeman (as cited in Riessman, 2008, p. 8) explains it this way:

> This is not to claim that the intentionality of narratives is always conscious
>
> and deliberate; the ends that are being achieved may be utterly obscure to those
>
> whose narratives they are. Rather, the claim is simply that narratives, as sense-
>
> making tools, inevitably do things – for people, for social institutions, for
>
> culture, and more.

Therefore, Freeman (as cited in Riessman, 2008) supports Ricoeur (1991),

Polkinghorne (1991), and Yugal-Davis (as cited in Reissman, 2008) with his conviction

that identities, as explored through storied narratives, are fluid. Yugal-Davis (as cited in

Riessman, 2008) expands this thinking about fluidity stating that identity is "always

producing itself through the combined processes of being and becoming, belonging and

longing to belong. This duality is often reflected in narratives of identity (p. 8)."

Paradigmatic cognition/narrative cognition. Storied narratives – narratives of identity – express a kind of knowledge that uniquely describes human experience where actions and happenings contribute positively and negatively to attaining goals, achieving purpose, and self discovery. Polkinghorne (1991) maintains that storied narratives cannot provide true knowledge; they are limited to communicating and generating emotional experiences. In contradiction, Bruner (1985) argues that narrative knowledge is more than just emotive expression; rather, it is a legitimate form of reasoned knowing. He proposes that there are two ways in which we see the world; paradigmatic cognition - the traditional and logical-scientific mode; and narrative cognition - understanding human action (Bruner, 1985).

Bruner, along with Polkinghorne (1991, 2015), offers an expansion of ways of knowing to include the narrative mode. Therefore, he asserts that both paradigmatic and narrative cognition generate useful and valid knowledge. They are part of the human cognitive repertoire for reasoning and making sense of the self, of others, and of our world – again, a perspective taking process. The primary function of paradigmatic cognition is classifying a particular instance as belonging to a category or concept. Additionally, paradigmatic reasoning is a method allowing humans to constitute their experience as ordered and consistent while acquiring a repertoire of responses to be applied to unique and diverse experiences.

In contrast, narrative reasoning does not reduce itself to rules and generalities across stories. Further, narrative cognition does not translate emplotted story into a set of propositions. Narrative cognition configures the diverse elements of a particular action into a unified whole and operates by noticing the differences and diversity of people's

behavior (Polkinghorne, 1991). Carter (1993) writes that narrative reasoning "captures in a special fashion the richness and the nuances of meaning in human affairs" (p. 5). This distinction is central in a current debate between Bamberg and Freeman, the former emphasizing the "small stories" perspective in narrative inquiry with the latter countering with "big stories" prominence (Freeman, 2006). Bamberg (2012) refers to the common threads spiraling through the differences and distinctions in narrative inquiry as "narrative essence" (Bamberg, 2012, p. 207).

   Narrative essence: towards a synthesis of stories, "big" and "small".
Distinctions and debates abound in conversations around narrative inquiry. Therein lies the richness of this process of making sense of self, others, and our world. As mentioned above, while attending the seventh *Narrative Matters Conference, Narrative Knowing/Récit Savoir* (2014), discussions around paradigmatic cognition and narrative cognition were overshadowed by the current debate between "small" stories – those derived from everyday social exchange – and "big" stories – those derived from interviews, autobiographical writing, and other interrogative venues. I was present when narrative scholars Bamberg and Freeman shared the Université Paris Diderot (2014) stage while fueling this debate (Bamberg & Freeman, 2014). Bamberg acknowledges being influenced by Erikson's (Erikson, 1997) life cycle psychosocial stages when adopting the "small" story discursive practice perspective – a person is socially interactively constituted by and mainly tells "small" stories which play out during the course of living their life (Bamberg, 2010).

   Bamberg challenges what he considers an overemphasis on the "big" story research (adding, "and their often fuzzy methodology") (Bamberg, 2010, p.2) within the

field of identity analysis. His "small" story practice orientation is an approach building

constructively on stories told in interaction – in every day settings and through interviews

- making them relevant for identity research. He refers to them as real stories of our lived

lives (Freeman, 2006). Bamberg further argues that "small" story research provides a

theoretically sound point of departure for "big" biography research to begin. This

establishes a space for the abstraction of "big" story research to be seen as being different

and resting on the shoulders of "small" story practice perspective (Bamberg, 2010).

A rebuttal to this hierarchy of first "small" and then "big" is provided by

Freeman, who states that compelling though the "small" story perspective may be, there

are good and important reasons for "big" stories to retain a prominent place in the

narrative picture. He asserts that "big" stories are narratives that entail a significant

measure of reflection on either an event or experience. Far from being abstract or

artificial, as Bamberg asserts (Freeman, 2006), "big" story reflection involves a particular

kind of accounting practice going beyond the specific discursive contexts in which real

life talk ("small" story content) occurs. Freeman (Bamberg & Freeman, 2014) connects

his "big" story stance to McAdams (2006) and the belief that beginning in adolescence,

we give meaning to our lives by constructing and internalizing self-defining stories.

These self-defining stories fuel Bamberg's ideas. He contends that the self that

emerges from "big" story reflection is a product of process perpetuating an artificial

image of identity too large, and more continuous and stable than "small" stories would

suggest (Bamberg, 2010). Bamberg (2010) claims his interest is in words – not people –

that provide an authenticity of self through the examination of language, glances, stances

and relational connections. Thus, he maintains that the authentic, real self can best be viewed in the present moment – the essence of the "small" story (Bamberg, 2010).

I suggest the essence of narrative inquiry is the synthesis of "big" and "small" stories - neither one should be empathsized. Rather than focusing on which story is real, I believe the difference lies in proximity. "Small" stories are valuable for showing how identity gets renegotiated and reconstructed in and through social interactions, a lot closer to home (Freeman, 2006). Also valuable is the revelatory power of "big stories" – their capacity to yield insight and understanding – of the sort that cannot occur in the immediacy of the present moment and the "small" stories that issue from it. Narrative essence may well call for a more inclusive, pluralistic approach to the study of self and identity, one that accommodates and celebrates both "big" and "small" stories alike. Freeman (2011) alludes to different orders of identity, some of which lend themselves to "big" stories – focusing more on expression –while some lend themselves to "small" stories – focusing more on production. Narrative essence may be their peaceful coexistence.

Conclusion. Who am I and who am I not? This question haunts me, as it stems from Yugal-Davis' definition of narrative (shared in Chapter One) – "identities are narratives, stories people tell themselves and others about who they are (and who they are not)" (as cited in Riessman, 2008, p. 8). Perhaps the tender, nuanced search for self, beginning in adolescence and continuing throughout our lives, starts with our story – "big" or "small" – as we tangle with this question. Narrative scholar Luttrell (2010) reports that adolescent narrative self-construction is often misrepresented due to the researcher's lack of transparency and reflexivity. In what feels like a power grab the fine

line between adolescent voices and those of the adult researchers themselves is often

blurred (Luttrell, 2010). Reflexivity, co-participant positioning, and co-constructed

processes encourage me to welcome every bit of narrative when I am the researcher.

Freeman (as cited in Riessman, 2008), again, reminds me that stories and narratives are

simply sense-making tools. A larger question may be, "who makes sense of these

stories?" This study strives to make sense of stories and discussions inspired through the

lens of a camera - *photovoice* - cultivating adolescent emerging identities in spaces

allowing for new seeing, fresh listening, and authentic knowing.

Photovoice Participatory Action

Introduction.

The actions taken through *photovoice* – taking pictures and telling stories as they

relate to these images – are empowering (Palibroda, 2009). *Photovoice* is rooted in the

belief that, "people ought to participate in creating and defining those images that shape

public discourse" (Wang, 1999, p. 191). The *photovoice* process, developed by public

health educator Wang (1999), asserts that feelings of empowerment arise from the

multiple roles (seer, knower, creator) individuals undertake when using a photographic

lens to share a story. Through this lens, participants assume the role of co-researcher with

responsibilities around choice (what image to capture), composition (what's left in,

what's left behind), and values (light, medium, dark). Exhibitions of photographs with

writing and oral discourse provide participants with a canvas from which to create and

convey experiences.

As a tool, *photovoice* offers a rich technique for adolescent development by

cultivating choice and voice – articulating and taking action on experiences that affect

themselves and their community. This study employs *photovoice,* as participatory action

research, in the spirit shared by photographer and *photovoice* facilitator Briski (2013):

"Any form of art can be used as a means of transformation…it isn't about taking a formal

portrait…this is expressing yourself and being open to what is around you and just

learning." Being open and just learning, as seer, knower and creator, captures the essence

of this potent methodology – a method that celebrates participatory action exhibited

through common concepts, empowerment, and three *photovoice* projects (*Born into*

Brothels, *Literacy Through Photography,* and *The Youth Empowerment Strategies [YES]*

Project).

Participatory action research (PAR).

Action research comprises a family of research methodologies aiming to pursue

action and research outcomes at the same time. Participatory Action Research (PAR)

requires a practitioner with the conviction that learning is experiential, relational and

reflexive (Participatory action research, 2014). PAR recognizes that people learn through

the active adaption of their existing knowledge in response to their experiences with other

people and their environment. Believing that building on experience is authentic learning,

action research provides a framework for problem solving and documenting experiences,

alternative possibilities and discovery.

Photovoice participatory action research is a process empowering participants to

identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic

technique (Wang and Burris, 1997). Public health educators and researchers Wang and

Burris (1997), developers of the *photovoice* concept, explain that unlike *photo novella*

(using photographs to teach language) or *photo documentation* (using photographs to

illustrate a story), their term *photovoice* describes a unique process of discovery, empowerment and action. Entrusting cameras to participants enables them to act as recorders and potential catalysts for change. Thus, *photovoice* participatory action uses the immediacy of the visual image to provide evidence while promoting an effective, participatory means of sharing experiences and knowledge.

Wang and Burris (1997), deepening the observation of *photovoice* participatory action, provide a three-stage process as a foundation for analysis: selecting the photographs; contextualizing and telling stories about the photographs; and, codifying emerging issues, themes or theories. Their participatory approach dictates the first stage – selecting – as participants choose the photographs for discussion. This participatory approach generates the second stage – conceptualizing – as participants use storytelling to voice their individual and collective experiences (referred to by the acronym, VOICE – **V**oicing **O**ur **I**ndividual and **C**ollective **E**xperiences). In the third stage – codifying – the participatory approach gives multiple meanings to singular images. Codifying themes and patterns or developing theories grounded in photographic data inform participant discussions - conversations share *photovoice* participatory action common concepts.

Common concepts.

Photographs alone, without participant voices and stories, contradict the essence of *photovoice*. Thus, *photovoice* participants, along with their facilitator (*photovoice* co-participant), bring spirit, energy and authenticity to each project. As a result, a beautiful characteristic of *photovoice* is its diversity – every *photovoice* project has a different lens, a different focus, and different outcomes are being sought. However, common to each *photovoice* project are four concepts that contribute to exploring the human experience

and working for social and personal change (Wang & Pies, 2004). The first concept is the

idea that images teach. The camera is a widely available, popular and magical tool used

by humans to creatively capture and share our life experiences. Photographic images tell

our stories and reveal what is important to us. Images captured by *photovoice* participants

can tell stories that identify concerns, cravings, and struggles. Through photographs,

individuals offer insight and teach others about their experiences.

Secondly, photographs can influence policy. *Photovoice* capitalizes on the power

of photographs to provide concrete evidence of reality in a way that words, alone, cannot

capture. Increasing awareness and knowledge of experiences differing from their own can

help policy-makers make decisions from a broader perspective while potentially

improving the lives of disadvantaged groups. Stringer's (1999) action research model -

look, think, act – allows participants to serve as the eyes, ears and voice of their reality.

This model's first component, "look," commences with a topic, a question or problem,

generated from the participant, and is the picture taking stage of *photovoice*. In the

second component, "think," participants reflect on the images they capture and create a

narrative making connections and exploring issues. Freire (2001), as mentioned in

Chapter One, refers to this inquiry as developing a *critical consciousness*. The third

component, "act," creates an equal stage for participants and the wider audience,

engaging and empowering participants to share their perspective with evidence and

reflection – often with influential stakeholders and community leaders (Royce, 2004;

Johansen & Le, 2012).

Thus, *photovoice* is not just about individuals capturing images. A third concept –

participants develop personal and collective responsibility – empowers the *photovoice*

participant and involves their roles as photographers, writers and speakers. Individuals have both a right and a responsibility to shape public policy (Palibroda, 2005). *Photovoice* creates the opportunity for individuals to initiate discourse influencing decisions affecting their lives and the lives of community members. And, finally, *photovoice* emphasizes individual and community action. Information, evidence, and thinking from images are not only compiled for gathering knowledge but to inspire social action and change. Sometimes examining a personal or community situation, problem or struggle that encourages personal growth is enough. However, *photovoice* inspires energy towards action by exhibiting images and ideas leading to solutions – the spirit of empowerment.

Empowerment.

How is *photovoice* empowering? *Photovoice* participants gain valuable skills in reflecting on the realities of their lives, seeing many sides of an issue, and educating others about these realities. Choosing images to capture or situating oneself in a scene allows participants to gain confidence in asserting ideas and engaging in self-advocacy. In addition, participants expand their knowledge of how the individual becomes political (Palibroda, 2005). How do participants go from planning an image to social and political action? As discussed previously, every *photovoice* project is unique, however Palibroda (2009) offers a step-by-step guide for *photovoice* facilitators and participants to consider:

(1) Connect and consult with the community – it is essential that trust be developed in all stages of *photovoice*

(2) Plan a *photovoice* project by identifying a research focus (guiding question) to frame issues of concern in the classroom, club or community – and provide ethical guidelines

(3) Seek diversity for *photovoice* participants (co-researchers) and identify a potential audience, building a bridge between research and community

(4) Create a *photovoice* participant group, and conduct workshops in photography skills and the role of PAR - establish a timeline

(5) Establish project meeting schedules to address: the *photovoice* process; issues of concern; and group goals

(6) Ensure data collection is ongoing – each photograph, discussion, narrative, exhibition, and feedback session are data

(7) Promote ongoing data analysis through audio-tapes, transcription, and codifying

(8) Prepare and share the *photovoice* exhibit, establishing voice, awareness and understanding

(9) Set the foundation for social and/or political action suggesting guidelines and practices (p.26)

Empowerment imbues in the acronym, VOICE - Voicing Our Individual and Collective Experience – as each *photovoice* project embodies selecting, conceptualizing and codifying. The following three *photovoice* projects, *Born into Brothels*, *Literacy Through Photography,* and *The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) Project,* provide models, celebrate empowerment and pose dilemmas – the rich circle of qualitative research.

Photovoice PAR projects.

Born into Brothels, *Literacy Through Photography,* and *The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) Project,* three *photovoice* participatory action research projects, are concerned with giving voice to adolescents, assisting them in making choices and taking actions impacting larger forces. Moreover, Freire's (2001) scholarship leads him to assert that every individual can develop a voice, one that champions human rights and effects change through artistic discourse. According to Freire (2001), individuals travel on a continuum that can become a socially conscious community with sensitivity to human rights. A Freirian 7-step model for creating a socially conscious community values the schema (conceptual patterns in the mind) of all participants, the steps being: awareness; dialogue; critical reflection; activism; social action; self-education; and transformation (Briski, 2013). The following projects showcase these steps while their *photovoice* methodology opens up spaces for discovery.

Born into brothels.

When I first went into the brothels of Calcutta I had no idea what I was doing. Circumstances had led me there and I had a deep visceral reaction to the place. It was as if I recognized it on a very personal level. (Briski, 2013)

These sentiments, shared by documentary photographer Briski, after spending two years trying to get inside and live in a brothel, are common to other *photovoice* facilitators and participants – feelings of being both confused and compelled to continue (Briski, 2013). Briski (2013) is not a social worker or teacher yet someone who "follows my heart and puts myself in the 'shoes' of others." In 1997, Briski moved to Calcutta to live with the women and children who work as prostitutes and she documents their lives

through photography. While staying in the brothels, she develops relationships with children residing there and after recognizing their fascination with her camera, she begins to teach them basic photography. What follows is a photography project – and a documentary film widely circulated today - exploring an environment where each child could learn, discover their own creativity, and realize their own self-worth through the lens of a camera. A voice component emerges organically as Briski and filmmaker Kauffman begin to document the children as they use their cameras throughout their day-to-day lives. The documentary film, *Born into Brothels* (2005)*,* the product of this collaboration, introduces resilient young photographers, the children of the brothels, demonstrating their art and speaking with free expression – the essence of *photovoice.*

The images and voices throughout the film, *Born into Brothels* (2005), fulfill Briski's dream to inspire others to feel, to notice, to challenge, and to take action – *photovoice's* mission as participatory action research. Two non-profit organizations continue to support Briski's collaboration, yielding intimate portraits of urban brothels. *Kids with Cameras* (www.kids-with-cameras, 2014), founded in 2002 to raise awareness for the children in Briski's documentary, supports the education of several children from the original photography workshop. Further, *Kids with Cameras* uses photography - placing cameras in the hands of kids - to capture the imaginations of children, empower them, and build confidence and hope (Segars, 2007). Sponsoring a Hope House Capital Campaign, *Kids with Cameras* created HOPE HOUSE, in Kolkata, India, an educational center for sex workers wanting to leave the world of prostitution for jobs and alternative educational opportunities (www.kids-with-cameras, 2014). Another non-profit, Amnesty International (2014), whose mission is conducting research and generating action to

prevent abuses of human rights, develops a curriculum guide accompanying the film,

Born into Brothels. This guide, a collaboration of researchers, photographers and

teachers, provides lessons and activities designed to engage learners in discussions

around social status and the right to education. Raising awareness around social status,

basic rights, and abuse and trauma speaks to the transformative power of *photovoice* –

using images to deepen awareness, and develop writing, thinking, and public speaking

skills.

Literacy through photography.

Photography is the catalyst for verbal and oral expression in the participatory

organization, *Literacy Through Photography (LTP). LTP* (Segars, 2007) encourages

adolescents to explore their world as they photograph scenes from their own lives. In this

participatory action method, the expressive art of photography stimulates writing for use

in classrooms. Framed around four themes – self-portrait, community, family, and

dreams – *LTP* encourages students to be problem-solvers perceptive of the world around

them and assertive about the value of their own voice and opinion (Li, 2012). The intent

of *LTP* is integrating an iteration of *photovoice* into the academic curriculum as a habit of

mind – a way of seeing and making meaning. *LPT* becomes a teaching practice and

student habit relying on critical thinking pedagogy while using exhibition and

performance as assessment tools in place of standardized grading systems.

As a teaching philosophy and methodology, *LTP* promotes an expansive use of

photography across different curricula and disciplines, building on the information that

students naturally possess. An introductory activity may involve a situated selfie – a

photograph of the participant in a chosen setting based on a guiding question. As a

teaching practice, *LTP* also provides valuable opportunities for students to bring their

home and community lives into the classrooms allowing teachers a glimpse into their

students' lives. In culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms, *LTP* affords students a

way to understand each other's different experiences. Inviting participants to share their

situated selfie with a partner and asking partners to enter that situation opens space for

empathy and perspective taking. As a result of this invitation, contemporary social issues

weave through content unique in each situated selfie. Further, *LTP* methodology remains

constant - combining photography with verbal and oral expression for literacy

assessment. Consider the thinking of a pre-service educator (an education major prior to

licensure) responding to the use of *LTP*:

> These past two months have taught me that the most insightful and praiseworthy
>
> students are those who are curious, innovative, and perceptive. I now understand
>
> that achievement is not strictly a branch of academia, that student success cannot
>
> be accurately represented by traditional assessment methods, and that a child's
>
> self-worth is all too often correlated with an unbudging red ink mark on a piece
>
> of paper. (Li, 2012, p. 3)

Li's (2012) thinking reflects her experience as a teacher in the *LTP* Arusha

DukeEngage program. In this eight-week experience, Duke University students train

Tanzanian teachers in *LTP's* participatory learning philosophy and methodology. In

Tanzania alone, hundreds of teachers have been trained and several thousand school

children have participated in *LTP* (Documentary studies, n. d.). Li introduces activities

and methods to Tanzanian students, teachers and administrators ranging from interpreting

photographs and self-portraits to writing narratives and playing charades. Her perspective

and understanding regarding educational practice is transformative, as each personalized

experience for students using *LTP* reveals new truths and even wonder (Li, 2012).

Valuing and growing personal experience is the curriculum of *LTP,* as it "makes

room for creativity, whether it is through participation, pictures or play; it is a (method)

that engages the creative process and directly channels it into the curriculum" (Doktor,

2012). Finally, I share a *photovoice* project where volunteer afterschool programming

opens space for creativity and empowerment, raising awareness and enacting change.

Youth empowerment strategies (YES!) project.

Photography is increasingly being used with adolescent populations to explore

opportunities for civic engagement. The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) Project

is an afterschool empowerment program and research project focusing on the application

of the *photovoice* process – moving from photography and writing to initiating group-

designed social action projects. The acronym SHOWeD guides the writing process: what

do you SEE here; what's really HAPPENING here: how does this relate to OUR lives;

WHY does this problem exist; and, what can we DO about it (Wilson, Dasho, Martin,

Wallerstein, Wang, & Minkler, 2007)? The *photovoice* approach employs diverse groups

creating needs assessments for social action through structured curriculum addressing

cognitive and social development (Wilson et al., 2007).

Researchers Wilson et al. (2007) explain that YES! participants identify as high

risk (through Title 1) from area elementary schools serving low-income communities in

West Contra Costa County, California. Participants, ranging in age from 9 to 12 years old

(sample ethnicity includes Latino/a, Native American, Caucasian, African American and

Asian), gather for 90 minutes after school during 25 sessions (Wilson et al., 2007).

Facilitators, recruits from local high schools and The University of California at

Berkeley, receive 30 to 60 hours of interactive training in participatory education

techniques, youth development, and *photovoice* techniques along the lines of Palibroda's

(2005) approach discussed earlier (Wilson et al., 2007). Further, each YES! participant

becomes the owner of an easy-to-use non-disposable camera (Olympus Trip XB400)

receiving multiple rolls of film for *photovoice* projects and following a curriculum that

stresses team building, norm setting, and community organizing strategies (Wilson et at.,

2007).

Research conducted by Wilson and his colleagues highlights three social action

projects: tackling issues of littering; graffiti; and, scary places on school campuses.

Further, YES! offers critiques of three curricular goals: social development; critical

discourse to social action; and cognitive development. These lenses bring clarity yet

facilitators and researchers agree that a common limitation across all three projects, while

assessing the three curricular goals, involves the low quality of writing and processing of

the causality of each issue. However, participants struggle with deeper issues beyond the

surface photograph of the problem. Storyboarding activities aiming at creating a

sequential causal chain of events for each issue yields little insight and weak action

strategies (Wilson et al., 2007). Limitations of *photovoice* methodology are discussed in

greater detail further in this research, yet gains include the opportunity for YES!

participants to actively engage with their social environment through photography,

participate in critical analysis, and take action (Wilson et al., 2007). Opportunities in

hospitable spaces frame *photovoice* projects - the safe pedagogical places inspired by this research and discussed by the theorists in the next section.

Conclusion.

I personally seek out art as a way to process a family tragedy. The medium calling me is watercolor painting. Stroke by stroke, the act of creating (in watercolor, photograph, collage, or short story) and then critiquing, in a larger forum, inspires my reflection, self-evaluation, and space for perspective taking. *Photovoice*, click by click, offers adolescents a similar meaning-making experience. *Photovoice,* in its iterations, *Born into Brothels*, *Literacy Through Photography,* and *The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) Project*, along with my pilot studies (discussed in Chapter Three) fuel creative fires and open up fresh space for learning. But, somebody has to care, wonder, question, and act once these participatory action projects are exhibited. I present a *photovoice* participatory action hybrid model in this study, utilizing the freedom and choice from *Kids-With-Cameras* and the relational constructs of *YES!* As a pre-service educator, *LTP* inspires me to create a classroom culture of routinely opening space for narrative writing, art making and reflective practice. My vision is to contribute to the conversation around creating spaces for sharing life experiences in this study and in further research (Chapter Five).

Theoretical Framework

Introduction

My theoretical framework is the lens through which I view my research question, "what happens when space is created for middle school students to engage in photovoice

participatory action research and narrative self exploration with perspective taking?"

Further, I apply my domain specific guiding questions (expanded upon below): how is

perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescent grapple with creating a

community of learning that values all voices; how does the integration of

autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives;

and, how might photovoice – as a participatory action research method – help adolescents

imagine an alternative possibility and make meaning of life experience? This framework

gives coherence to my data collection, analysis and interpretations of findings. Thus, I

draw on theory, research and experience creating a heuristic model guiding every step of

this study, a project furthermore steeped in aesthetic thinking.

Guiding question 1: How is perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescent grapple with creating a community of learning that values all voices?

My thinking on perspective taking draws from the theoretical framework for

understanding the social development of the self articulated by psychologist Mead

(1934). As discussed above, the ability of an individual to experience the attitude of

another toward herself/himself allows the individual to become self-aware – in Mead's

(1934) words, *reflexive*. This study examines reflexiveness as it cultivates the

development of self-awareness. Reflexiveness is fostered through the use of language to

communicate and the ability to switch social roles. By switching roles, an individual

takes on the perspective of the other person in that role, including the perspective that a

person has of herself and himself. Piaget (2007) adheres to this social-relational approach

contending that egocentrism is a failure in perspective taking. This failure to coordinate

others' points of view with one's own prevents an individual from designing intellectual

constructions between the individual and her/his environment (Piaget, 2007).

Reflecting on both Mead and Piaget's understanding of child development, I am

passionate about adolescent interactive conduct in the world as a source of knowing –

about themselves and others. Mead (1934) refers to the self that arises in relationship

with others as "me" – starting with a child learning to take the views of all family

members. Referring to this knowing as "the generalized other," Mead (Mead, 1934)

contends that learning to take the view of the family - a system of viewpoints – cultivates

the ability to know the family's view of herself/himself. Over time, a child approaching

adolescence learns to take the view of many "generalized others," including at a societal

or global level – thus increasing self and other awareness (Mead, 1934).

I approach perspective taking with a strong belief in reflexivity and co-

construction – that I may learn as much from others as they learn from me. As I

continuously work on unpacking my own prejudices and opening up space for my own

perspective taking, I draw from what Hansen (2011) refers to as listening *with* others. As

discussed earlier, this new listening connects to his idea of *cosmopolitanism* – the stance

of global citizenship. A cosmopolitan perspective expands our capacity to be open to

seeing the world as others do and hearing their ways of thinking and knowing (Hansen,

2011). I hear this cosmopolitan stance when Kwane Anthony Appiah states, "We can

learn from each other's stories only if we share both human capacities and a single

world" (Hansen, 2011). Opening, expanding, listening, thinking, perspective taking and

knowing is the synthesis I seek for myself and adolescents as pedagogical space is

cultivated.

**Guiding question 2: How does the integration of autobiographical narrative inquiry
invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives?**

Informing and guiding my research is the question, how does the integration of autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives? I gain insight from feminist ideas, postmodernism and critical theory approaching this question. Grounded in feminist thinking, based on the premise that the experience of all human beings (social locations) is valid and must not be excluded from our understandings (Reinharz, 1991), I examine narrative inquiry as identity formation – making sense of one's life (Mishler, 2010). To honor and explore our social locations, I participate in narrative self-construction through narrative writing, memos, and journal keeping, opening and exposing my perspectives and experiences. My pilot study, shared in Chapter Three, *Personal Narrative Exploration: Creating Critical and Self-Reflective Learners and Practitioners,* responds to the treasures and challenges in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms and the importance of my story being shared (as an educator of pre-service teachers), along with the stories of pre-service teachers and the students they encounter. Drawing from Freire (2001) that narrative inquiry develops a critical consciousness and creative power in both the participant and researcher, I accept that though my views are authentic to my experience, my theoretical perspectives are shaped by my students (and research participants).

Postmodernists argue, as well, that you can only know something from a certain position and this knowledge is not binding. My past experiences as an adolescent educator (middle school humanities teacher for 23 years) and mother of four adolescents connect to the postmodern orientation of researcher as interpreter, describer, and discoverer. As I shared earlier, whether in the living room, locker room or classroom, all my ideas regarding race, gender, class, ability, sexual orientation, and other axes of

identity must be challenged and given space for reflexivity – self-reflection on my own

biases (Lutrell, 2010). My own reflexive practice is ongoing as I draw on theory,

research, and experience to examine my research methodologies (shared in Chapter

Three), data collection (shared in Chapter Four), findings and interpretations (shared in

Chapter Five) while inspecting my own biases.

The third ideological influence on my thinking – critical theory – specifically

encourages me to look for biases. As I attempt to account, honestly, for my stance, I am

aware that social organization privileges some at the expense of others (Harding, 2005).

Critical and standpoint theory remind me to pay attention to the intersectionality of

multiple systems of oppression and discrimination silencing or entitling participants in

my study (Crenshaw, 2004). The theoretical underpinnings of feminist thinking,

postmodernism, and critical theory contribute to the meaning-making of narrative self -

exploration– making sense of events and experiences through storytelling. Opening up

pedagogical space to all experiences, perspectives, stories, and voices frames this study

and invites participant (and co-participant) *fresh listening*.

**Guiding Question 3: How might *photovoice* – as a participatory action research
method – help adolescents imagine an alternative possibility and make meaning of
life experiences?**

This study opens the pedagogical space for *photovoice* – participatory action

research. However, troubled by a diminished focus on the student due to our new testing

and accountability culture (shared in Chapter One), being present and engaging in a

hospitable pedagogical space requires a new theoretical framework. The pedagogical

spaces I create are informed by social constructivism (a construct that gives order to our

meaning making). Foucault (1972) teaches that out of social constructivism emerges

values and sense of self – both aspects of the way power/knowledge works. Further, I am

motivated by an important application of social constructivism to consider epistemology

(a theory of knowing) – and standpoint theory (defined earlier). Feminist theorist Harding

(2005) believes a standpoint is a place from which human beings see the world. Harding

(2005) adds that the inequalities of different social groups create differences in their

standpoints. Drawing from feminist theory, standpoint epistemology argues that all

knowledge is constructed in specific matrices: physical location, history, culture, and

interests (Harding, 2005; Sprague, 2010). I am interested in opening up the space where

location, history, culture and interests convene through image creation.

Adding to standpoint theory, Freire's (2001) theory of unfinishedness – "the

unfinishedness of the human person" (p. 21) propels us into a process of searching and

changing. In my work, I provide pedagogical space for standpoint stances and

unfinishedness through *photovoice* – a participatory action research methodology. The

theoretical underpinnings of *photovoice* are further supported by Freire's (2001) methods

of using line drawings or photographs to represent significant realities. *Photovoice*,

through participatory action, takes this concept one step further by enabling participants

to showcase viewpoints that differ from the traditionally controlling images of the world

(Wang & Burris, 1997). Articulating standpoint through photography and narrative aligns

with a social construction developed by law professor Kimberle Crenshaw (2013) –

intersectionality.

I believe seeing ourselves and others with openness and depth reminds us that we

are all unfinished and have multi-layered facets – traits that we may not like but have to

deal with. Crenshaw's (2013) sociological theory – intersectionality – is the study of

these facets, specifically the study of interactions of multiple systems of oppression and

discrimination. My research explores intersectionality as a heuristic term focusing our

attention on the dynamics of difference and the solidarities of sameness (Cho et al.,

2013). Additionally, while this theory began as an exploration of the oppression of

women within society, scholars and activists today strive to apply it to all people and to

many different intersections of group membership (Tomlinson, 2013). Tomlinson (2013)

theorizes that intersectionality is used differently across various academic disciplines.

Central to her thinking is that discussion and disagreement across disciplines are already

situated within fields of power (Tomlinson, 2013). Further, Tomlinson (2013) adds that

the inequalities of different social groups create differences in their standpoints. These

differences in standpoints intersect in our multi-layered selves – an intersection where

photovoice methodology can enter and provide space for examination and reflection.

I contend that using the lens of intersectionality – and the multi-faceted place

from which human beings see the world – may lead *photovoice* participants to explore

their standpoint – their individual perspective. Collins (1986) stresses that speaking from

a critical standpoint, self evaluation and self-definition are two ways of resisting

oppression and devaluation. *Photovoice* elicits self-evaluation and self-definition as

participants engage in capturing strengths and weaknesses in their environment and take

time, care and space engaging in critical dialogue, narrative reflection, collective

responsibility, and aesthetic thinking (Wilson, Dasho, Martin, Wallerstein, Wang, &

Minkler, 2007).

Conclusion: Aesthetic Thinking

As an educator, researcher and beginning artist, I understand that creating time, care and space can begin with art – a drawing, photograph or artifact. Art is the catalyst in the framework of aesthetic thinking. As a philosophy, aesthetics refers to the study of sensory values – rooted in Ancient Greece where thinkers like Plato and Socrates considered the inherent meaning and beauty of things (Dewey, 1934). Dewey (1934) turned to the artistic aesthetic – art as experience – actively engaging in diverse works of art, coming to realize them as objects of possibility. Dewey's theory of constructionism – the notion that we construct our understandings of things over time by self-directed activity – calls for intrinsic motivation, or student as learner. Together with Dewey, Greene (2000) advocates releasing the imagination through exposure to art and aesthetic thinking. These form important new habits of inquiry.

Releasing the imagination (Greene, 2000) – our new domain (Moje, 2013) - champions the idea that art makes us aware of ourselves as questioners, as meaning makers, and as persons engaged in constructing and reconstructing realities with those around us. Photographer Richmond and dancer/writer Snowber (Richmond & Snowber, 2011) add that we when we are living with attentive hearts, bodies, and minds can we engage in deep seeing and deep listening. Greene (1995), Richmond and Snowber (2011) concur that only by opening an hospitable space to our students can the dialogical process of seeing and listening occur. The gift of art offers this space. Creating space for all is the challenge – engaging students who normally hold back, whose attention wanders, and whose cultural and linguistic diversity is misunderstood. Opening pedagogical space to explore the research question - what happens when space is created for middle school students to engage in *photovoice* participatory action research and narrative self-

construction with perspective taking - results in the methodology I present in Chapter

Three, my investigative intentions.

Chapter Three: Methodology
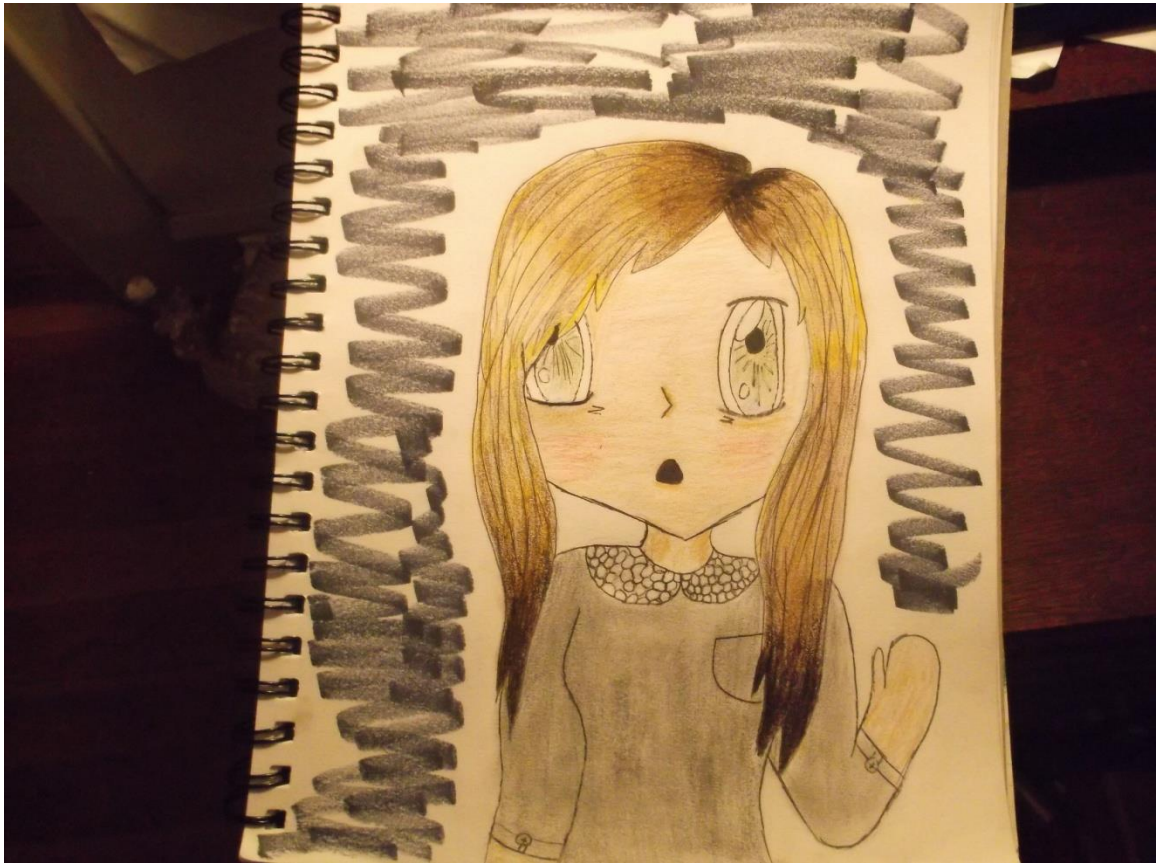
Photogragh 3.1: O'Maley Middle School Academy, *Self Portrait*, by Maria

Overview

      The space to wonder and imagine is the individual and collective territory I

choose to explore in this study. My pedagogical intentions begin with unpacking my

sociocultural perspective while engaging in participatory action research – a balance

between researcher and participant where questions and content are co-constructed. My

purpose emanates from the problem articulated in Chapter One - disturbingly, in the

current educational environment, spaces supporting the inner lives and voices of students

are shrinking (Palmer, 2007; Brown, 2009; hooks, 2010). This study seeks to create

dynamic spaces for participants to become researchers, voicing life experiences while

wielding a camera, and is framed by the question: "what happens when space is created

for middle school students to engage in *photovoice* participatory action research and

narrative self-construction with perspective taking?"

As a critical researcher, I engage in qualitative research. Grounded in

constructivist philosophical positioning, qualitative research explores how the

sociocultural world is experienced, interpreted and understood in a particular context at a

particular point in time (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Educators and researchers

Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) assert that qualitative methodology implies an emphasis on

discovery and description, focusing on extracting and interpreting the meaning of

experience. Specifically, visual content analysis and thematic narrative analysis

illuminate my multiple data points – image (photographs), voice (videotaped discussions)

and narrative (self/peer scribed). I draw my qualitative methodology from Riessman

(2008), Saldana (2009), Luttrell (2010), and Rose (2012) as I approach photographic

images through visual content analysis, videotaped discussions and scribed/self- authored

narratives employing thematic content analysis.

Visual methodology researcher Rose (2012) provides a critical approach to visual

analysis: take images seriously; think about the social conditions and effects of visual

objects; and consider your own way of looking at images. Her framework for exploring

visual content includes site of production, the image itself, and its audience. I choose to

center my visual analysis on the image itself, believing there are multiple layers of

meaning in a single photograph – photographer intentions, choices, and narratives

(Luttrell, 2010). Further, while examining the photographic image, Luttrell (2010)

encourages me to analyze content through emergent categories.

I combine visual content analysis of photographs with thematic narrative analysis of participant voices in discussion and narrative writings (Riessman, 2008, Saldana, 2009). I embrace the phrase, "narrative turn" – scholars examining how "selves" are constructed (Riessman, 2008, pp. 14-15). This evolution in narrative studies celebrates interdisciplinary, layered expression of human thought and imagination. Riessman (2008) cites four movements framing this evolving practice: positivist modes of inquiry; the "memoir boom" in literature and popular culture; the new "identity movements" – emancipation efforts of people of color, women, gays and lesbians, and other marginalized groups; and, the growing therapeutic culture – exploration of personal life in various therapies. Embracing this move away from discipline-specific and investigator-controlled practices is the essence of *photovoice* participatory action, where participants capture images portraying their viewpoint, with discussion and narrative providing participant perspective.

Finally, I compose analytic memos (Saldana, 2009) encouraging reflexivity - allowing me to document and reflect on my coding process while wrestling with developing patterns and themes leading to theory. What gets themed? Saldana (2009) reminds me to look for repeating ideas, participant terms and metaphors, along with theoretical issues of interpersonal relationships, social conflict and control. Over the course of this chapter, my heuristic approach unfolds in discussions of my pilot studies, research participants, research design, data collection methods, data analysis leading to synthesis (Chapter Four), ethical considerations, issues of trustworthiness, and, lastly, limitations and delimitations.

Pilot Studies Shaping Methodology

Pilot study 1: *Personal narrative exploration: creating critical and self-reflective learners and practitioners.* In the context of my current teaching position with pre-service educators at the university level, I piloted a study, along with narrative scholar Gurley-Green, called *Personal Narrative Exploration: Creating Critical and Self-Reflective Learners and Practitioners* (Gurley-Green, 2014)*.* Our research question, "how do we provide space for pre-service students to locate attitudes and themes within life experiences as a key to developing self-concept and professional identity?" shaped our narrative inquiry. Presented as an autobiographical narrative intervention, we introduced our participants to activities that created space for personal reflection and perspective taking. This pilot study emerges from our belief that personal narrative exploration begins the reflective practice of discovering assumptions and biases. Without examination, attitudes and themes within life experience may lead to inequity and discrimination (Markos, 2012).

Piloting narrative exploration with pre-service teachers revealed tensions that I explore in this study with middle school students – how do classrooms create open spaces for narrative reflection and perspective taking that challenge prescribed classroom curriculum? Our pilot participants included 25 pre-service teachers across subject areas attending a state university located ten miles north of Boston, Massachusetts. The majority of our students (15 women, 10 men) are white (95%), of European extraction, from working class backgrounds. Many will observe, student teach, and find employment at the secondary level in the local school district. Currently, 25% of secondary students in the local district have a primary language other than English (with 37 languages spoken). Thus, the heart of our intervention is the conviction that narrative exploration

provides the medium for participant self-disclosure and assists in identifying strengths

and an opening up to the strengths of others, different from our own (Slivinske &

Slivinske, 2013).

Understanding thematic narrative analysis. The qualitative data drawn from our

intervention encompassed written, visual and social data: autobiographical narratives;

videotaped debates; and peer conversations. Our methodology conformed to thematic

narrative analysis, our first cycle being In Vivo Coding – verbatim coding of actual

participant words (Saldana, 2013). Data theming, our second cycle, draws from Riessman

(2008) who reminds us that themes are interpretive, insightful discoveries that shape and

make sense of the data. Themes emerged from discussions on narrative identity formation

(Riessman, 2008; Strack, Magill, & McDonagh, 2004): family (continuity/discontinuity),

culture (values/change), loss (productive/unproductive), hope (professional/personal),

and alterity (inside/outside). As our research progressed, we analyzed our data

inductively by means of constant comparison, confirming the validity of our themes and

subthemes.

Methodological processes practiced from this pilot encourage me to draw from

Riessman (2008) and Luttrell (2010), while practicing narrative thematic analysis on

participant narratives and class discussions. Further, introducing myself to In Vivo

coding – using actual participant terminology as my first cycle of analysis – guides me

towards themes and patterns in these discourses (Riessman, 2008; Saldana, 2009). Thus,

as I approached this study I brought valuable lessons in narrative thematic analysis, most

notably: the challenge of linking pieces of data rendering them coherent; and, the

challenge of In Vivo coding – using precise spoken or written words – and developing

this context to make meaning. Further informing my methodology is my second rich pilot

study (the site of Case Study II, a year later), presented below.

   Pilot study 2: The girlhood project. My second pilot study, The Girlhood

Project, Cambridge, MA, embeds body image, and an identity development workshop in

a seven-week critical media literacy study. As a component in the Lesley University

upper level sociology course, *Girlhood, Identity, and Girl Culture*, this workshop invites

middle school girls from Tutoring Plus to join Lesley University students for this service

learning workshop. Tutoring Plus is a free tutoring and enrichment program for

Cambridge students - grades 4 through 12 - from diverse backgrounds – many coming

from low-income families. I conducted this pilot study as a graduate student enrolled in

the Lesley course. The study involved 8 middle school workshop participants (out of 21

girls) bused to Lesley University every week for seven weeks (along with four peer

leaders - middle and high school students who have participated in the course).

   My pilot study employed the participatory action research tool, *photovoice,*

encouraging adolescent girls to take photographs and explore their own voice through

group discussions about their photographs. Qualitative methods of analysis in this study

draw on three data points: photographs (visual content analysis); discourse and scribed

narratives (thematic narrative analysis). The first cycle of thematic narrative analysis is In

Vivo coding – its root meaning being "in that which is alive" (Saldana, 2009, p. 91) –

which encourages me to study and honor the participant's voice by using exact quotes

from narratives. In Vivo coding connects nicely to participatory action research as this

genre's primary goal honors participant terminology rather than terms derived from the

academic disciplines (Saldana, 2009). Saldana (2009) informs me that In Vivo coding is

particularly useful with youth as child and adolescent voices are often marginalized.

Thus, codifying the actual words of young people enhances my understanding of their

social world.

The second cycle of analysis allows me to pull In Vivo codes into overarching

themes that rise from the data. The phrase, "beautiful to me," rose organically from our

participant group and allows for the following meta-themes or meaning interpretations

(Saldana, 2009):

- **Beautiful is family**

- **Beautiful is art-making**

- **Beautiful means relationships**

This pilot enlightened my expanding methodology by: introducing visual content

analysis (I began to develop categories for photographic content); informing my first

cycle of thematic narrative analysis, In Vivo coding; engaging me in meta-theme

identification; and most importantly, providing a fertile site for future Case Study II data

collection. Thus, techniques of analysis from my pilot studies forged a research approach

for my current study and reinforced my research orientation, *photovoice* participatory

action research.

Photovoice participatory action hybrid model. Photovoice is a flexible approach

to participatory action research (see **Participatory Action Research** section)

intermingling images and words as a way of representing lived experiences and

encouraging group dialogue (Wang & Burris, 1997). My participants are co-researchers –

novices to photography making decisions on what photographs to shoot, display, discuss

and narrate. I am a co-participant, also a novice to photography, interested in clicking,

displaying, and shaping my research through data collecting and qualitative analysis (choosing visual content analysis and thematic narrative analysis).

As co-participant, I blend my methodology (see Table 3.1, below) with *photovoice* participatory action research processes (Palibroda, 2009), creating a hybrid model responsive to my guiding questions:

- How is perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescents grapple with creating a community of learning that values all voices?

- How does the integration of autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives?

- How might *photovoice* – as a participatory action research tool – help adolescents imagine alternative possibilities and make meaning of life experience?

Photovoice Participatory Action Research Processes	*Photovoice* **Participatory Action Research Hybrid**
Connect and consult with the community – it is essential that trust be developed in all stages of *photovoice*	**Trust develops throughout the first 4 – 5 weeks at each participant site through relational discussions, journaling, and media studies**
Plan a *photovoice* project by identifying a research focus (guiding question) to frame issues of concern in the classroom, club or community – provide ethical guidelines	**Brainstorming, concept-mapping, art-making and sharing of "big ideas" are co-constructed**
Seek diversity for your *photovoice* participants (co-researchers) and identify a potential audience, building a bridge between research and community	**Two case studies are cultivated - participants are middle school volunteers in after school programs.**
Create a *photovoice* participant group, conduct workshops in photography skills and the role of PAR - establish a timeline	**Case Study I focuses on digitally publishing a sketchbook; Case Study II focuses on community celebration and an exhibition connecting participants, families, and the community**
Establish project meeting schedules to address: the *photovoice* process; issues of concern; and group goals	***Photovoice* workshop sessions commence (see Appendix F) utilizing discussion, *photovoice* projects and distribution of**

	"point-and-shoot" cameras with memory cards
Ensure data collection is ongoing – each photograph, discussion, narrative, exhibition, and feedback session is data	**Participants share "free lance" photographs stimulating discussions and narratives**
Promote ongoing data analysis through audio-tapes, transcription, and codifying	**Case Study I and II participant data points include photographs, videotaped discussions and scribed stories (image, voice, narratives)**
Prepare and share the *photovoice* exhibit, establishing voice, awareness and understanding	**Case Study I participants display photographs and text through The Sketchbook Project; Case Study II participants display photographs, written narratives and tell stories during The Girlhood Project final celebration**
Set the foundation for social and/or political action, suggesting guidelines and practices	**Case Study I and II provide space for safely creating, engaging, exploring and documenting**

Table 3.1: *Photovoice* Participatory Action Research Processes/*Photovoice* Participatory Action Research Hybrid

Research Participants

My selection of research participants is intentional – referred to as purposive

sampling (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012) – and I employ case study methodology to

showcase two participant sites. As a form of research methodology, I choose case study

for its intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon (method) – *photovoice*

participatory action research. Further, qualitative researcher Merriam (1998) explains:

A case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the

situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is in the process rather than

outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than

confirmation. Insights gleaned from case studies can directly influence policy,

practice, and future research. (p. 19)

My purposive sampling procedure sought to locate middle school students with the following criteria:

- All participants range in age from 11 to 15 years old.

- All participants attend a voluntary after school program in an urban or suburban district (I sought both district settings).

- All participants volunteer to explore *photovoice* participatory action research

This sampling procedure yielded 15 participants involved in a delimiting time frame of twelve weeks, ensuring relational context between *photovoice* facilitator (me, as co-participant) and *photovoice* participants. My two sites (forging two case studies) include: Case Study I: O'Maley Innovation Middle School, Gloucester, Massachusetts – participants attending O'Maley Middle School Academy, an extended day program granted through the Massachusetts 21st Century Learning Center; and Case Study II: Tutoring Plus in partnership with Lesley University, Cambridge, Massachusetts – participants attending an afterschool workshop, "Girls, Media, and You," a component of Lesley University's undergraduate sociology/service learning course, *Girlhood, Identity, and Girl Culture* (referred to as *The Girlhood Project*).

Case Study I situates at O'Maley Innovation Middle School, the public middle school in Gloucester, Massachusetts – a city on Cape Ann in Essex County (population: 29,393), home to an important yet struggling fishing industry and a lively summer community. O'Maley's demographics include 631 students (grades six, seven and eight) – with 86.67% identifying as white, while the largest minority, 5.40%, are bi-racial (white and Hispanic). Most notably, 49.28% of O'Maley's population qualify for free and reduced lunch. Case Study I's participant demographics are displayed below (Table 3.2):

Name	Grade	Age	Race	Free/reduced	Language spoken
Jade	7	11yrs10mo	white	No	English
Joe	7	11yrs11mo	white	Free	English
Cloe	8	13yrs3mo	White/Hispanic	Free	English
Maria	7	11yrs11mo	White	No	English

Table 3.2: Case Study I Participant Demographics – this limited data was made available
by The Gloucester Public Schools in February, 2015

Case Study II locates in *The Girlhood Project* – a service learning community

partnership between Tutoring Plus and Lesley University, both located in Cambridge,

Massachusetts. Now in its ninth year, *The Girlhood Project* is a multidimensional

exploration of how girls ranging from middle school to college negotiate their emerging

and evolving identities. Embedded in this project is a service learning component, "Girls,

Media and You," targeting middle school girls from Cambridge's racially diverse Area

IV identified through Tutoring Plus – celebrating 50 years of Cambridge community

outreach. Case Study II participant data is displayed below (Table 3.3):

Name	Grade	DOB	School
Sophia	9		GRLS
Kiara	7	7/16/2001	CSUS
Camila	7	8/1/2002	CSUS
Kayla	9		Chapel Hill-Chauncy Hall
Ivanna	8	8/24/2000	CSUS
Gabriela	7		Prospect Hill

Samantha	9		CRLS
Julia	7	5/23/2002	PAUS
Connie	7		PAUS
Evie	8	10/22/2000	PAUS
Bianca	7		PAUS

Table 3.3: Case Study II Participant Demographics – this limited data was made available by Tutoring Plus in February, 2015

Case Study I and II participants completed consent forms (Appendix A) and experienced similar introductions, workshop sessions, and data collection processes. I share my research design/methodology and sessions of data collection through data analysis in the following sections.

Research Design

Researcher positionality and reflexivity guide my research design. I enter into this design through participatory action research – I am a reflexive co-participant during every session. My process title is **FOCUS ON *PHOTOVOICE*** (Appendix F), a participatory action research workshop involving the following co-constructed sessions with participants:

Session One: Introducing perspective taking**;** drawing self-portraits; sharing postcard perspectives

Session Two: Examining situated "selfies" (photographing oneself in a chosen context), "selfie" swap (reflecting inside on a partner's "selfie"); introducing *photovoice***;** distributing point and shoot digital cameras with memory cards

Session Three: Creating **"5-minutes of fame"** slide show (participant showcasing of several photographs); discussing slide show images (perspective taking) and choosing one image to narrate; introducing narrative self-construction

Session Four: Voicing Our Individual and Collective Experiences (**VOICE**), celebrating image, voice and narrative with a wider audience

Youth Participant Informed Consent for Photovoice forms (Appendix A) are given to all participants prior to Session I as stated in my Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (Appendix B). Every precaution is taken to minimize participant risk including loss of privacy and physical harm. No names or identifying information are noted unless specific written permission is obtained. I am a familiar participant in each case study prior to my workshop sessions – a relational consideration separating *photovoice* participatory action research from other photo-generating studies, specifically photo-elicitation. Rose (2012) contends that there can be confusion between the qualitative visual methods of *photovoice* and photo-elicitation. Photo-elicitation "is based on the simple idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview" (Harper as cited in Rose, 2012, p. 304). These photos can be participant generated or found elsewhere. Framed differently, *photovoice* emerges from a specific tradition of action research, the point being to not just study something but to engage participants and researchers in the process of social learning, analysis and empowerment (Rose, 2012). I form a *photovoice* participatory action research hybrid model creating pedagogical spaces for participants to explore images, cultivate discussions and create narratives. Creating possibilities for social identities to emerge and group belonging to strengthen is a goal of participatory action.

Participatory action research (PAR). As a research orientation, PAR

methodologies include: planning and conducting the research process with people whose

life and meaningful actions are under study; developing research questions out of

experience and practice; and the stepping back of participants and researchers from

familiar routines, forms of interactions and power relationships in order to fundamentally

question and rethink situations (Bergold & Thomas, 2014). Thus, as a methodological

style, PAR represents numerous iterations that are knowledge-generating inquiries – a

characteristic being participants as research partners in the production of knowledge

while researching their social world. Therefore, Rose (2012) asserts that photovoice

participatory action research is an iteration looking at the participants as researchers, in

relationship with their social context. My *photovoice* participatory action research hybrid

model seeks to open spaces for this rich iteration.

Prior to introducing my hybrid model to Case Study I and Case Study II

participants, I gain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (Appendix B) of my

research design including: background/context; problem statement; purpose statement;

research questions; review of literature; and methodological approach. The following two

sections elaborate my methods of data collection and process of data analysis - both

informed by theoretical premises gleaned from my pilot studies.

Data Collection Methods

I base my data collection methodology on several empowering theoretical

assertions. First, I draw from educator and activist Palmer's (2007) contention that how

you teach reflects who you are. Who am I? I teach and research seeking to create space

where no one is denied the opportunity to speak and be heard. My own feelings of

invisibility and of being silenced in adolescence (shared in Chapter One) forge my

current stance. Supporting this premise, feminist scholar Harding (2005) reminds me that

I enter these spaces accepting that the standpoints I favor shape my understandings.

Second, *photovoice* participatory action research - taking photographs and telling stories

relating to these images - is the tool I use to empower my participants to share ideas,

concerns, and stories helping them become "aware of themselves appearing before

others, speaking in their own voices…" (Greene, 2000, p. 68). Third, Greene (2000),

Palibroda (2009), and Wang and Burris (1997) encourage me to diminish any facilitator

power by becoming a co-participant giving voice to all perspectives and listening to all

stories, including mine.
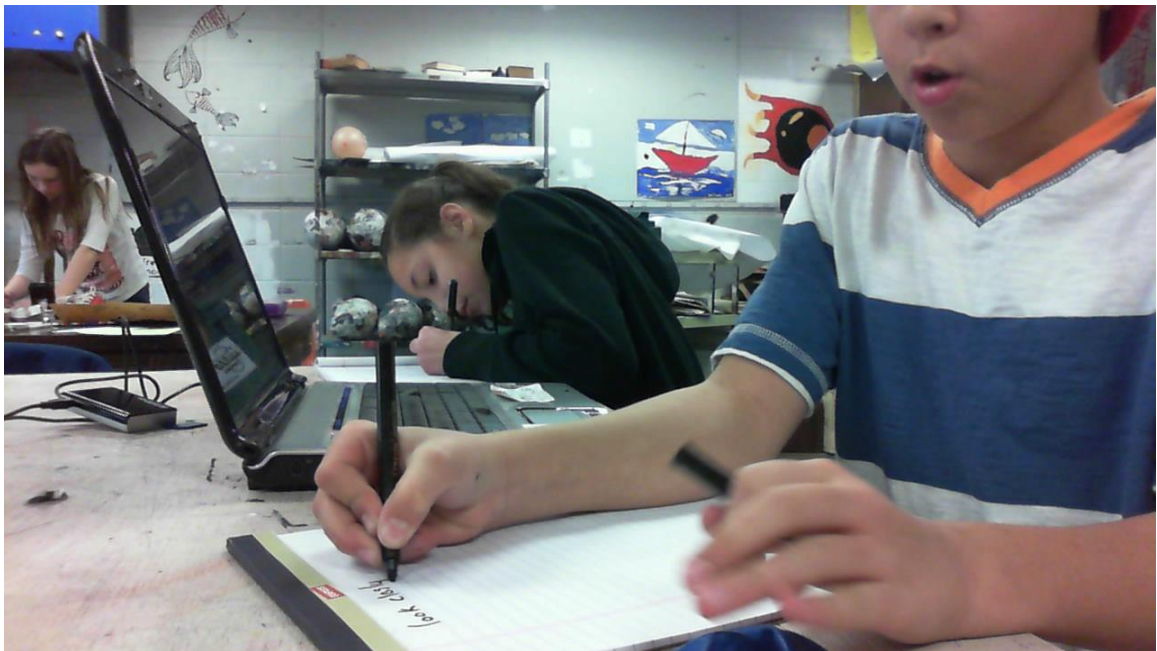
Photograph 3.2: O'Maley Middle School Academy – *Photovoice*, by Ann

Case study I context. Visual context for Case Study I data collection can be viewed in the Photograph 3.2, above. Situated in an art space, The Sketchbook Project is a voluntary after school gathering orchestrated through a larger initiative, O'Maley Middle School Academy, a daily 12 - week program promoting community building and skill development. Middle school students choose a focus, line up for a snack, and head to their chosen gathering place. I entered this space as an invited guest doing research using *photovoice* participatory action with the goals of: showcasing *photovoice* projects; sharing "point-and-shoot" cameras; inviting viewing of several photographs from each participant; printing chosen photographs for sketchbook use; and encouraging discussion and narration around these images.

The cultural context of Case Study I speaks to the socioeconomic demographics of the O'Maley School community. The students in this mid-size (631 students, grades 6 – 8) suburban middle school identify as 86.67% white, with the largest minority, 5.40%, being bi-racial (white and Hispanic). This after school program is funded through a Massachusetts 21st Century Learning Center grant awarded to economically struggling districts (49.28% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch). As specified in the grant, core subject enrichment and self-esteem building are criteria for academy offerings. Case Study I sessions invite exploration in watercolor, drawing, collage, and poetry. *Photovoice* introduces photography, as well as discussions and narrative self-construction. Lewin (1935) reminds me human behavior is a function of the interaction of the personal and the environment. Thus, the learning behaviors exhibited in the spaces opened through *photovoice* sessions reflect an established environment of safety and creative focus.

The creative focus of this gathering is a powerful vehicle for digital exhibition of student work, The Sketchbook Project, a traveling and digital library of sketchbooks created by anyone across the globe who registers at groups@arthousecoop.com. Upon registration and a fee, students receive a blank sketchbook, to be returned to The Sketchbook Project. Case Study I participants are creating content for their sketchbook, with entries varying but often including travelogues, memoirs, narratives, poetry, sketches and photo logs. A former O'Maley teacher facilitates this group of seventh and eighth graders appearing irregularly – attendance is taken but not mandatory – and participants arrive independent of close peers. Despite irregular attendance, they race into this art space to begin an individually motivated session of creative expression. The skillful facilitation consists of sharing art supplies, examples of possible entries, and encouragement. The best results of the day are cut, colored, stamped, arranged, glued and written upon in their sketchbooks. As their invited guest, I spend five weeks immersed in my sketchbook, making casual conversation in this academically uncluttered space full of art making and personal expression. Backpacks, texts and homework are left at the door. I begin this study's *photovoice* workshop sessions (Appendix F) on week five.

Photograph 3.2 portrays Session Three of our Focus on Photovoice workshop (see Appendix F). Students insert memory cards into computers, creating slide shows of chosen photographs – their "5-minutes of fame" leading to group discussion and narrative self-construction. Students help each other name their photographs while commenting on content. During Session Three, discussions are videotaped, narratives are written and multiple copies of photographs are printed for data and participant use. Thus, three data points are collected for analysis: images, discussions and narratives. The creative, open

spaces of The Sketchbook Project provided fertile ground for this study. After 5 weeks of

relationship building, the 4 – 6 weeks of workshop sessions provided rich data for

analysis despite students' lack of interest in narration (an issue addressed under

Delimitations).

Photograph 3.3: The Girlhood Project – *Journal Time*, by Ann Z.

Case study II context. Data collection proved both challenging and rewarding

throughout The Girlhood Project (site of my pilot study a year earlier). In spring

semester, 2015, I was situated as a Doctoral Research Fellow, in collaboration with

researcher and course instructor Dr. Amy Rutstein-Riley, deeply involved in: developing

syllabi for both Lesley students and teaching and research assistants in the course,

Girlhood, Identity, and Girl Culture; facilitating visual journaling among teaching and

research assistants; participating in every aspect of this multidimensional project; and

introducing *photovoice* participatory action to all members of the project, while inviting

middle school workshop participants and Lesley student facilitators into *photovoice*

sessions.

The service learning component for Lesley undergraduates of The Girlhood

Project, *Girls, Media, and You!* is the site of Case Study II. Twenty-five diverse, urban

youth come to Lesley University, identified through Tutoring Plus, to participate in a

seven-week girls' group. Middle school girls and high school peer leaders (formerly in

The Girlhood Project) build relationships with Lesley University students through

collaborative examination of the experiences and meanings of being a girl in

contemporary society. The Girlhood Project is grounded in principles of feminist

pedagogy and feminist group process for exploration of self against the backdrop of

critical media literacy, critical reflection, social critique and the co-construction of

counter narratives of girlhood. Lesley students and peer leaders facilitate each session,

designed around their co-constructed theme or content goal. Middle school participants,

arriving at Lesley University by bus around 4:30pm, present in many ways: energized

and grateful; rattled and despondent; clinging to a friend; and first time joining. This

brilliant, complex model presents stunning opportunities for Lesley University students to

facilitate engagement and growth as well as complex challenges.

Lewin (1935) and Riessman (2008) shine light on the challenges posed by The

Girlhood Project by encouraging my examination of the broader context contributing to

this unique setting. The Girlhood Project seeks to provide college students with a diverse

theoretical and academic background in order to challenge dominant power dynamics affecting the racially and socioeconomically diverse middle school participants. These power dynamics influence the socialization of these girls as well as the process of identity development throughout their lives. Thus, The Girlhood Project creates tension and release for both college and middle school students through actively examining and questioning the power dynamics at play in our culture.

Examine the focus, energy, collaboration and complex interactions (middle school through college and adult learners) in Photograph 3.3. This Lesley student-facilitated journaling activity preceded Session Two of Focus on *Photovoice* (Appendix F) – the passing out of cameras and brief demonstration of *photovoice* as a tool for self expression using images and words. Fourteen middle school students taking cameras for a week and collecting data proved enlightening. The Girlhood Project provided fertile ground, as well, with spaces opening for participant connection, growth and expression. Space was already open for dynamic data collection of image and text leading to analysis, due to the feminist pedagogical framework established in this workshop.

Data Analysis

Inventory of Data	Photographs	Videotaped Discussions	Scribed/Self-Scribed Narratives
Case Study I – O'Maley Middle School Academy	Self Portrait The Web Stuck in a Mirror Infinite Grayness Word Gen Look Clos[e]ly My Favorite Cousins The Group My Cat	WIN201412 – 56.12 minutes WIN20150129 – 15.03 minutes WIN201520 – 26.35 minutes	Infinite Grayness The Web Look Clos[e]ly Word Gen No Cars No People An Old Graveyard Covered in Snow Stuck in a Mirror I Love You Winter Wonderland My Favorite Cousins
Case Study II – The Girlhood Project	Pretty My name I Love Chris Brown Family Softball Mitt My Favorite Quote Beautiful The Squad Easter Egg	WIN2015041 – 10.12 minutes	My Family Pretty Jazzy and Christina First Kiss Easter Egg My Name The Squad Beautiful My Favorite Quote The Squad I Everyone #1

Table 3.4: Inventory of Data

In Case Study I and II contexts, I collected the data, shared above (Table 3.4: Inventory of Data). Data collection reflects who I am in relation to my sites, capturing voice and emerging identities from all participants. Revealing real life experiences and empowering all participants, the spirit of *photovoice* participatory action research, is grounded in Freire's "critical consciousness," activating social and political forces using visual image (Freire, 2001). Further, this awakening in participants when space opens through a camera lens aligns with Foucault's "inspecting gaze…our very eyesight [is] pressed into service as a mode of social control" (Foucault, as stated in Luttrell, 2010, p. 224). Steeped in the qualitative case study tradition, I now employ visual content analysis and thematic narrative analysis with rich within-case analysis followed by cross-case analysis.

Case study I. Drawing from Saldana (2009), Riessman (2008), Luttrell (2010), and Rose (2012), I approach the photographic images, transcribed videotapes and scribed narratives from participants at the O'Maley Innovation Middle School. Visual culture and methodology researcher Rose (2012) provides a critical approach to visual analysis: take images seriously; think about the social conditions and effects of visual objects; and consider your own way of looking at images. Choosing to center my visual analysis on the image itself, I believe there are multiple layers of meaning in a single photograph – intentions, choices, and narratives (Luttrell, 2010). In addition, I combine visual content analysis with thematic narrative analysis (In vivo coding [verbatim coding] being the first cycle of this analysis) for salient themes and patterns in transcribed videotapes and participant narrative writings (Riessman, 2008; Saldana, 2009). Finally, I compose

analytic memos (Saldana, 2009), encouraging reflexivity, allowing me to document and reflect on my coding process and emergent patterns and themes leading to theory.

Visual content analysis. Visual content analysis is a clear method for engaging systematically with images. This method of analysis focuses on the photograph itself, and not the other two sites of image meaning-making – production and audiencing (Luttrell, 2010). Lutz and Collins (1993), Luttrell (2010) and Rose (2010) concur that the challenge of visual content analysis is developing coding categories that can lead to findings with analytical significance. Thus, the development of codes requires a theoretical connection between the image and the broader context of the research question. For my first cycle of visual content analysis, I develop a coding approach reviewing my research question: how might photovoice – as a participatory research method – help adolescents imagine an alternative possibility and make meaning of life experience? Guided by Luttrell (2010) and Rose (2012) while using this framework of my guiding question, I develop a theoretical and inductive content coding list. I present codes for reliability with two cohorts, Lesley literacy cohort and Community of Scholars Day cohort, arriving at a co-constructed coding list including: titles (ideas, people, pets); setting (school, community, inside, outdoors); activities (work, play, creativity); people (age, gender, relationship) and posture (positioning for the camera, posturing creativity) (Luttrell, 2010; Rose, 2012). Finally, after several coding sessions, I add "subject" (family, friends, nature, artifacts) to further explore the intentions of our participants.

To this first cycle of focused analysis, I compute frequency codes, a quantitative approach to transparency, counting occurrences of image content in coding categories, Using 9 photographs from middle school participants in the workshop, I keep an eye on

validity (coding categories connecting to research question with a focus on describing) and replicability (codes clearly defined with inter-rater reliability by inviting multiple coders) - key terms and considerations in content analysis (Rose, 2012).

My second cycle of analysis – identifying meta-themes or "big" stories rising from the data - emerges from frequency counts of our coding categories. Interestingly, Rose (2012) reminds me that number count may not always translate into significance. Further, content analysis does not discriminate between a weak or strong representation of each code. However, Luttrell (2010) encourages me to strive for transparency and reflexivity through frequency. Rose (2012) agrees that validating participants as producers of content through image frequency counts gives voice to the concerns of participants over facilitator assumptions, an important tenent of participatory action research.

> *I worry that my coding categories, gleaned from my pilot study, Girls, Media and You, may need review. I bring first cycle of coding to my Literacy Cohort – they suggest another code, "stance or gaze," meaning positioning persons take in photographs. I return to Rose (2012) discovering her reference to visual anthropologists Lutz and Collins' (1993) expansive content analysis on over 600 National Geographic photographs. They include the code of "posture" – gaze, smile, positioning – which concurs with my caring cohort! I add "posture" and remove genre (snapshot, landscape, portrait) as all participants agree that we are interested in content over composition. I also collapse the code "subject" into "setting" as we acknowledge participants' subjects through image titles. Rose (2012), Luttrell (2010) and Lutz and Collins (1993) agree*

examining and editing codes promoting deepening of analysis may enrich data.

(Memo 3.1: Ziergiebel, 4.20.2015)

Thematic narrative analysis. Thematic narrative analysis focuses exclusively on content to generate significant findings, with attention on "what" is said rather than "how" or "for what purposes" (Riessman, 2008, pp. 53-54). My first cycle of thematic narrative analysis is In Vivo coding (verbatim coding) – its root meaning being "in that which is alive" (Saldana, 2009) – encouraging me to study and honor the participant's voice. In Vivo coding connects nicely to participatory action research as this analysis method's primary goal honors participant terminology rather than terms derived from academic disciplines (Saldana, 2009). Saldana (2009) informs me that In Vivo coding is particularly useful with youth as child and adolescent voices are often marginalized. Thus, coding the actual words of my adolescent participants enhances my understanding. My data is generated from three transcribed videotaped discussions (WIN20150129 – 15.03 minutes; WIN201520 – 26.35 minutes; WIN201412 – 56.12 minutes) and 10 self/peer scribed narratives connecting to peer-chosen photographs.

Weaving In Vivo codes into overarching themes (meta-themes) informs my second cycle of thematic narrative analysis. I blend (collapse into each other) or discard codes depending on their significance in the framework created by this study's research and guiding questions. This exciting practice places the participant as knowing subject – the meaning maker - as meta-themes or meaning interpretations (Saldana, 2009) begin to emerge and strengthen.

Case study II. Modeling after Case Study I, Case Study II situates in *The Girlhood Project*, Case – a service learning community partnership between Tutoring

Plus and Lesley University. Home to my pilot study one year earlier (The Girlhood Project, Spring 2014), I strive to replicate Case Study I methodology, combining two cycles of visual content analysis with cycles of narrative thematic analysis, (again, In vivo coding being the first cycle of this analysis) leading to themes and patterns in transcribed videotapes and participant narrative writings (Riessman, 2008, Saldana, 2009). I continue to compose and review analytic memos (Saldana, 2009) attempting to establish connections between myself and the spaces I am studying. Saldana assures me that as "sites of conversation with ourselves about our data" (p. 42), analytic memo writing and coding are concurrent qualitative data analytic activities. Reflecting on Case Study I while entering Case Study II, I memo:

> *I think of pedagogy as meaning making - experiencing deeper*
>
> *understandings of self and others – as my experiences as a learner are most*
>
> *vibrant through informal pedagogical experiences: figure drawing with*
>
> *Grampa among live models (age eight); and, sewing, drawing, perspective-*
>
> *taking and color valuing modeled by my Aunt Peggy and Dorothy's arts and*
>
> *crafts movement - inspired Folly Cove Designers (designer-craftspeople)*
>
> *carving designs in linoleum blocks creating draperies, table linens and*
>
> *clothing) (ages ten to seventeen). So, what do I really mean by pedagogical*
>
> *spaces… giving Jade space to explain her intricate drawings in the margins of*
>
> *her interdisciplinary curriculum booklet, Word Generation, with time to explain*
>
> *herself further through photovoice? What are we doing wrong with these*
>
> *educational reforms that appear multi-modal yet continue to shrink space for*
>
> *imagination and discovery?* (Memo 3.2: Ziergiebel, 2/11/2015)

Visual content analysis*.* As stated in Case Study I, my first cycle of visual

content analysis involves a theoretical and inductive content coding list, including: titles

(ideas, people, pets); setting (school, community, inside, outdoors); activities (work,

play, creativity); people (age, gender, relationship); posture (positioning for the camera,

posturing creativity); and subject" (family, friends, nature, artifacts) (Luttrell, 2010, Rose,

2012). I use 9 photographs from participants in the workshop, The Girlhood Project**,**

keeping an eye on validity and replicability. While entering Case Study II, I reflect on my

guiding question, "how might *photovoice* – as a participatory action research tool – help

adolescents imagine an alternative possibility and make meaning of life experience? To

this second case study, I bring renewed eagerness to open spaces to showcase participant

photographs in hopes of generating robust discussion and rich narration. Throughout

Case Study I, instances occurred when discussion and narration were cut short due to

natural interruptions, absences and missed opportunities – hazards for pedagogical

spaces.

Thematic narrative analysis*.* My narrative data embodies one transcribed

videotaped discussion (WIN2015041 – 10.12 minutes) and nine 9 self/peer scribed

narratives connecting to chosen photographs. As in Case Study I, In Vivo coding

(verbatim coding) is my first cycle of coding. I integrate In Vivo codes into overarching

themes - my second cycle of thematic narrative analysis - witnessing the effect of story

on participants. Narrative scholar Freeman (Bamberg & Freeman, 2014) asserts

beginning in adolescence we give meaning to our lives by constructing and internalizing

self-defining stories. My second cycle of thematic narrative analysis may reveal social

identities, voice and collective action through "big" story meta-themes. I approach this

cycle of analysis looking for thematic similarities, differences and relationships (Saldana, 2009).

Central to critical qualitative research is my ongoing praxis of reflexivity – establishing connections between myself and the social world I am studying (as co-participant). This process reflects the relational stance of participatory action research. I memo during the tenth week of The Girlhood Project:

> ***Yikes…Girls' Group I remains tension-laden, only relational in proxity due to meal sharing, joint activities and adherence to established protocols. What's missing is TRUST and CHOICE. Kayla and I co-construct a mini-lesson in photovoice hoping to open space for both choice and trust. Using her photo from our Pilot Study, Kayla evokes passion and joy around her graffiti mural and we provide cameras to willing participants…here's hoping…****(Memo 3.3: Ziergiebel, 4.4.2015)

I conclude my discussion of data collection methods with two important lenses of this study, memo writing and inter-rater reliability. These lenses oversee my qualitative data collection and analysis insuring validity, dependability and reflexivity (discussed below in **Issues of Trustworthiness**). Further, these lenses examine two critical concerns of this qualitative research study. The first concern is making sure that each cycle of analysis connects to my guiding questions:

- How is perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescents grapple with creating a community of learning that values all voices?

- How does the integration of autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives?

- How might *photovoice* – as a participatory action research tool – help

  adolescents imagine alternative possibilities and make meaning of life

  experience?

These essential questions structure my dissertation research question, "what happens

when space is created for middle school students to engage in *photovoice* participatory

action research and narrative self-construction with perspective taking?"

My second concern is examining the structure of case study, both a type of design

in qualitative research and an object of study (Rose, 2010). Case Study I and II present

similar methodologies, providing themes within each case (within case analysis) followed

by thematic analysis across cases (cross-case analysis). A timeline follows to provide

context to this structure:

November 2014	Prospectus for dissertation approval by committee
December 18, 2014	IRB approval (Appendix B)
December, 2014 – March, 2015	Case Study I – O'Maley Middle School Academy
March, 2015	Case Study I Sketchbook Project submission deadline
February – April, 2015	Case Study II –The Girlhood Project, Tutoring Plus and Lesley University
March 26, 2015	"Using *Photovoice* in Research," Community of Scholars Day, Lesley University
April 28, 2015	Case Study II celebrating The Girlhood Project, Alumni Hall, Lesley University
June – August, 2015	Data analysis and synthesis
September, 2015	Dissertation underway
March, 2016	Dissertation defense and public presentation, Lesley University

Table 3.5: Study Timeline

      To further address my concerns, I offer Figure 3.1, below, as a visual model of

this study's exploration of data design. This visual illustrates the attention given to

replicate methodological design – visual content analysis and thematic narrative analysis

– throughout both case studies.

Pedagogical Space

Memo Writing

Inter-rater Reliability
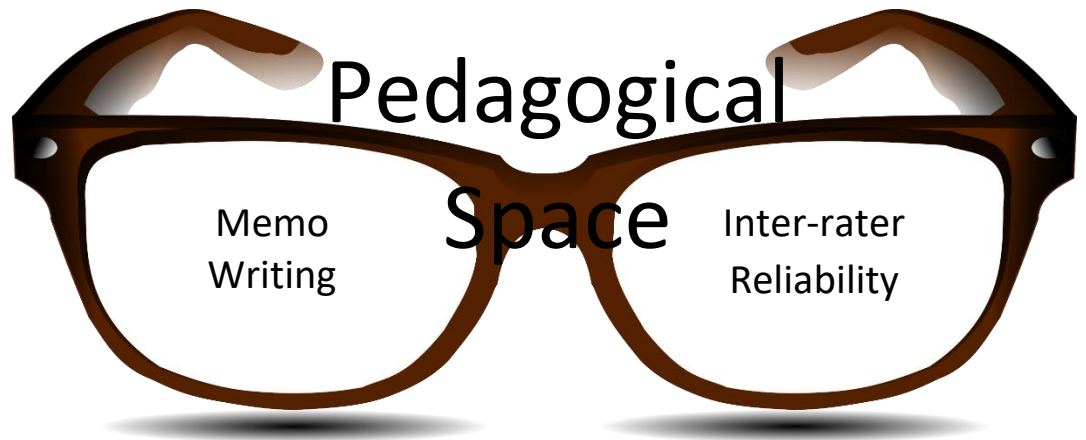
Case Study I
O'Maley

Case Study II
Girlhood Project

Within Case Analysis

CYCLE I
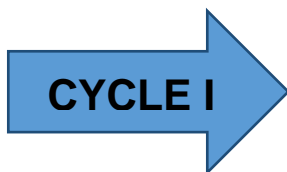
Visual Content Analysis of Photographs

Frequency Codes

Thematic Narrative Analysis of Discussions and Narratives

In Vivo Codes

CYCLE II

Meta - Themes

Meta - Themes

Cross Case Analysis

Figure 3.1: Exploration of Data

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues relating to protection of participants in my study are vitally important. As a qualitative researcher, I am responsible for both informing and protecting participants. Further, this study, involving visual research methods – photographs – requires explicit attention to the following three areas: consent, anonymity and copyright (Saldana, 2009; Rose, 2010). Although I anticipate no serious ethical threats posed to participants, this study employs safeguards to ensure the protection and rights of my participants and myself (as co-participant).

Informed consent. Informed consent, following the rules of Lesley University Institutional Review Board (Appendix B), remains a priority throughout my study. Case Study I and II participants provided written consent (Appendix A) to voluntarily proceed with this study. Further, consent was procured from participants' parent or legal guardian. Two unique issues arise with visual research methods: first, informed consent from public persons pictured in an image; and second, informed consent regarding the audiencing of images. I address the first concern through legal precedence (Rose, 2010) – consent from people pictured in public places is not legally required. The second concern, audiencing of images, requires me to obtain written consent (Appendix A) allowing informed and sympathetic audiences to view participant photographs. Permission for The Sketchbook Project submission in Case Study I and *The Girlhood Project* celebration in Case Study II was thoughtfully attained.

Anonymity. Anonymity can require obscuring faces or landmarks in photographs, a requirement both dehumanizing and disrespectful. In contrast, participatory action research solicits participants to articulate some aspect of their identity and connection to their images. Fortunately, consulting the IVSA (International Visual Sociology Association) Code of Research Ethics reveals:

> …various research methods do not require anonymity, among these are: community/participatory research, and individual case studies involving individuals who consent to use identifying information (e.g. own names and visual representations). (Rose, 2010, p. 338)

Anonymity is something to be considered carefully in visual research methods and I choose to use participant pseudonyms.

Copyright. Copyright, a legal term referring to the ownership of a specific visual image, contends the image is owned by the participant who makes it. Therefore, I seek consent from participants to reproduce their photographs for research, presentation and publication along with delimiting video use and storage. Vital to my study is the use of point – and - shoot digital cameras (donated) with memory cards – freely distributed – with cards erased after participant slide shows ("5 – minutes of fame") and photograph printing. All participants and facilitators in this study are aware of the questions of reproduction and copyright raised by digital images. Consent, awareness and delimits on images clarified through written permissions along with video safe storage and erasure of camera memory cards address predominate ethical considerations.

Issues of Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness involves the researcher (co-participant - me) controlling for potential biases present throughout the design, implementation and analysis of the study. The core research values I adhere to throughout this work include validity, dependability and reflexivity.

Validity. To ensure validity (reliability), coding categories in this study strive to be: exhaustive – every aspect that the image captures is covered; exclusive – categories do not overlap; and enlightening – categories produce "a breakdown of imagery that will be analytically interesting and coherent" (Rose, 2010, p. 91). Further, this study's opening of pedagogical spaces forges three data points–image, discussion, and narrative – employing both visual content analysis and thematic narrative analysis – requiring methodological validity matching guiding questions. Guiding questions grounding all collaboration ensures appropriate methodology - including my reflexive analytic memos.

Dependability. Qualitative research demands findings consistent and dependable with data collected. As a qualitative researcher, I cannot eliminate inconsistencies yet can be honest and reflexive when they occur – inconsistencies are presented as outliers for this study. Multiple data points, pilot studies and multiple cohort inter-rater reliability contribute to this study's quality and integrity (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Further, triangulation (agreement of three measures) of coding categories utilizing multiple date points forges corroboration from three different sources. This study's research question - what happens when space is created for middle school students to engage in *photovoice* participatory action research and narrative self-construction with

perspective taking - creates a reflexive stance illustrating how the data can be traced back to its authentic origins of participatory action.

Reflexivity. Reflexive subjectivity (constant reflective and self-critical processes) is an essential component of qualitative data collection and analysis. As a qualitative researcher, I strive to be reflexive by writing memos clarifying and probing: research design; participant collaboration and co-construction; coding sequences; coding check with cohorts; and relational facilitation (facilitator as co-participant). My reflexivity takes into account my social locations (autobiographical) and issues of representation (text based) - autobiographical reflexivity occurs with changes in me (co-participant) while acknowledging my intersectionality; and textual reflexivity guides me when analyzing images, discussions and narratives. Further, as shared in **Data Collection**, above, I privilege trust and choice throughout this study.

> *TRUST and CHOICE – those are the tenants of my sessions. I hand out point and shoot cameras – with cases, batteries and memory cards – reinforcing trust and choice as all participants are free to shoot anywhere and anything. No organizing themes emerge in either case study. My stance - unlike photography projects requiring tutorials on camera equipment – provides quality equipment (meaning "this is important work – I value you and your photos") and encourages learning while doing. Spaces may open for reflection, dialogue and social action. Luttrell (2010) suggests preserving multiple images participants are excited about, yet I prefer participants choosing one or two images to showcase through discussion and narrative writing adhering to photovoice essence – put cameras in participants' hands and let each image*

inspire a story. I never worry about cameras returning to the project…modeling

trust and respect releases this tension. (Memo 3.4: Ziergiebel, 4.24.2015)

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations. This study contains limiting conditions connecting to common

critiques of qualitative research methodology along with specific concerns of

participatory action research. First, qualitative research reflects researcher subjectivity. I

enter this research with assumptions (shared in Chapter One) framing my research design

and methodology. My first assumption is premised on the epistemological triad – the

knower, the known and the process of knowing requires space for voicing, risking, failing

and risking again. I contend that participatory action values this space and diminishes

power to foster co-creation of knowledge leading to understanding. My second

assumption is guided by visual content theory – a critical approach to visual images

theorizing that deeply embedding art and art-making into communities of learning opens

pedagogical space – the keystone of this study. Continuing, my third assumption speaks

to knowledge being culturally constructed and relational in nature. Finally, the missing

domain of imagination, my fourth assumption, places me at odds with the dominant

school discourses around performance, meritocracy and assessment.

Honoring my assumptions, I seek to join my adolescent participants in

exploring image, perspective and narrative through safe and open spaces. Therefore, a

key limitation of this study is my own bias towards certain types of learning

environments and my own lens defining "safe" and "space." Recognizing this limitation,

I read voraciously about "space" in educational sites discovering pedagogical spaces

occurring frequently in safe learning community settings. My pilot studies inform me that art encourages imagination across all disciplines and photography, specifically, empowers the photographer without the fear and anxiety of aesthetic judgment present in other genres. And, stories (narratives) are authentic responses to inquiries around art-making. A related limitation, facilitator as co-participant, may turn my co-constructing stance into confirmation bias – I believe in this process so it must be good! I take intensive measures to ensure reflexivity: pre-workshop session material and activity assessment; post-workshop setting debrief; videotaping and photographing workshop sessions; participant group check-ins; analytic memo writing; and, public sharing of research through colleague protocols and presentations.

Delimitations. Delimitations – parameters I impose on this study – concern workshop duration (Case Study I and II; 10-12 weeks each), participant criteria (middle school age, volunteering for after school programs), and choice of sites (suburban - Case Study I; urban - Case Study II). A further delimitation is my choosing *photovoice* participatory action as a tool to excavate the root of my research question: "what happens when space is created for middle school students…?" I wonder if my study is narrowed by my analysis of only three data points – image, discussion and narrative. In Case Study I, narratives were scant while in Case Study II, discussions were difficult to cultivate. Might interviewing and pre-post questionnaires generate further theoretical constructs for identity emergence?

A further study of pedagogical spaces might include more participants with a further emphasis on narrative self-construction. This study's voluntary after school sites were not conducive to detailed narrative drafting.

Framework Summary

In summary, this chapter provides a detailed description of this study's research methodology drawn extensively from two pilot studies. Continuing the qualitative tradition, using the case study approach, I combine visual content analysis of photographs with thematic narrative analysis (In vivo coding being the first cycle of this analysis) for themes and patterns in participant voices revealed through discussion and narrative writings. Informed by my pilot studies (discussed above), I employ three data points –photographs, transcribed videotapes and narratives. My analytic strategy provides meta-themes within each case followed by meta-thematic analysis across cases. Case Study I and II are revealed through participant data, setting, and purpose, while workshop sessions are similar in content and duration. I address ethical considerations along with my transparency regarding limitations and delimitations. The following chapter (Chapter Four) dives into the data through my unique analytical framing and presents within-case and cross-case analysis leading to synthesis.

Chapter Four: Findings

Photograph 4.1: O'Maley Middle School Academy, *The Web*, by Jade

I'm learning a lot about grief through "mucking around" in my data. I started

my doctoral program (Fall of 2011) frozen in grief. Losing Janey and John

propelled me to take a flying leap from middle school to pre-service teacher

education and on to graduate school to sharpen my skills – they were dull – so

questioning, researching and writing began an awakening. However, I'm still

so tender and my two case studies often bring me to tears. I miss middle school.

Adolescent participant photographs and discourse often leave me undone. So, I

practice letting go…themes jump out at me and I try to record them without

emotion. Grief is a wild and unpredictable thing.

Memo 4.1: Ziergiebel, 10.20.2015 – turning 65 today!

Overview

The purpose of this multicase study is to explore, "what happens when space is created for middle school students to engage in *photovoice* participatory action research and narrative self construction with perspective taking." Why does this matter? First, I address a problem - space supporting the inner lives and voices of adolescents is shrinking due to prescriptive curricula and rigid standards (Nieto, 2015). Second, as I carry out this study, I inspect personal biases forged by my own educational journey and experience as a middle school teacher. In this context, I premise the adolescent eye as meaning maker, having intentions, making choices and imagining alternatives.

My qualitative research represents three data points (photographs, discussions, narratives) gleaned from 15 middle school participants across two case studies (situated in after school voluntary programs): Case Study I situates at O'Maley Innovation Middle School, the public middle school in suburban Gloucester, Massachusetts; and Case Study II locates in *The Girlhood Project* – a service learning urban community partnership between Tutoring Plus and Lesley University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. The guiding questions that propel this research are:

- How is perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescents grapple with creating a community of learning that values all voices?

- How does the integration of autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives?

- How might *photovoice* – as a participatory action research tool – help adolescents imagine alternative possibilities and make meaning of life experience?

This chapter showcases Case Study I and II findings (meta-themes), within case and cross-case, emerging from my qualitative methodology, and develops analysis leading to synthesis and analytic categories. I analyze photographic images using visual content analysis (Lutz & Collins, 1993; Luttrell, 2010; Rose, 2012) – cycle one involving category coding with frequency counts, while cycle two seeks meta-themes. Further, I analyze discussions and narratives with thematic narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008; Saldana, 2009), using In Vivo coding for cycle one while gleaning meta-themes in cycle two. To visualize this meaning making, Figure 4.1 displays an open shutter of the adolescent eye looking through image, narrative and discussion. With lens adjustment, these focal points capture findings leading to analysis.

Photovoice **Participatory Action Hybrid Model**
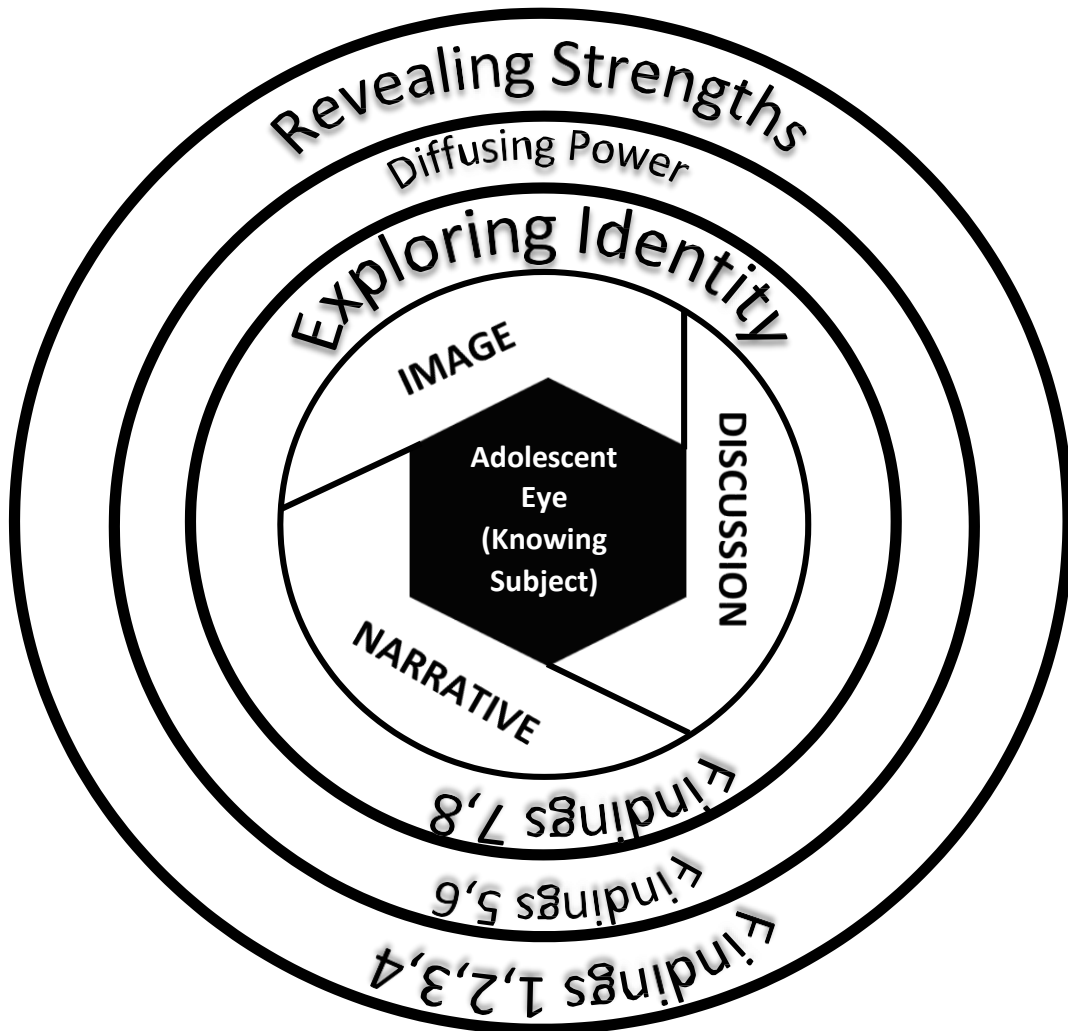
Figure 4.1: *Photovoice* Participatory Action Hybrid Model

A distinctive feature of this hybrid model places the adolescent participant (the

eye of the lens) as the knowing subject (co-researcher), exploring images, discussions and

narratives. Further, as co-participant, I participate in photography, conversations around

images, and narrative writing. This relational process provides me with a fresh lens while

coding, sorting, soliciting peer inter-rater reliability feedback and theming the data. I

prepare data tables from data templates (Appendices C, D, E) and write memos,

encouraging reflexivity in my coding patterns and emergent themes leading to analytic

categories. This chapter concludes with a summary of my key findings and analysis,

leading to synthesis.

Findings

My findings reflect within case and cross-case understandings, as participant data

points are analyzed through visual content analysis (photographs) and thematic narrative

analysis (discussions and narratives). Rose (2012) and Luttrell (2010) suggest images,

discussion and/or narratives - three "sites" of meaning making – may be collapsed into a

single framework. However, I choose to pull apart the data into two case studies with two

methodologies honoring the investment of my participants.

Visual content analysis yields the following within-case findings:

Case Study I:

> **Finding 1**: Participants use photographs for defining ideas

Case Study II:

> **Finding 2:** Participants use photographs for defining themselves

> **Finding 3:** Participants use photographs for defining relationships

A cross – case finding presents as:

> **Finding 4:** Participants use photographs for demonstrating what they know

Additionally, thematic narrative analysis showcases the following within-case

findings:

Case Study I:

> **Finding 5:** Space relieves boredom by inviting random thinking

➢ **Finding 6:** Space supports perspective taking through close looking

Case Study II:

➢ **Finding 7:** Space offers proof of self

➢ **Finding 8:** Space celebrates friendship and support

I discover no cross –study findings evidenced through thematic narrative analysis between Case Study I and II.

  Visual Content Analysis Findings (1, 2, 3, 4). As discussed in Chapter Three, visual content analysis is a clear method for engaging systematically with images. This method of analysis focuses on the photograph itself, and not the other two sites of image meaning-making – places of production and audiencing (Luttrell, 2010). Lutz and Collins (1993), Luttrell (2010) and Rose (2010) concur that the challenge of visual content analysis is developing coding categories leading to findings with analytical significance. Thus, the development of codes requires a theoretical connection between the image and the broader contexts of the research questions.

  As I engage in the process of honing in on reliable and replicable codes, Saldana (2013) reminds me that coding is heuristic (Greek, meaning "to discover" [p. 8]), an exploratory, problem-solving technique without specific formulas. Thus, through exploration and discovery, I condense my original codes – title, things, setting, people, posture and activities – into three categories: title (ideas, people, pets, things); posture (posing for camera, placed in front of camera, positional creativity); and activities (creating, play, relationships). This reflexive process links the categories of title, posture and activities with the larger contexts of my guiding questions (Figure 4.2, below) – making meaning of life experiences, perspective taking, and fresh listening, respectively.

Guiding Questions	Coding Categories
How might *photovoice* – as a participatory action research tool – help adolescents imagine alternative possibilities and make meaning of life experience?	**Title**
How is perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescents grapple with creating a community of learning that values all voices?	**Posture**
How does the integration of autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives?	**Activity**

Figure 4-2: Guiding Questions Leading to Coding Categories

Visual content analysis, as it connects to this study's guiding questions, is a "critical social practice…that values all voices." The coding category, "title," offers insight into the adolescent eye and focuses the audience on an idea, stance or intentional presentation. Further, "posture" explores the relationship each participant has with the camera, their comfort level with visual representation – reflecting their stance, social practice and experience. Finally, "activity" in each photograph illustrates intent and invites participants and their audience to "a fresh listening of their (participants) lives." Participants make choices about which photographs to discuss and narrate, thus their intentions to capture an event or action creates stories – "sense-making tools, that inevitably do things - for people, for social institutions, for culture, and more" (Freeman as cited in Riessman, 2008, p. 8). This study's *photovoice* participatory action research hybrid model empowers the adolescent as the knowing subject, making meaning through "title," "posture," and "activity" captured in each chosen photograph.

To further glean the power of image and contribute to transparency, frequency counts in each category are offered (Table 4.1, below). Frequency counts – often expressed as percentages of the total number of images in that category - support my theoretical framework and are essential elements of the research story, facilitating the

development of analysis. Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) encourage me to make sure my

percentages and words match, including: 100% translates to all; 95% translates to

overwhelming majority; over 50% translates to majority; 30% translates to some; while

10% translates to a few. Rose (2012) reminds me that frequency counts do not

necessarily translate to significance and visual content analysis does not discriminate

between occurrences of a code (strong or weak representation of the code). However, this

quantitative piece to our coding puzzle supports reliability through transparency and

being replicable through non-bias presentation.

> ***Collapsing themes and missing opportunities – these two concepts are swirling***
>
> ***around my thinking. Concerning collapsing themes, I keep re-reading different***
>
> ***stances on analyzing images and text (while considering within-case and cross-***
>
> ***case analysis). Participatory action, contend Wang and Burris (1997), dictates***
>
> ***three stages of analysis: selecting; contextualizing; and codifying for themes,***
>
> ***issues or theories. They view photographs as strategic, leading to patterns.***
>
> ***Luttrell (2010), stating that voice and photography-based projects are under-***
>
> ***theorized, views visual research and analysis as dynamic and relational.***
>
> ***Further, Rose (2012) stresses the natural reducing (collapsing) of the rich***
>
> ***material in photographs to a series of codes – component parts that can be***
>
> ***labeled in a way that has analytic significance – but how to ensure these labels***
>
> ***are enlightening…am I collapsing themes and missing meaning (I just***
>
> ***collapsed perspective taking and looking closely together)? And, as I code and***
>
> ***recode participant photographs, I identify missed opportunities in discussion***
>
> ***and narration – I didn't hear about the flags and cartoon image in Bianca's***

photo, I love Chris Brown, and I am unsure of the inspiration behind the

dynamic images in Jade's photo, The Web…

Memo 4:2: Ziergiebel, 11.11.2015

Case study I findings.

Findings 1 – 4 (see Table 4.1) emerge from the coding categories of "title," "posture," and "activity." As discussed earlier, these categories capture theorized connections between images and the broader cultural context framed by guiding questions. Rose (2012) encourages this return to the broader contexts of the research questions to yield categories that are 'enlightening' (p. 91).

Finding 1– participants use photographs for defining ideas.

A majority (66%) of participants "title" their photographs with ideas, examples being *Infinite Grayness*, *Look Clos[e]ly*, and *Stuck in a Mirror*. Ideas tend to be personal and self-generated, as photographic content uses familiarity in a new way. Imagery is present. *Infinite Grayness* personifies color, while *Stuck in a Mirror* uses hyperbole - both "titles" are demonstrating abstract thinking.

Regarding "posture" or relationship with the camera, the majority (66%) are either looking down, looking at work, moving away or looking up. Postures that are fluid – looking up, down, moving away – suggest the camera lens is an extension of thinking, ideas, or work in progress. The remainder of the participants (33%) pose directly at the camera.

Moreover, "activity" showcases the majority (77%) of participants involved in creative, personally motivated endeavors - ideas. Creative ideas present as familiar and comfortable, as participants practice art-making using

anime (*Self Portrait* and *Word Gen*) while *Look Clos[e]ly* and *Infinite Grayness*

reflect imaginative applications to familiar content.

These images defining ideas generate the following question: do these images

represent being in control of the camera as a means of expressing a point?

Photograph 4.2: O'Maley Middle School Academy, *Stuck in a Mirror*, by Joe

Case study II findings.

Finding 2 – participants use photographs for defining themselves.

The majority (66%) of "titles" of participant photographs use descriptors

to define themselves (*My Name*, *Family*, *Beautiful*, *Pretty, The Squad*, *I Love*

Chris Brown, *My Favorite Quote*) suggesting the camera lens becomes both a

mirror and a performance of self. The remaining "titles" include the naming of

things (*Easter Egg*, *Softball Mitt*). Most intriguing is the "title," *My Name*, speaking to the purest form of identity.

In addition, all (100%) participant photographs are "postured" (55% featuring people) or posed (items purposely placed in front of the camera lens). Photographs featuring people include two photo collages: a collage of selfies in practiced poses; and a collage of family in relational poses. Most significantly, all people in poses (including family in relational poses) are looking directly at the camera, perhaps demonstrating pride and self regard.

Therefore, "activity" collapses into posture as all photographs feature the activity of people or things placed in front of the camera.

A question from the images supporting finding 2 comes to mind: how does interest in appearing on camera communicate social distinctions?

Photograph 4.3: The Girlhood Project, *My Name*, by Gabriela

Finding 3– participants use photographs for defining relationships.

Through "titles" and picture content, the majority (77%) of participant

photographs feature relationships. "Titles" with multiple people include *My*

Family and *The Squad,* while *Beautiful* and *Pretty* are clearly exploring

relationships with self. Significant for definition of self and relationships, *I Love*

Chris Brown features two flags – Puerto Rican and Dominican Republic – and a

cartoon with the caption, "Soy 100% Boricua" (I am 100% Puerto Rican) along

with a list of Chris Brown songs.

As exhibited in finding 2, regarding "posture," all (100%) participant

photographs are "postured" (55% featuring people) or posed (items purposely

placed in front of the camera lens). Thus, relationships are showcased with confidence and purpose. *My favorite Quote* features the following striking relational statement from Jackie Robinson: "I'm not concerned with your liking or disliking me. All I ask is that you respect me as a human being." Respect may be the essence of relationships.

Furthermore, the majority (77%) of participants feature relationships as the "activity" in their photographs, specifically reflected in the relational group photo, *The Squad*, and the photo collage, *Family*. Hugging and finger gesturing are prominent features in both groups suggesting peer familiarity in *The Squad* and familial intimacy in *Family*. Further shaping relationship exhibition are the photos discussed above, *My favorite Quote* and *I Love Chris Brown,* where relationships are staged through a poster and wall tableau, respectively. The "activity" in several other photos reflects the development of a relationship with self through a selfie and a collage of self.

Finding 3, defining relationships, may speak to larger social forces: what social forces privilege relationships over more independent stances?
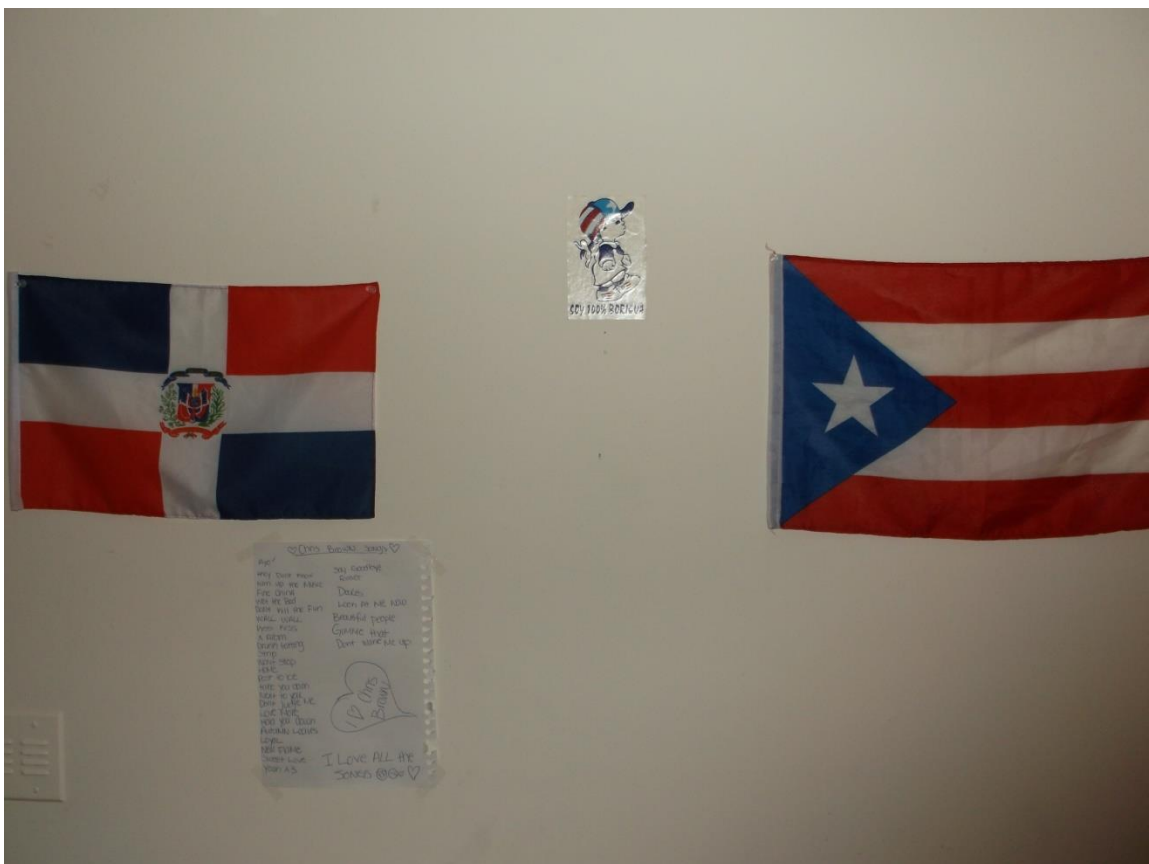
Photograph 4.4: The Girlhood Project, *Love Chris Brown*, by Bianca

Cross-case finding.

Finding 4 - participants use photographs for demonstrating what they know.

As mentioned above, examining the majority of photographic "titles,"

Case Study I express ideas (66%) while Case Study II express self and

relationships (77%) – showcasing their respective areas of knowledge and

demonstrating what they know in a social context. Luttrell (2010) suggests that

adolescents use photography for self- and identity-making purposes and for an

examination of larger social forces – this thinking supports finding 4.

The expression of ideas and self is further supported by photographic

"postures." In Case Study I, the idea of *Infinite Grayness* is, indeed, realized

through a stunning image of an expansive gray sky laced with tall tree branches.

Subsequently, *Look Clos[e]ly* is the clever idea behind the three-legged body

"posturing" with matching red sneakers. *Stuck in a Mirror* features a human eye

reflecting several photographic flashes as if gazing in multiple mirrors.

Participatory action gives free will to participants (note: no instruction manual or

photographic workshop supplied!) to capture and select, thus confidence and

knowledge are evidenced in capturing and selecting images rich with "postured"

ideas.
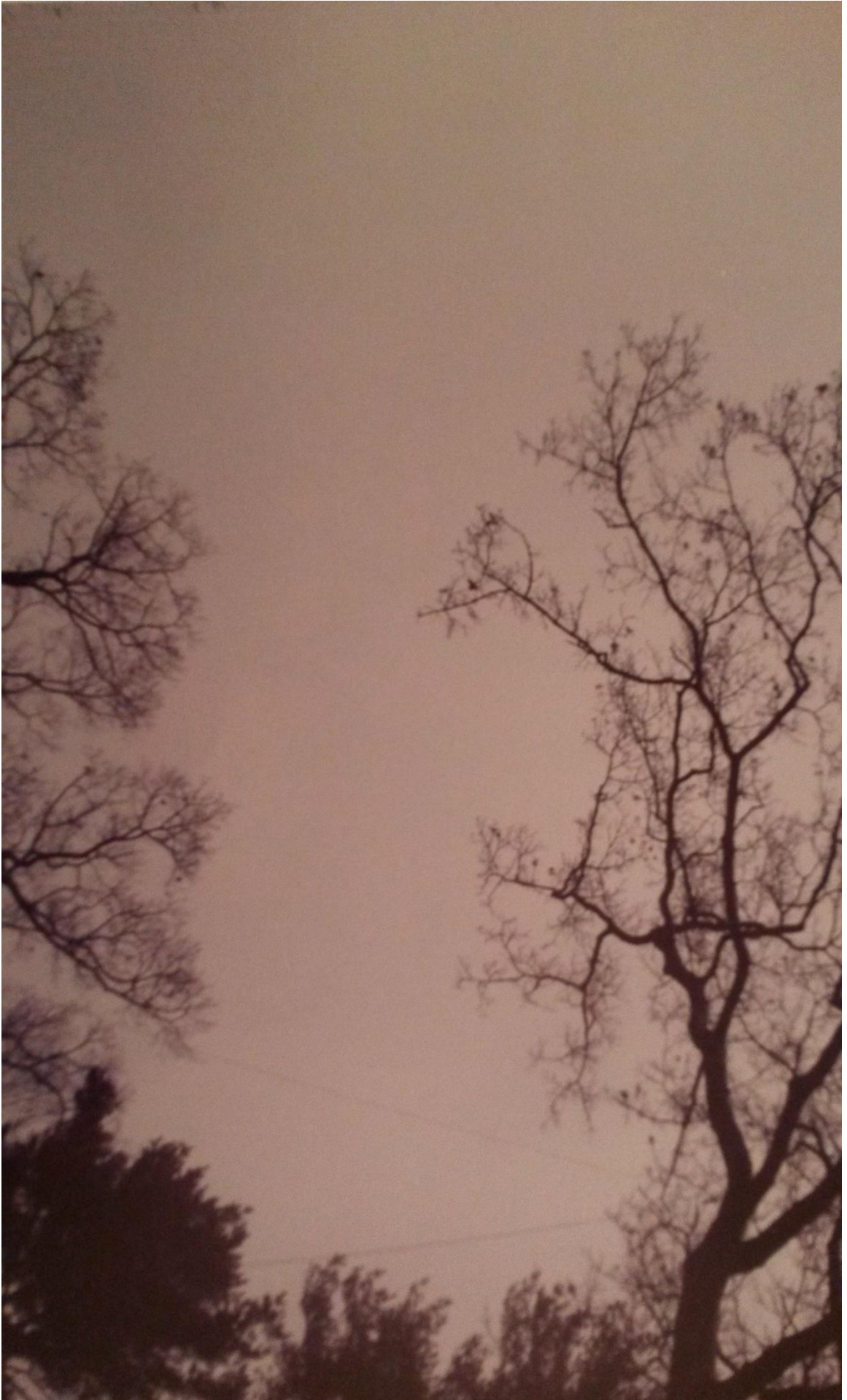
Photograph 4.5: O'Maley Middle School Academy, *Infinite Grayness*, by Maria

Further, Case Study II participant examination of self, both self-to-self and self in relationships, is powerfully portrayed through "poses." *Family* captures five loving images of family, in groups of two, three, five, seven and ten, including ages from infant to adult. *The Squad* portrays eight adolescents comfortably engaged in familiar "posturing." Further, *Softball Mitt* positions self in relation to a passion. *Beautiful* and *Pretty* are thoughtful, "posed" images. Again, with no camera instruction and freedom to choose, Case Study II participants demonstrate what they know and care about in presenting self, familial and social "positioning."

Consequently, "activity" showcasing what participants know collapses into "posture" in the above discussion of Case I and II participant stance. Thus, "posture" (through activity) robustly captures poses exhibiting participant desire to demonstrate ideas through perspective (Case Study I) and self through life experiences (Case Study II).

This powerful cross-case finding, where participants use photographs to demonstrate what they know, not only questions my assumption about images used for imagining alternatives, but begs the question: what other visual literacies invite student knowing?

Photograph 4.6: The Girlhood Project, *Family*, by Ivanna

      Table 4.1 visually presents frequency counts from coding categories (data gleaned

from data templates, Appendices C, D) developed through inter-rater reliability and

theorized connections between images and the broader cultural context framed by the

guiding questions presented earlier.

Frequency Counts (cycle one) – Visual Content Analysis Data Table

Codes	Case Study I	Case Study II
Photo Title	**Ideas (66%):** 　　Word Gen 　　The Web 　　Stuck in a Mirror 　　Infinite Grayness 　　Look Clos[e]ly 　　*Photovoice* **People (22%):** 　　My Favorite Cousins 　　Self Portrait **Pet (11%):** 　　My Cat	**People (77%):** 　　Beautiful 　　The Squad 　　Pretty 　　My name 　　I Love Chris Brown 　　Family 　　My Favorite Saying **Thing (22%):** 　　Softball Mitt 　　Easter Egg
Posture	**Positional creativity (66%):** 　　Word Gen 　　The Web 　　Look Clos[e]ly 　　Infinite Grayness 　　*Photovoice* 　　My Favorite Cousins **Posing for camera (33%):** 　　My Cat 　　Self Portrait 　　Stuck in a Mirror	**Posing for camera or postured in front of camera (100%):** 　　Beautiful 　　The Squad 　　Pretty 　　My name 　　I Love Chris Brown 　　Family 　　My Favorite Saying 　　Softball Mitt 　　Easter Egg
Activity	**Creative activity (77%):** 　　Word Gen 　　The Web 　　Stuck in a Mirror 　　Infinite Grayness 　　Look Clos[e]ly 　　*Photovoice* 　　Self Portrait **Play (22%):** 　　My Favorite Cousins 　　The Cat	**Relationships (77%):** 　　Beautiful 　　The Squad 　　Pretty 　　My name 　　I Love Chris Brown 　　Family 　　My Favorite Saying **Creative activity (11%):** 　　Easter Egg **Play (11%):** 　　Softball Mitt

Table 4.1: Frequency Counts (cycle one) – Visual Content Analysis Data Table

Thematic Narrative Analysis Findings (5, 6, 7, 8). Thematic narrative analysis focuses

exclusively on content to generate significant findings, with attention on "what" is said

rather than "how" or "for what purposes" (Riessman, 2008, pp. 53-54). This study

examines transcribed videotaped participant discussions and self/peer-scribed participant

narratives employing cycle one In Vivo coding (verbatim words or phrases) (Appendix

E) and cycle two focused coding generating theming from codes. Cycle one creates

coding categories from participant words – the adolescent knows best. Saldana (2013)

encourages me to trust my instincts and when something in the data stands out, apply it as

a code.

Cycle two focused coding is an analytic process allowing categories (themes) to

emerge from the data – referred to as theming the data (Saldana, 2013). Framed by this

study's guiding questions, I weave together themes from participant words, often

blending or collapsing themes into each other. The following findings – 5, 6, 7, and 8 –

are evidenced in meta-themes emerging from transcribed discussions and self/peer

scribed narratives.

Case study I findings. Case Study I reveals the following themes collapsing into

findings:

<div align="center">

boredom

random thinking

perspective

looking closely

</div>

Finding 5: space relieves boredom by inviting random thinking. Case Study I

participants write about and discuss being bored during core classes evidenced, first, by

Maria when narrating her photograph, *Self-Portrait*, "I was rather bored and I wanted to draw." Echoing these sentiments, Jade, in her narrative, states, "…best class to draw in is science…I don't know why I did it while I was doing word gen 'on steriods' – I've heard that argument a million times…it's in my workbook…where there are a lot of doodles." Leading into random thinking, Jade continues, "I don't know why, I started drawing a fish and it turned into a kind of ying & yang."

Acknowledging further random thinking, Jade comments on her photograph, *Word Gen*: "That one is on the back of Word Generation – from the anime series I like – and these are characters who propel themselves with gas tanks…his name is Aryon which is kind of funny because we've been reading a story with a character called Erin…E-R-I-N." In her narrative about the photograph, *The Web*, Jade shares her random choices about content: "I don't know how it turned into a haunted house. I don't know how I decided on the horns and tails…I just kinda went with the horns…my friends tell me I should live there." Jade ends her narrative, "I love capturing this moment of pure peace – it means absolute perfection to me."

Questions abound for further analysis and interpretation: do Maria and Jade create space in a boring class to randomly think and doodle for self-preservation; what if space for random thinking was opened up, by design, in core classes; how does random thinking make connections to core content; and, in what ways can *photovoice* become a curriculum tool channeling thinking and connections?
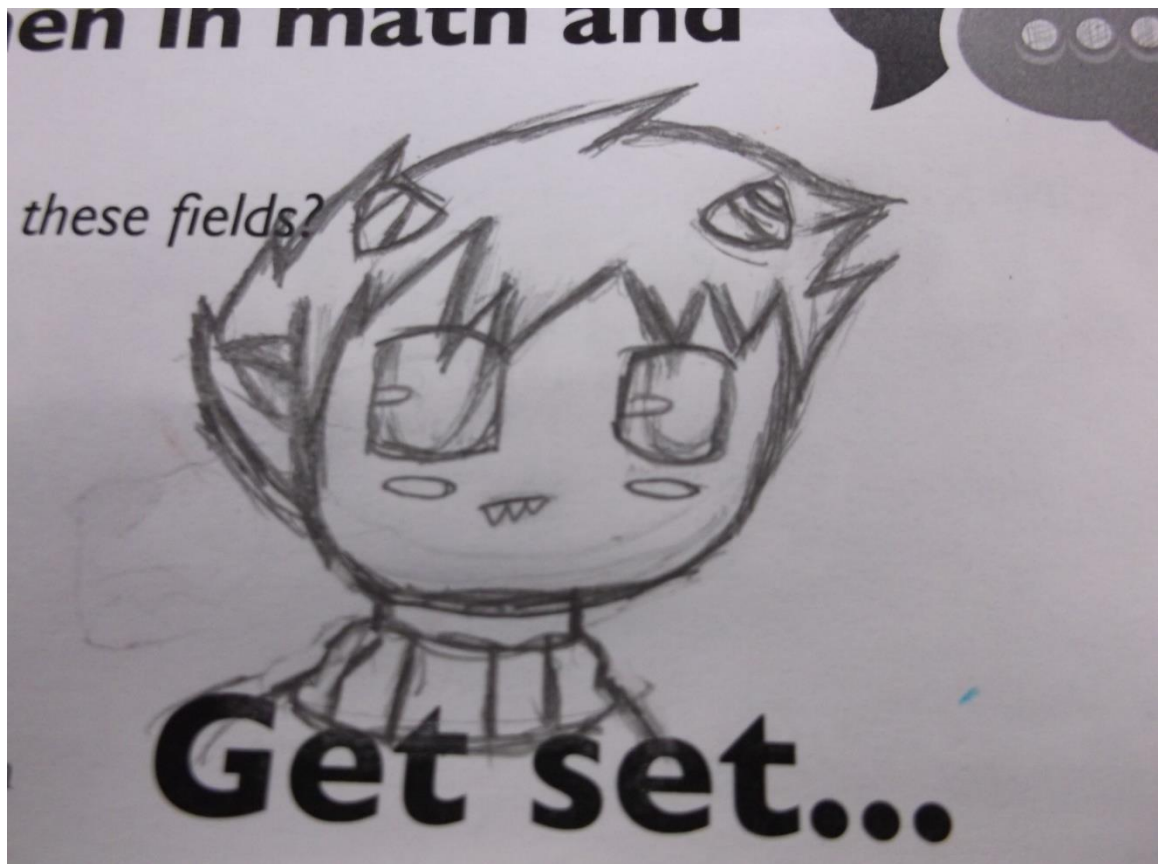
Photograph 4.7: O'Maley Middle School Academy, *Word Gen*, by Jade

Finding 6: space supports perspective taking through close looking. "This is all about perspective…I sketched it out at first – basically you draw a line an inch from the top and then place a dot in the middle of that line and all your lines go through there." Jade is writing a narrative about her photograph, *The Web*, describing one-point perspective (a drawing method that shows how things appear to get smaller as they get further away). Concluding her narrative, Jade writes, "everyone sees it [drawing] differently." In discussion of this photograph, a peer chimes in, "...it's a masquerade…" while Jade adds, "it's an Egyptian mummy kinda like spider web." Her peer continues to think about the photograph, adding her point of view, "I want to put my sister in the spider web – the one with the teeth – she's almost nine years old."

Looking closely to gain perspective is evidenced in Joe helping Maria name her photograph – "Well, this…ummm. I was thinking about…I was going to name it the sky to nowhere – there is nothing in the sky but bland and nothingness." "Infinite grayness!" squeals Maria. "That's perfect – infinite grayness," champions Joe.

Further, Joe explores perception through his photograph, *Stuck in a Mirror,* asking, "Could someone, like, help…I need someone to zoom this [camera lens] in as far as it goes…and when it zooms in as far as it goes, I need someone to stand right there and while you are taking a picture of my eye, do you see the person taking the picture? Ya, when you step back, you can see the eye but when you're up close, you don't know what it is." Joe is inviting close looking and perspective taking. Further, Joe shares his stance, "…the eye is supposed to signify people – you're supposed to recognize people by their eyes – that [is] why superheroes cover up their eyes with masks."

Maria urges us all to "look closer…" at Joe's photograph – full of angles - of three feet in red sneakers. Joe's narrative reveals, "If you look close enough you will see a foot. It looks as if it is not connected to my body. But it is [the third red sneakered foot]." Joe's narrative (and his photograph) is entitled, *Look Clos[e]ly*! Seeking perspective and close attention begs the question: does the diffusion of facilitator power and coaching invite perspective taking and authentic seeing?

Photograph 4.8: O,Maley Middle School Academy, *Look Clos[e]ly*, by Joe

Case study II findings. Case Study II thematic narrative analysis reveals the

following themes leading to findings:

proof of self

friendship

support

Finding 7: space offers proof of self. Gabriela narrates her photograph, *My Name,*

revealing, "…it represents my title giving [given] to me!" Proof of self. Camila says she

is "…beautiful," both in narration and her artful selfie collage. Camilia presents herself in

four varied stances: smiling and open; playful; pensive; and rather wistful – a powerful

statement of our multiple selves. Her peer, Ailia, narrates Camilia's photograph, saying,

"People will always label people like you but there is no one like you!"

> ***Another missed opportunity? I am purposeful in resisting leading or***
>
> ***orchestrating discussions and writings around photographs – I am interested in***
>
> ***just opening space. However, I long to learn more about Ailia's thinking***
>
> ***articulated in, "People will always label people like you…"***

Memo 4.3: Ziergiebel, 4.30.2015

As evidenced in memo 4.3, this study design does not encourage probing

questions from the facilitator (co-participant). As I discuss in the next section (**Social and**

Cultural Contexts), adolescent photographs generated in open spaces reveal larger

social forces. There are powerful social forces at work as Kiara displays a hint of shyness

in her photograph entitled, *Pretty*. Her images are brave offerings of self. Further,

exhibiting oneself through images displaying ethnicity demonstrates further proof of

origin. Ethnicity, confirmation of one's heritage, is substantiated through Bianca's photo,

I Love Chris Brown, a wall collage of flags (Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic).

Further, Bianca creates the cartoon captioned, "SOY 100% Boricua" (I am 100% Puerto

Rican) - an identity exhibition. This study captured no discussion or narrative around

Bianca's photo. However, similar to Gabriela's photograph, *My Name*, Bianca is voicing

her unique self through the photographic lens.

In thinking about the multiple ways identity is revealed in this research – text, talk

and image – I wonder, how else can emerging identities be observed?
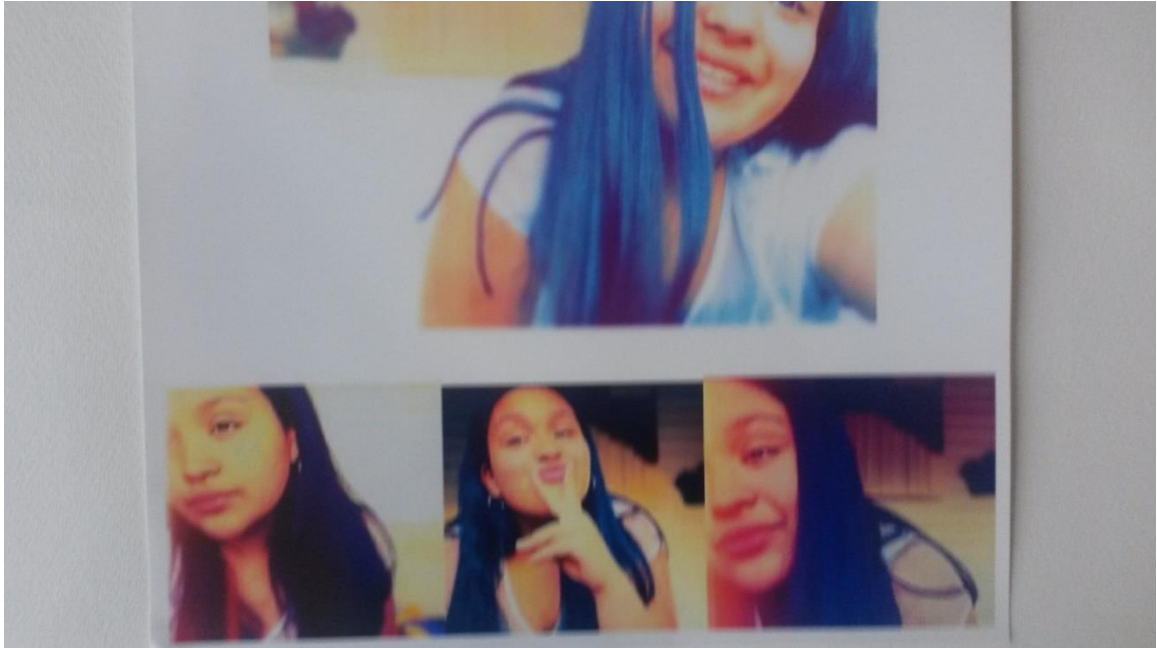
Photograph 4.9: The Girlhood Project, *Beautiful*, by Camilia

Finding 8: space celebrates friendship and support. Connie narrates *The Squad* –

a photograph I took of her(self) and seven friends – with, "…it has my friends and we

was [were] all happy and the picture was nice." Writing about the same photo, Sadie

narrates, "It represents our friendship – its important 'cause when we first met each other

we clicked together and became great friends." Adding to this narrative, Bianca scribes,

"It shows our strong friendship." Nell's narration moves into another dimension of

friendship – in addition to clicking and feeling happy together – the element of support:

> Me and mostly all my friends. I can trust them. They are loyal. At school and at
>
> Girl's Group…they will help if I'm down.

Ivanna's family collage photograph, *Family*, is striking in it breadth of images

commemorating family, friendship and support. Her courageous offering of smiling

children, intimate adolescent friendships, and family love provokes deep connections.

During her narrative, Ivanna discusses the tenseness in her family relationships, commenting, "…they will always have my back and be there when I need them."

I reflect on these stunning images of connection and wonder, how important is social space in the development of identity? This question and others emerging from findings encourage further thinking around the social and cultural contexts framing this study.

Photograph 4.10: The Girlhood Project, *The Squad*, by Ann

Social and Cultural Contexts

Sociologist and narrative scholar Bell (as cited in Riessman, 2008) shares her thinking about visual analysis using photographs:

Visual images are so thoroughly embedded in our worlds that not to take them

seriously, and not to work at making them part of analysis, is to reduce our

understandings of subjects' worlds. (p. 182)

Understanding the social worlds of this study's participants spawns the following

inquiries:

- Do images that define ideas represent being in control of the camera as a means of

  expressing a point?

- How does interest in appearing on camera communicate social distinctions?

- What social forces privilege relationships over more independent stances?

- What other visual literacies (besides photographs) invite student knowing?

- How does random thinking make connections to core content?

- In what ways can *photovoice* become a curriculum tool channeling thinking and

  connections?

- How does the diffusion of facilitator power and coaching invite perspective taking

  and authentic seeing?

- How else (besides photographs, discussions, narratives) can emerging identities

  be observed?

- What is the importance of social space in the development of identity?

  Understanding subject's worlds is the essence of *photovoice* participatory action

research, visual content analysis and thematic narrative analysis – the methodology of

this study. This study's data points - photographs, discussions and narratives - are

situated in two distinct (yet with some participant commonalities as stated in Chapter

Three) microcontexts: Case Study I locates in an after-school program in the participant's

suburban middle school with a focus on content enrichment and self-esteem building;

while Case Study II resides in an urban University community service workshop with

participants bused several miles late in the afternoon to focus on identity, media, body

image and relationships, framed by feminist pedagogy. The larger, societal macro

contexts (adolescents in extended school settings focusing on self-expression) may be

shared by the majority of participants, as exhibited in cross-case finding 4. This finding,

shared by both case studies, reveals that participants use photographs for demonstrating

what they know about themselves and, perhaps, what they know about the world. The

desire to be heard and understood supports Luttrell's (2010) theory that "children have

intentions and make deliberate choices to represent themselves…in an effort to 'speak

back' to dominant or stereotypical images (p. 224)."

This study's findings, analytic categories and conclusions emerge from these

contexts, acknowledging that all adolescent voicing (through image, discussion or

narrative) is framed in social distinctions and cultural differences. This framing begins

with the camera lens, with Rose (2012) reminding me that ways of seeing are culturally

and socially specific. Furthermore, both Case Study I and II (as discussed earlier) share

multimodal methods of interaction: Case Study I situating in a curricular context of self-

esteem and content enrichment; and Case Study II challenging dominant narratives about

girls and girlhood. Further, this study's cross-case finding 4 suggests that the majority of

participants use photographs for demonstrating what they know – using their adolescent

eyes to represent themselves, perhaps against dominant images.

Thus, with *photovoice* participatory action research as our orientation, outlier

discoveries (next section) support this reality – specifically, photographs explore how we

read our social worlds (findings 5, 6, 8), construct ourselves (findings 2, 3, 4) and express

matters of the mind and heart (findings 1, 4) (Luttrell, 2010).

Outliers

In my analysis, this study's three data points (photographs, discussions and

narratives) offer unique opportunities to communicate participant experience. In Case

Study I and II data, outliers were present, reinforcing my findings and illuminating my

thinking towards analytic categories.

Case study I. I remain open to the possibility that Cloe's photographs, narratives

and discussions may not be deviant from the majority of participants. However, visual

content analysis places her two photographs, *My Cat* and *My Favorite Cousins*, as the

only examples (11%) of pets and people (66% of the titles were ideas). Thematic

narrative analysis reveals that her narratives and discussions focus on family, writing, "I

like this one and two of my cousins are holding hands…I travelled to St. Louis [to see

them]." Further, in discussion, Cloe adds, " I took this picture – it reminds me of my

family – ever since I moved away from Puerto Rico, I really don't get to see my family

over there…I like this one because two of my cousins are holding hands and they are so

cute – I went over Thanksgiving break." Her images, writing and discussions are

thoughtful and support the Case Study II Finding 3, participants use photographs for

defining relationships and Finding 8, space celebrates friendship and support. However,

Cloe's outlier presentation in Case Study I strengthens my cross-case Finding 4,

participants use photographs to demonstrate what they know.

Photograph 4.11: O'Maley Middle School Academy, *My Favorite Cousins*, by Cloe

Case study II. I am riveted to the visual content analysis of Sofia's photograph,

Easter Egg, and the thematic narrative analysis of her narrative and discussion. Similar to

Cloe in Case Study I, Sofia is an outlier in Case Study II but fits the majority of findings

in Case Study I, specifically Finding 1, participants use photographs for defining ideas

and Finding 6, space encourages perspective taking. Sofia's photograph, *Easter Egg*, is

an outlier in title (77% are people) and most dramatically, her narrative is a fantasy, a

testimony to her perspective:

> There was this girl called Maya. She was walking around her street and suddenly
>
> a portal opened up to another dimension. A dimension where royalty had wings.
>
> Suddenly Maya grew wings [and] wanted to go home to her own dimension. So

she had to start on a long journey to get to the elder who knows how to go there.

Maya walked toward the deepest darkest forest where the prince sees her wings.

From a distance that's where he fell instantly in love with her.

Interestingly, Sofia's ideas, random thinking and perspective taking, in contrast to Case Study II participant offerings of self, friendship and support, validates the cross-case Finding 4, participants use their photographs to demonstrate what they know. Perhaps Sofia is exhibiting a way of knowing that helps her make meaning. I embrace these vibrant outliers openly so as to reflect further on the societal contexts that Case Study I and II illuminate.

Societal (macro) and local (micro) contexts are at play in the visual content analysis of this study. Foucault (1972) refers to this construct as an "inspecting gaze" – arrangements through which our eyesight is pressed into service as a mode of social control. On the societal level, cross-case finding 4 - participants use photography for demonstrating knowledge – communicating across social distinctions and cultural differences. This finding challenges my assumption that adolescent images would capture alternative realities and longings. In contrast, displaying ideas (Case Study I) and self (Case Study II) are actions of knowledge and confidence. Considering local context, Case Study I participants make meaning through their curricular setting – an art-space cultivating thinking – while Case Study II participants make meaning through relational self exploration.

Photograph 4.12: The Girlhood Project, *Easter Egg*, by Sofia

Summary of Findings

Case Study analysis, both visual content and thematic narrative analysis, reveals

seven within case findings and one cross-case finding. As discussed above, I choose to

pull apart my three data points (image from narrative and discussion) honoring the

intensity of participant involvement. Consequently, my findings reflect consensus in

mega-themes gleaned from photographic content and line-by-line thematic narrative

analysis (of narratives and transcribed discussions). My reflexive stance contributes to

inquiries arising from this analysis. Thus, my visual content analysis reveals the

following findings and questions:

Case study I

➢ **Finding 1**: **Participants use photographs for defining ideas.** A majority (66%) of participants title their photographs with ideas, examples being *Infinite Grayness, Look Closely;* and *Stuck in a Mirror*.

Case study II

➢ **Finding 2: Participants use photographs for defining themselves.** The majority (66%) of titles of Case Study II participant photographs use descriptors to define themselves (*My Name*, *Family*, *Beautiful*, *Pretty*, *The Squad*, *I love Chris Brown*, *My Favorite Quote*) suggesting the camera lens becomes both a mirror and a performance of self.

➢ **Finding 3: Participants use photographs for defining relationships.** Through titles and picture content, the majority of participant photos, demonstrate ration wirh other like *My Family* and *The Squad*, while *Beautiful* and *Pretty* are clearly exploring relationships with self. Significant for definition of self and relationships, the content of *I Love Chris Brown* features a wall display of two flags – Puerto Rican and Dominican Republic –and a cartoon with the caption, "Soy 100% Boricua" (I am 100% Puerto Rican). Also pictured is a list of Chris Brown songs.

A cross – case finding presents as:

➢ **Finding 4: Participants use photographs for demonstrating what they know.** Examining the majority of photographic titles, Case Study I express ideas while Case Study II express self. The expression of ideas and self through titles is strongly supported by photographic content. Participatory action gives free will to participants to capture and choose, thus suggesting confidence and knowledge in

capturing and selecting images rich with ideas and relationships with self and
others.

Additionally, thematic narrative analysis showcases the following within-case

findings:

Case study I

➢ **Finding 5: Space relieves boredom by inviting random thinking.** Case Study I
participants write about and discuss being bored during core classes leading to
photographing, discussing and narrating random thinking. Questions abound for
further analysis and interpretation: do students create space in a boring class to
randomly think and doddle for self-preservation; what if space for random
thinking was opened up, by design, in core classes; how does random thinking
make connections to core content; and, in what ways can *photovoice* become a
curriculum tool channeling thinking and connections?

➢ **Finding 6: Space supports perspective taking through close looking.** Case
Study I participants invite close looking and perspective taking through their
narratives and discussions. Further, playing with perception (observation through
discernment) infuses this data. Seeking perspective and close attention begs the
question: does the diffusion of facilitator power and coaching invite perspective
taking and authentic seeing?

Case study II

➢ **Finding 7: Space offers proof of self.** Case Study II participants present brave
offerings of self and multiple selves. Exhibiting oneself through images
displaying ethnicity demonstrates further proof of origin. In thinking about the

multiple ways identity is revealed in this research – text, talk and image – I

wonder: how else can emerging identities be observed?

➢ **Finding 8: Space celebrates friendship and support.** Through posed images,

Case Study II participant text and talk commemorate friendship. In addition,

another dimension of friendship is showcased - the element of support. Reflecting

on these stunning images of connection, I wonder about the importance of social

space in the development of identity?

Further, an outlier presentation in Case Study I, of images of relationships and

questions, tests yet may strengthen Case Study I's Findings 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 - Case Study I

being testimony to ideas, random thinking, and perspective. A second outlier emerging

from Case Study II, exhibiting ideas, random thinking and perspective taking, in contrast

to Case Study II participant offerings of self, friendship and support, may demonstrate the

validity of Findings 2, 3, 7 and 8**.** Further, I believe these outliers may strengthen the

cross-case Finding 4, participants are demonstrating knowledge. Photography is proving

to be a lens on participant social context – promoting social awareness in both Case

Study I and II. Thus, participants across both case studies reflect their adolescent and

societal contexts, the essence of social constructivism (Foucault, 1972) captured by

photovoice participatory action.

I now transition to analysis and synthesis, looking through the lenses of my

guiding questions, reflecting on my findings with a holistic perspective leading to

synthesis and analytic categories. Participatory action research places me as co-

participant in both Case Study I and II allowing for fresh examination of my pedagogical

assumptions and socio-cultural biases.

Analytic Category Development

I must listen before I understand. Both Dewey (1934) and Freire (2001)

encourage listening to understand experience. Qualitative analysis, too, encourages

listening to understand the lived experiences of this study's participants. Additionally, as

I listen and analyze, I move from a holistic perspective to findings (analysis), back to

holistic reflection of this data – often referred to as synthesis (Bloomberg & Volpe,

2012). Throughout this process, I attempt to construct an understanding of this research. I

begin this process with Figure 4.2 – an Analytic Category Development Tool – aligning

findings and guiding questions while listening and analyzing for categories, as displayed

by the following process:

Analytic Category Development Tool

How is perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescents grapple with creating a community of learning that values all voices?

Finding 5 - space relieves boredom by inviting random thinking

Finding 6 - space supports perspective taking through close looking

Diffusing Power

How does the integration of autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives?

Finding 7 - space offers proof of self

Finding 8 - space celebrates friendship and support

Exploring Identity

How might *photovoice* - as a participatory action research tool - help adolescents imagine an alternative possibility and make meaning of life experience?

Finding 1 - participants use photographs for defining ideas

Finding 2 - participants use photographs for defining themselves

Finding 3 - participants use photographs for defining relationships

Finding 4 - participants use photographs for demonstrating what they know

Revealing Strengths

Figure 4.3: Analytic Category Development Tool

Developing analytic categories involves revisiting data summary tables leading to findings through the lenses of my guiding questions. Three analytic categories emerge helping me understand pedagogical spaces:

- ❖ **Revealing strengths (Findings 1, 2, 3, 4)**

- ❖ **Diffusing power (Findings 5, 6)**

- ❖ **Exploring identity (Findings 7, 8)**

Analytic category 1 - revealing strengths. The guiding question, how might *photovoice* – as a participatory action research tool – help adolescents imagine an alternative possibility and make meaning of life experience – speaks to the possibility of imagining an alternative reality or possibility for participants. Findings 1, 2, 3 and 4 indicate a surprising contradiction – pedagogical space using *photovoice* participatory action defines and demonstrates participant's current selves – not alternative possibilities. Finding 1 (Case Study I) – participants use photographs to define ideas – is strongly supported by photographic titles, activities and relationships to the camera. Most illuminating is the activity in participant photographs – 77% involve art-making in a confident, proud manner (*Word Gen*; *The Web*), photographing images while playing with composition (*Self Portrait*; *Stuck in a Mirror*) and capturing scenes with emotive titles (*Look Clos[e]ly*; *Infinite Grayness*).

What a revelation! I assumed cameras in participant hands would lead to improvisation, changes in presentation and abstract thinking. On the contrary, participants scattered around their school and neighborhoods capture images with ease, collaboratively naming them with confidence and demonstrating what they know. Findings 2 and 3 (Case Study II) are exhibitions of self to self and self in relationships –

hardly new possibilities and alternative realities. Positioning self with the camera (*Beautiful*; *Pretty*; My *Family*) and capturing self through interests (*Softball Mitt*; *I Love Chris Brown*) speak to the concept – "here's what I am" – not, "here's what I want to be." Further, my cross-case finding, participants use photographs for demonstrating knowledge in social contexts, describes the majority of images in Case Study I and II. Hence, my surprise – the photographic lens proudly displays who participants are and what they know: their ideas and relationships in Case Study I and II, respectively.

As visual art, photographs are empowering, arising from the multiple roles of the photographer – seer, knower, creator (Wang, 1999). Thus, my participants assume the role of co-researchers with responsibilities around choice (what image to capture), composition (what's left in, what's left behind) and values (light, medium, dark). *Photovoice* facilitator Briski (2013) reminds us that being open and just learning, as seer, knower and creator, captures *photovoice* participatory action. Further, participatory action research provides a framework for problem solving and documenting experiences, alternative possibilities and discovery (Participatory action research, 2014). However, Case Study I and II participants documented experiences in thinking and relationships. My role as co- participant, providing the camera and creating space for discussion and narrative writing, involves no prompts or expectations. Therefore, Analytic Category 1 - space revealing strengths (ideas and relationships) - is authentic yet surprising as I had anticipated alternative possibilities and participant discovery. I am the participant making the discoveries!

My discoveries in Findings 1, 2, 3, and 4 affirm thinking and self. Freire's (2001) theory of "unfinishedness" – humans are constantly thinking, searching and sharing

ideas - supports Case Study I participants representing significant realities through their knowing creations (*The Web*; *Look Closely*; *Stuck in a Mirror*). Further, I suggest that standpoints – places from which humans see the world (Harding, 2005) - are offered through Case Study II participant images of self and relationships. Capturing friendships (*The Squad*), extended family (*My Family*), and family ethnicity (*I Love Chris Brown*) provide frameworks for seeing and understanding self in society. My adolescent participants are showcasing strengths in ideas and self - demonstrating what they know - through photographs, without prompts and facilitation. My theoretical framework supports this presentation yet I remain surprised.

> *My interdisciplinary Eighth grade unit – Grappling With Voice through Perspective – starts with art as a way of wrestling with the essential question, how does place influence perspective? As students viewed our local 19th century landscape artist, Fitz Henry Lane, through his paintings and positioning on Gloucester Harbor, I assumed our sketching and eventual watercolor painting was stretching students into discovering new talents and perspectives. These assumptions enveloped my thinking around photovoice as an art-making tool to foster thinking, stimulate discovery, and imagine alternatives. However, this research questions my stance of "this is new, different and risky" and may offer a different perspective – "this makes sense, is natural and in my skill set." Wow – pedagogical space may not be as subversive as I once thought –space allows for confirmation of individual strengths.*

Memo 4.4: Ziergiebel, 12.13.201

Photograph 4.13: The Girlhood Project, *Softball Mitt*, by Bianca

Analytic category 2 – diffusing power

Pedagogical spaces diffusing power grows from the guiding question, how is

perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescents grapple with creating a

community of learning that values all voices? Findings 5 and 6, space relieves boredom

by inviting random thinking, and space supports perspective taking through close

looking, respectively, celebrate communities of learning where meaning is co-

constructed and relational – a power neutral environment. These Case Study I findings

are supported by random thinking, imagery and ideas. Random thinking is mentioned in

discussion and narration, often in response to being bored in core classrooms. Again, are

students creating space for themselves to think and wonder to endure class content? Jade
creates some of her favorite art work (*Word Gen*) on her Word Generation curriculum
booklet (an interdisciplinary literacy initiative), stating:

> I get bored all the time doing Word Gen…that one I did today…his name is
>
> Aryon which is kind of funny because we've been reading a story with a
>
> character called Erin in Word Gen.
>
> Given space to share her thinking, Jade elaborates on her drawing during a core

class:

> I'm drawing all these [pictures] during school time – actually the best class
>
> for me to draw in is in science class – that's a character from a series I read,
>
> *Homestruck.*

I wonder if anyone has noticed or commented about her drawings, asked her about
Homestruck, and possibly making a connection to science content?

> Along with drawing, random thinking abounds as an antidote to boredom. Given

the space to think, Maria discusses her photograph, *Self Portrait*:

> I just have random ideas and I write them down…I don't know what to do [in
>
> class] - I was wearing a shirt with those jewels on it (and drew me)…I kinda
>
> know what I look like.

Space to talk, work, look and listen creates a community open to perspectives. Listen to
Joe and Maria's exchange as Joe offers to name her photograph, *Infinite Grayness*:

> **Joe:** I was going to name it the sky to nowhere – there is nothing in the sky
>
> but bland and nothingness – there is nothing in the sky but gray – nothingness!
>
> **Maria:** Infinite grayness?

Joe: That's perfect: Infinite Grayness!

Joe's photographs, *Stuck in a Mirror* and *Look Clos[e]ly*, invite perspective taking if

you look closely:

If you look close eno[u]gh you will see a foot. It looks as if it is not connected

to my body. But it is.

Maria and Jade both ask the group to "look closer," as they enjoy Jade's photograph,

The Web:

I don't know how it turned into a haunted house – my friends tell me they think I

should live here – I don't know how I decided on the horns and tails. I kinda

just went with the horns. Everyone sees it differently.

Indeed – often everyone does see differently. Space to see without restrictive

power hierarchies may stimulate perspective taking. Gehlbach (2013) shares that

perspective taking is, "understanding the thoughts, feelings, and motivations of other

people." (p. 1). Further, Gehlbach et al. (2012) identify pathways for adolescents to be

motivated to engage in perspective taking. These pathways include: relationship goals,

where perspective taking helps maintain or repair relationships; and, prosocial goals,

where perspective taking helps or is desirable for the community (Gehlbach et al., 2012).

However, classroom environments with power-laden structures can block these

pathways, those structures being cognitive load (too many distractions) and sufficient

conviction (through power structures) that one perspective is correct. Thus, Gehlbach (et

al., 2012) offers that adolescents unmotivated to engage in perspective taking may be

encouraged through an alternative pathway – the opening of spaces for cultural context

and students schemas to flourish, unencumbered by intrusive benchmarks and power

hierarchies.

Cultural context and individual student schemas require reflection – the quest for

understanding self. Educators and researchers Nakkula and Toshalis (2010), influenced

by education theorist Vygotsky (1978), contend authoring life stories – narratives – is

the productive imagining of self in context. When Joe, Maria and Jade urge "looking

closely," we see their perspectives without prompts or assessment. Interestingly, Jade's

photograph, *The Web*, demonstrates one-point perspective (an art-making technique)

with the space to discuss and narrate multiple views and ideas. Acknowledging that we

are all "unfinished" (Freire, 2001) carrying multiple selves (Crenshaw, 2013), reinforces

the futility of top-down hierarchies. Individuals think and explore self through

discussion and stories, integrating experiences across time marked by core themes

(Vygotsky, 1978). Power is in the hands of students, not teachers or facilitators. Analytic

category #3 – exploring identity – further affirms the vitality cultivated in a community

of learning where power leaches out to all participants.

Analytic category 3 – exploring identity

Identity is central to the guiding question, how does the integration of

autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives?

As stated above, discussion and narration explores our "unfinishedness" and multiple

selves. Findings 7 and 8 from Case Study II, space offers proof of self and space

celebrates friendship and support, respectively, provides evidence of the relational

nature of identity and the exploration of our multiple selves. Space to discuss and narrate

images reveals brave offerings of self and multiple selves. Gabriela narrates her

photograph, *My Name*, stating "it represents my title giving [given] to me!" Concrete

evidence of self. Further, Ailia, writing about Camilia's selfies photograph, *Beautiful*,

comments:

> People will always label people like you but there is no one like YOU!

This striking acknowledgement of multiple selves begs for further discussion, a

limitation in this research, discussed in Chapter Five – Conclusions and

Recommendations. Kiara's self portrait photograph, *Pretty*, is accompanied by her

comments:

> I love myself…I thought about calling it "pretty" but it seems to feel a bit
>
> strange.

Brave, powerful affirmation of self in context – identity – demands fresh listening of self

and creates relational connections.

Educators Palmer (2007), Brown (2009), hooks (2010), and Ravitch (2010) raise

the question, mentioned in Chapter One – should educators roles be prescribed largely

by subject matter, state-mandated curricula, and the standardized tests that hold them

accountable, or should educators think of their work in more relational terms. Findings 7

and 8 support the latter (relational). Space to discuss and narrate, in classroom context,

creates lively conversations among narrative scholars. Bamberg and Freeman (2014),

"small story" and "big story" advocates, respectively, currently contend that the essence

of narrative inquiry is the synthesis of "big" and "small" stories – neither one should be

privileged. "Small" stories exhibit how identity gets renegotiated and reconstructed

through social interactions, while "big" stories yield insight and understanding

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(Bamberg & Freeman, 2014). Most important, however, is the opportunity to tell your own story.

Yugal-Davis' (as quoted in Riessman, 2008, p. 8) definition of narrative – "identities are narratives, stories people tell themselves and others about who they are (and who they are not)" – may reflect the tender, nuanced search for self-witnessed in Case Study II participant images, discussions and narratives. One could argue that Camilia's photograph, *Beautiful*, creates a small story while Ailia's narration of it depicts a big story. Further, Freeman (as cited in Reissman, 2008) reminds me that stories and narratives are simply sense-making tools. Consider the story, "big" and "small," offered by Gabriela's photograph, *My Favorite Quote*:

> I'm not concerned with your liking or disliking me. All I ask is that you respect
> me as a human being. – Jackie Robinson

Her narrative, "it represents what's part of me," similarly tells both a "small" story (in context) and a "big" story (insight). Space cultivates emerging identities by inviting discussions and stories, "big" and "small," inspired through a camera lens.

Finding 8, space celebrates friendship through support, further demonstrates the relational nature of adolescent identity. Carter (1993) writes narrative reasoning "captures in a special fashion the richness and the nuances of meaning in human affairs" (p. 5). Let's explore the rich narration around the photograph, *The Squad*:

> **Nell:** Me and mostly all my friends. I can trust them. They are loyal. At school
> and at girls group – they will help if I'm down.
>
> **Sadie:** It represents our friendship – its important [be]cause when we first met
> each other we clicked together and became great friends.

Bianca: It shows our strong friendship.

Connie: It has my friends and we was [were] all happy and the picture was

nice.

Spiraling through friendship is the concept of sustaining support. Further, Ivanna

narrated her photographic collage, *My Family*," scribed by Kate:

I want to print [out] my family. I fight with my brother but we always make up

and he always has my back.

Narrative scholar Polkinghorne (1991) reminds me that tensions can arise as the

narrator perceives the connectedness of life and seeks coherence – a uniquely human

experience. As Ivanna alludes suggests above - family dynamics are complex yet

sustaining. Narrative plot, Polkinghorne (1991) continues, whether one sentence or

many, structures a person's understanding of the relationship among events and their

lives. Consider the numerous plots narrated by participant responses around the

photograph, *The Squad* (shared above). These are "big" ideas – loyalty, trust, friendship,

support – narratives exploring self and self in relation to others. Identities *are* narratives.
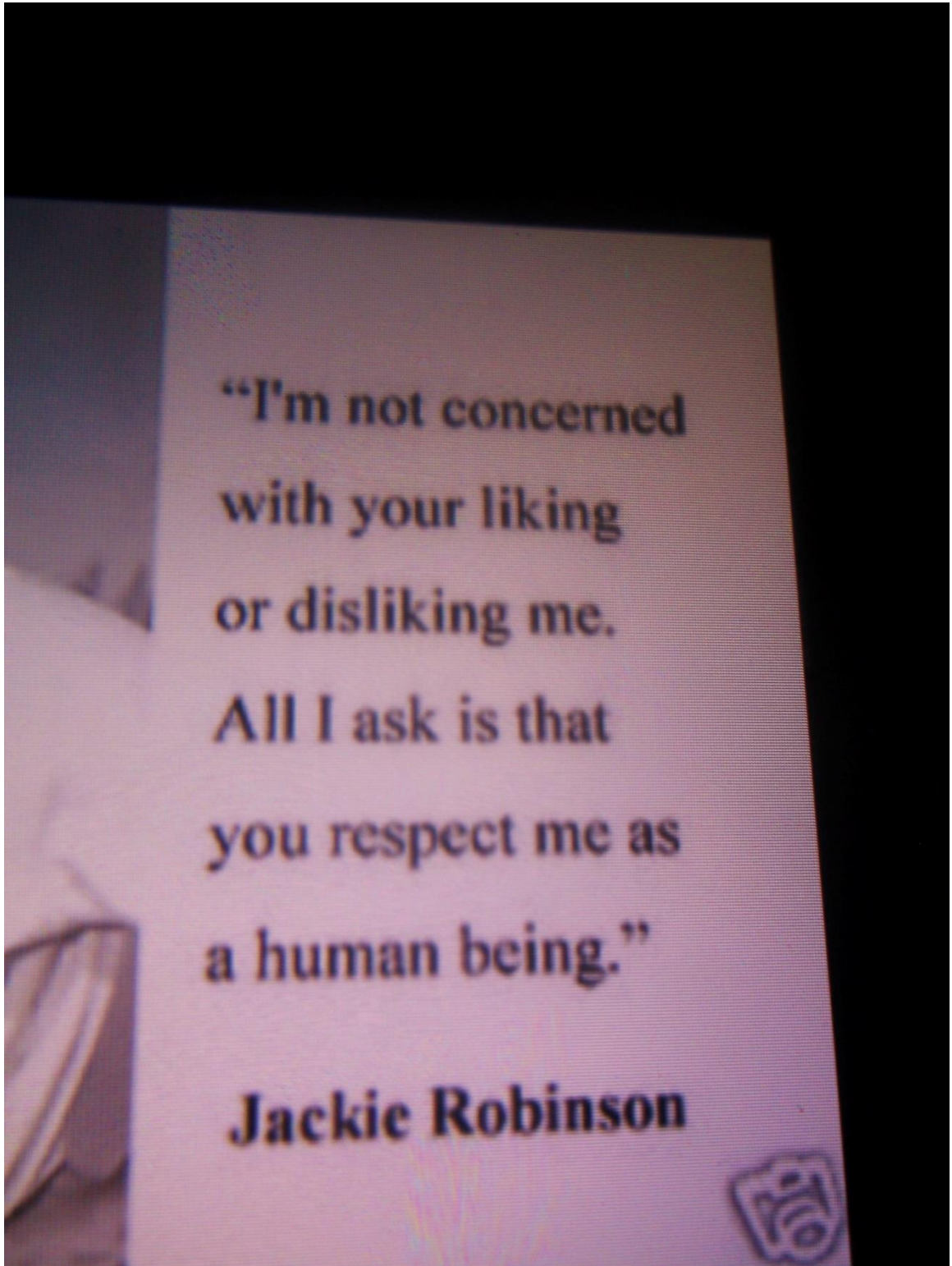
Photograph 4.14: The Girlhood Project, *My Favorite Saying*, by Gabriela

Revisiting Assumptions

I revisit four assumptions brought to this study, generated from past experiences, current educational practices and heuristic thinking. My first assumption privileges space for voicing, risking, failing and risking again as participant becomes knower, the known and practices the process of knowing (epistemological triad). Vital for this exploration is the diminishing of power by dominant figures allowing for diverse thinking and presentations. This assumption held partly true based on Finding #5, space relieves boredom by inviting random thinking, and Finding 4, space supports perspective taking through close looking. Additionally, employing *photovoice* participatory action as a research tool situates me as co-participant, thus diminishing any power hierarchy of achievement and expectation. Assuming risk taking by participants did not hold true as Case I and Case Study II participants used *photovoice* and space to exhibit strengths defining ideas and self – snapshots of who they are now and what they know (Finding 4).

My second assumption, guided by visual content theory, holds the belief that embedding art and art-making into communities of learning increases participation and engagement, while deepening thinking, language ability, writing skills and visual literacy. The data supports the validity of this assumption. Findings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 exhibit participant engagement, deep thinking and language use through creating, developing, discussing and narrating photographs. However, increasing participation in writing skills and visual literacy are not notable in this study. Addressing my third assumption, knowledge being culturally constructed and relational, Findings 7 and 8

validate this assumption. Photographs, discussion and narratives evidence participants celebrating self in context and self in relationships.

Finally, my fourth assumption - the missing domain of imagination – privileges vital space where imagination is cultivated through cultural context, voice, creativity and inquiry. Though imagination is clearly present in photographic composition, this assumption did not hold true in discussions and narratives save for one outlier, Sophia's narration of *Easter Egg* in Case Study II. As stated earlier, my biggest surprise in this study is the absence of imagination and alternative possibilities. However, I witness the powerful presence of participant places of strength – ideas and relationships exhibit through image, discussion and narration.

Summary of Analysis

Remaining open to the possibility that others might tell a different story, this chapter presents an ongoing synthesis combining my analysis of findings into an integrated whole. My framework for analysis consists of findings from data employing visual content analysis (photographs) and thematic narrative analysis (discussions and narratives) leading to my analytic categories. These categories offer a holistic understanding of this study supported by current literature in the fields of perspective taking, narrative - self construction and *photovoice* participatory action research. My findings include:

Visual Content Analysis (photographs):

➢ Finding 1 (Case Study I) - participants use photographs for defining ideas

➢ Finding 2 (Case Study II) - participants use photographs for defining themselves

➢ Finding 3 (Case Study II) - participants use photographs for defining relationships

➤ Finding 4 (Cross-Case) - participants use photographs for demonstrating what they know

Thematic Narrative Analysis (narratives and discussions - text and talk):

➤ Finding 5 (Case Study I) - space relieves boredom by inviting random thinking

➤ Finding 6 (Case Study I) - space supports perspective taking through close looking

➤ Finding 7 (Case Study II) - space offers proof of self

➤ Finding 8 (case Study II) - space celebrates friendship and support

My analytic categories evidenced in pedagogical space, a correlation of research findings, guiding questions and current literature, include:

❖ **Revealing strengths (Findings 1, 2, 3, 4)**

❖ **Diffusing power (Findings 5, 6)**

❖ **Exploring identity (Findings 7, 8)**

The guiding questions framing this synthesis are:

- How is perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescents grapple with creating a community of learning that values all voices – **diffusing power**

- How does the integration of autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives – **exploring identity**

- How might *photovoice* – as a participatory action research tool – help adolescents imagine alternative possibilities and make meaning of life experience – **revealing strengths**

Finally, I revisit my four assumptions (Chapter One), discovering several holding true through findings, while others (including segments) hold partially true or not at all. A big surprise remains the lack of evidence supporting my fourth assumption: space encourages imagination and alternative possibilities. On the contrary, I witness the powerful presence of participant places of strength – photographs, discussions and narratives defining current ideas, who they are now and what they know. Participants exhibit the statement: "here's what I am"; not, "here's what I want to be!"

Chapter Five – Conclusions and Recommendations

Photograph 5.1: O'Maley Middle School Academy, "My Cat*,"* by Cloe

So, I started this research to see what happens when spaces open and,

BEHOLD, spaces are opening up in me. Participatory Action Research, calling

for the facilitator – me – becoming a co-participant allows me to experience the

unscripted freedom capturing an image, discussing and narrating. In my own

teaching practice, I used to think that all museum trips, sketching folders and

subsequent watercolors were stretching students and pulling them out of

comfort zones. I felt nervous about raising their level of risk taking. Thus, I

considered myself subversive and even, perhaps, enriching at the expense of

content. However, through gale-force winds, light rain and thick fog (we

sketched our predictions about floating objects in Gloucester Harbor), students

seriously and thoughtfully found space and drew, and drew, and drew (with

only the infrequent, "I can't draw" and "when's lunch?"). Herein lies my study

surprise…students weren't being dutiful and well-behaved while risking and

stretching new skills in strange places…they always had these skills, ideas,

relationships. These authentic interests and talents were always there…as they

were and are in me. Spaces just opened for their release…for students to think,

care, relate and be themselves and for me to engage in scholarship…surprise –

space caters to our strengths, not our longings. And, it's not about being good

at art making – it's about the space to show who we are, what we know and

what we care about. (Memo 5.1: Ziergiebel, 12.13.2015)

Overview

This multicase qualitative study in after school voluntary programs (without teacher presence), asks the question, "what happens when space is created for middle school students to engage in *photovoice* participatory action research and narrative self-construction with perspective taking?" The following guiding questions, shaped by current literature, form my methodology (visual content analysis and thematic narrative analysis), leading to findings:

- How is perspective taking a critical social practice as adolescents grapple with creating a community of learning that values all voices?

- How does the integration of autobiographical narrative inquiry invite adolescents to a fresh listening of their lives

- How might *photovoice* – as a participatory action research tool – help

  adolescents imagine alternative possibilities and make meaning of life

  experience?

Emerging from the synthesis of these questions, my findings (analysis) and prior

assumptions are analytic categories describing pedagogical space:

- ❖ **Revealing strengths (Findings 1, 2, 3, 4)**

- ❖ **Diffusing power (Findings 5, 6)**

- ❖ **Exploring identity (Findings 7, 8)**

Thus, I draw two conclusions from these analytic categories and share recommendations

with implications for my own practice as teacher educator. Concluding this chapter I

explore study limitations and offer a final reflection.

Conclusions – Multiliteracies and Identity Exploration

My findings address two powerful areas: photographs as multiliteracies and

middle school identity exploration. Multiliteracies, a term coined by The New London

Group (1996), celebrates the increasing multiplicity and integration of modes of meaning

making beyond text (Landay & Wootton, 2012). Further, Pullen and Cole (2011) urge

educators to utilize this multiplicity of literacies, forming new pedagogies corresponding

to diverse learning options – with special reference to evolving technological

applications.

The second area, exploration of identity, Dictionary.com's 2015 word of the year

(due to the domination of gender, race, sexuality and nationality in the news) (time.com,

2015), explores the combined processes of being and becoming, belonging and longing to

belong (Yugal-Davis as cited in Riessman, 2008, p. 8). Identity can emerge through

narration. Telling a story about oneself can sometimes transform that self – a narrator

often reinforces and recreates what sort of person they are (Wortham, 2000). I offer two

strong conclusions in these areas, supported by multiple findings, followed by doable

recommendations. Figure 5.1 visualizes my process from findings (if I find this) to

interpretations (then I think this means) and finally, conclusions (therefore, I draw this

conclusion).

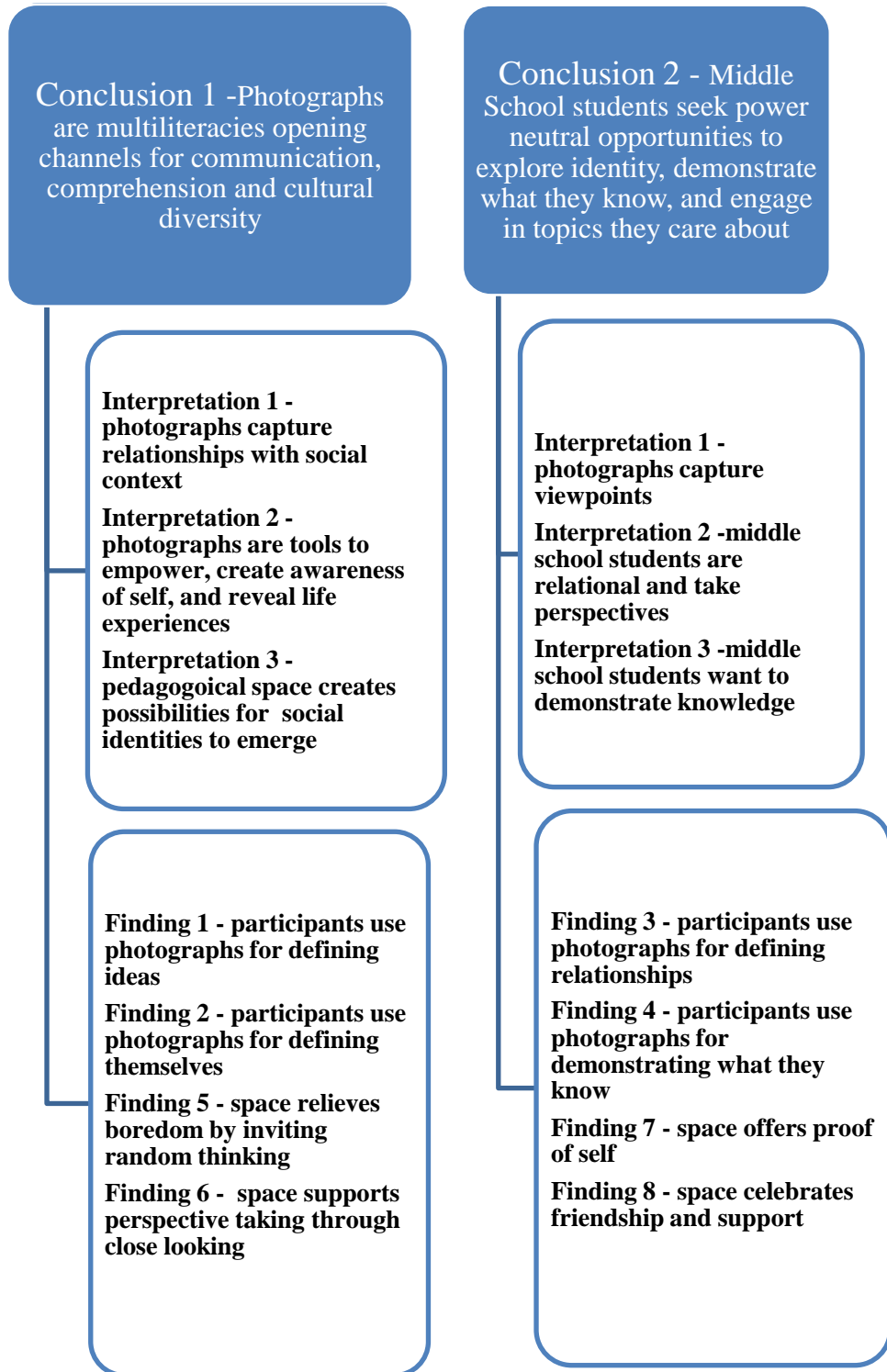| Conclusion 1 - Photographs are multiliteracies opening channels for communication, comprehension and cultural diversity	Conclusion 2 - Middle School students seek power neutral opportunities to explore identity, demonstrate what they know, and engage in topics they care about
Interpretation 1 - photographs capture relationships with social context **Interpretation 2 - photographs are tools to empower, create awareness of self, and reveal life experiences** **Interpretation 3 - pedagogoical space creates possibilities for social identities to emerge**	**Interpretation 1 - photographs capture viewpoints** **Interpretation 2 - middle school students are relational and take perspectives** **Interpretation 3 - middle school students want to demonstrate knowledge**
Finding 1 - participants use photographs for defining ideas **Finding 2 - participants use photographs for defining themselves** **Finding 5 - space relieves boredom by inviting random thinking** **Finding 6 - space supports perspective taking through close looking**	**Finding 3 - participants use photographs for defining relationships** **Finding 4 - participants use photographs for demonstrating what they know** **Finding 7 - space offers proof of self** **Finding 8 - space celebrates friendship and support**

Figure 5.1: Consistency Chart of Findings, Interpretations and Conclusions

The chart, above, helps me generate conclusions by looking at deeper meanings

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ADOLESCENT VISUAL VOICES: DISCOVERING EMERGING IDENTITIES THROUGH
PHOTOVOICE, PERSPECTIVE AND NARRATIVE

behind my findings to say, "If I find this…then I think this means…therefore, I draw this conclusion" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Thus, Findings 1, 2, 5 and 6 tell me that participants use photographs for defining ideas and themselves while pedagogical spaces invite random thinking and perspective taking. I think this means that while photographs capture relationships, awareness of self and life experiences, this can only happen if space opens, inviting identities to emerge that reflect this opening. In the context of this space that encourages perspective taking, I conclude that photographs are multileracies – connecting existing literacies to new literacies with the potential to write one's own identity (The New London Group, 1996).

Further, Findings 3, 4, 7 and 8 tell me that as photographs capture participant relationships and knowledge, middle school students (study participants) are seeking space to explore and demonstrate who they are and what they are thinking in a relational setting – the exploration of identity (who am I and who am I not [Yugal-Davis as cited in Riessman, 2008, p. 8]). I expand on this "if, then, therefore" process while offering the following conclusions:

Conclusion 1 - Photographs are multiliteracies opening channels for communication, comprehension and celebrating cultural diversity.

This conclusion draws from the following findings:

➢ Finding 1 (Case Study I) - participants use photographs for defining ideas

➢ Finding 2 (Case Study II) - participants use photography for defining themselves

➢ Finding 5 (Case Study I) - space relieves boredom by inviting random thinking

➢ Finding 6 (Case Study I) - space supports perspective taking through close looking

My study places cameras in the hands of middle school participants (no tutorials on

picture taking) providing space for participant intentions and meanings to arise through

image content, discussions and narratives. Visual content analysis of photographs reveals

the theme of ideas (Finding 1) through imagery and creative compositions while a second

theme of self-definition (Finding 2) is thoughtfully staged in numerous images.

Through thematic narrative analysis, photographic content stimulates discussions

and narratives speaking of academic environments that limit rather than inspire (boredom

being one limitation) (Finding 5), while capturing participant listening, looking and

caring about differing perspectives (Finding 6). Photographs invite critical engagement

through verbal exchanges and narration around image title, content and meaning. Further,

photographs showcase our increasingly global society by capturing ethnic artifacts along

with family album photos of members living elsewhere, revealing a cosmopolitan stance

of students as citizens of the world (Hansen, 2010). Pedagogical space, using the

photovoice participatory action hybrid model, opens channels for deeper understanding of

thinking, being and relating – new learning contexts, the essence of multiliteracies

(Kalantzis & Cope, 2008).

Conclusion 2 – Middle school students seek power neutral opportunities

to explore identity, demonstrate what they know, and engage in topics

they care about.

My second conclusion draws from the following findings:

➢ Finding 3 (Case Study II) - participants use photographs for defining relationships

➢ Finding 4 (Cross-Case) - participants use photographs for demonstrating what

they know

➢ Finding 7 (Case Study II) - space offers proof of self

➢ Finding 8 (case Study II) - space celebrates friendship and support

Integrating the above findings and analytic category synthesis, I now know that middle school students seek space to establish their own personal vision and demonstrate what they know. Participant photographs display a majority of images about their current self-displaying ethnic heritage (Finding 7), in selfies with family and friends (Findings 3 and 8). Further, understanding the importance of their social destiny, participants want to demonstrate their current skills and knowledge through art work, hobbies and inspirational quotes (Findings 4 and 7). Orchestrating compositional plans for photographs is a performance of skill, vision and ideas (Finding 4).

Engagement in topics of interest and knowledge typify the majority of photographs, discussions and narratives (Findings 4 and 8). Expecting to see and hear longings of alternative realities and re-envisionings of self, I remain surprised that participants use power neutral space to be themselves – a sign of respect, and self-respect (Findings 4, and 7). Finally, participants exhibit civility and mutual respect through the presentation of and discussion around intimate portraits of identity (Findings 3, 4, 7, and 8). Thus, I offer the following recommendations drawn from these conclusions, speaking to my own practice and pedagogy as a teacher educator (Figure 5.2).

Conclusion 1

Photographs are multiliteracies opening channels for communication, comprehension and cultural diversity

Recommendation 1
New Literacies
Brown (2009)
Landay & Wootton (2013)

Recommendation
2
Museum Components
Wiggins & McTighe (2005)
Yenawine (2013)

Conclusion 2

Middle school students seek power neutral opportunities to explore identity, demonstrate what they know, and engage in topics they care about

Recommendation
3
Autobiographical
Writing
Polkinghorne (2015)
Wortham (2008)

Recommendation
4
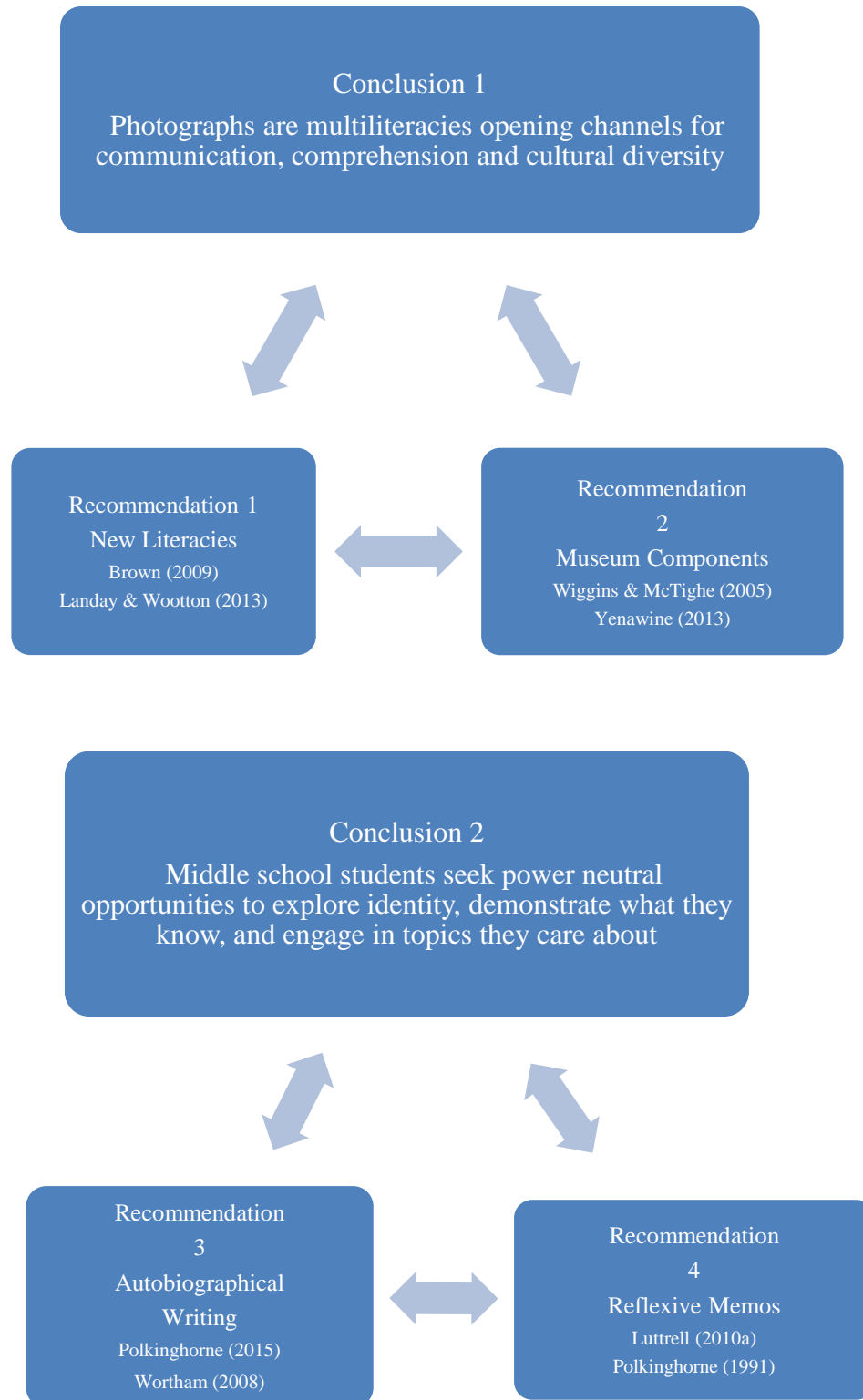Reflexive Memos
Luttrell (2010a)
Polkinghorne (1991)

Figure 5.2: Conclusions Leading To Recommendations

Recommendations

Drawing from Conclusion 1 - Photographs are multiliteracies opening channels for communication, comprehension and celebrating cultural diversity – I plan to integrate the following two recommendations into my current teaching practice.

Recommendation 1 – In the spirit of creating academic environments that inspire rather than limit and that incorporate a range of multiliteracies, I recommend bringing on in new literacies, integrating digital tools to expand student reading, writing, thinking, communicating and art-making.

As a teacher educator, I strive to model being open to the new (space for digital and new literacies) and loyal to the known (space for cultural relational connections) with the understanding that our mission remains engaging and motivating one student at a time. *Photovoice* participatory action embraces the new and known with numerous iterations, the most basic being giving cameras to kids to capture content, text, or life experiences, while narrating chosen images. Introducing any unit with art is powerful. Whether students create the art, watch art performed, or explore an art space, embedding art into curriculum units motivates students to explore content with perspective as a lens while offering multimodal performance tasks as student-empowered assessments.

Further, I plan to explore the implementation of the Performance Cycle, an arts integration model developed by The ArtsLiteracy Project (http://artslit.org). Since its founding in 1998, the ArtsLiteracy Project has involved students of all ages, from elementary to graduate school, including a wide-ranging group of teachers and artists. Founders Eileen Landay and Kurt Wootton (2012) achieve a balance between

establishing a foundation of content knowledge and skills measurable by standardized

tests, and providing space for student initiated community building and text entering,

comprehending, creating and revising – all grounded in exercises of reflection. This

framework, referred to as the Performance Cycle, is an organizing structure for

developing original curriculum driven by student multiliteracies (photographs, for one!)

and community crafted essential questions. The Performance Cycle creates space

promoting student collaboration, identity exploration and literate behaviors.

Space created by a performance cycle framework fits nicely with feminist

pedagogical space (discussed in Chapter One) endorsing four critical themes: voice

(rotating chair model for discussions); mastery (individual contextual construction of

social knowledge); authority (feedback and conferencing); and positionality (individuals'

lived experiences are valued) (Watson, 2008). Cultivating feminist pedagogical space

requires a nuanced environment requiring constant calibration, ensuring trust, choice,

feedback and inquiry in the entire community, just the spaces I seek to create in this

study. Palmer (2007), Watson (2008), Brown (2009), and hooks (2010) refer to this ideal

as shared leadership between authority and student. And an ideal, it remains. Clearly, the

voluntary after-school spaces of this study are far less complex than the current middle

school multi-layered classroom dynamics. Yet, creative and innovative initiatives are

breaking out in traditional classroom spaces in my own teaching community.

In my teaching community of Salem, Massachusetts, the New England Arts for

Literacy Project (NEAL), using the Performance Cycle model developed by The

ArtsLiteracy Project, was awarded a multi-year grant from the U. S. Department of

Education (http://artsforliteracy.org/2014). The Collins Middle School, Salem, MA, is

home for this grant, partnering with two other school districts, Andover Public Schools

and Quaboag Regional Innovation School District, along with the following museums:

Peabody Essex Museum; Addison Gallery of American Art; and the Springfield

Museums. Subsequently, the Collins Middle School community witnesses student and

teacher participants in NEAL take part in a range of modes of learning, while writing,

reading, sketching, recording (photographs and videos), revising, performing and

reflecting. I recommend teachers and districts seek out applications of the Performance

Cycle, including professional development workshops and grant awards as intentional

space for student-centered and inspired meaning making.

> **Recommendation 2 – Understanding that connections need time and space
> to make themselves apparent, I recommend integrating museum components
> and/or visiting artists in all disciplines.**

The forming of connections is fluid, drawing on both experience and memory,

and requiring space, time and intention. This study reminds me that ongoing

opportunities and spaces for observation, wonder and reflection stimulate big ideas.

Museums offer space for visual literacies to deepen student connection and

understanding, along with the formation of big questions (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

Asking big questions is important. Consider the current exhibit at the Peabody Essex

Museum (PEM), Salem, MA, "Stranbeest: The Dream Machines of Theo Jansen" – the

celebration of walking kinetic sculptures he refers to as a new form of life. Questions

swirl around these "beests." How do we define life? What does life look like? These big

questions and those generated by students frame secondary school interdisciplinary units.

Museum educators Fortney and Sheppard (2011) provide case studies illuminating

powerful partnerships forged between students, their families, educators and curators –

opening up new dimensions for inquiry. Exploring opportunities for volunteer "artist in

residence" programs can open up spaces in school communities for renewing student

engagement when field trip funding is scarce. Fortunately, I am sending my pre-service

teachers to the PEM this semester with free admission (as university students).

I plan to further explore with my pre-service educators the essential question,

"What's going on here?" a framework for the arts integration approach called *Visual*

Thinking Strategies (*VTS*) (hepg.org/hel/printarticle/577).Yenawine, founder of *VTS*, was

responding to a challenge to build and grow visual literacy as education director at New

York City's Museum of Modern Art (MOMA). After consulting with educators for over a

decade, he and roughly four thousand teachers grounded *VTS* with the following premise:

embed art into the classroom experience while building on that base to apply carefully

calibrated questions to other lessons (Yenawine, 2013). The intent of *VTS* is to increase

class participation and student engagement while deepening thinking, language ability

and writing skills – the tools of visual literacy (Yenawine, 2013a). "What's going on

here?" opens spaces for diverse entries into content and community.

Finally, the following two recommendations that I intend to bring to my practice

are inspired by Conclusion 2 – Middle school students seek power neutral opportunities

to explore identity, demonstrate what they know, and engage in topics they care about.

Recommendation 3 – Narratives are sense-making tools. I recommend

bi-weekly autobiographical writing assignments for middle school students,

their teachers, and students in pre - service education.

Research recommends that becoming a professional teacher starts with an examination of one's own cultural assumptions and/or biases (Markos, 2012). This examination often includes guided reflections, lessons in narrative writing, autobiographical construction and discussion around metacognition. My findings inspire me to suggest a shift in emphasis away from scripted narrative – for example: write about your educational experience; or write about an obstacle that you have overcome – in favor of narrative texts and stories - including spoken, written and visual material (Polkinghorne, 1991; Ricoeur, 1991; Riessman, 2008). Relating past experiences and telling stories in multiple genres encourage openness and understanding for pre-service teachers. As results from my pilot study, ***Personal narrative exploration: creating critical and self-reflective learners and practitioners,*** indicate, narrative exploration begins the reflective practice of discovering assumptions and biases. Without examination, attitudes and themes within life experience may lead to inequity and discrimination by pre-service teachers (Markos, 2012).

Further, I recommend teachers of middle school students introduce bi-weekly narrative self-construction – telling stories about ourselves (Wortham, 2000). Stories enable adolescent understanding of present experiences and those yet to come. Thus, stories about the past offer a lens on the present and future. I include practicing teachers (teachers of record) in this recommendation as writing about oneself is educative – a passage between theory and practice leading to critical self-reflection. I connect to this recommendation a relational component (inspired by findings) – students, pre-service teachers and teachers of record sharing their stories in small groups (teacher-facilitators

write and share with students). Student generated rubrics reflecting co-constructed

writing intentions can check for frustration, complacency and growth.

I plan to apply this recommendation to my current work as a pre-service educator

at Salem State University, Salem, Massachusetts. I am charged with creating a new

iteration of the class, EDU254A - *Teaching the Adolescent*, into EDCXXX – *Introduction*

to Teaching and Assessment in Secondary Schools. This study encourages me to include a

bi-weekly narrative component with no guiding questions or rubrics – just space

providing pre-service teachers the experience of making sense of their own life or

meaning making while practicing reflexivity. Further, this educator practice may cultivate

habits of whole class (students and staff) narrative writing, leading to my final

recommendation.

Recommendation 4 – Making thinking visible happens by writing reflexive

memos. I recommend cultivating a daily habit of memo writing in

secondary and pre – service teacher classrooms.

Establishing connections between yourself and your social world encourages

identity formation and perspective taking (Saldana, 2013). Further, researcher Saldana

(2013) contends that memo writing creates space for connecting, questioning and

exploring passions. Teacher educator Schwartz (2014) refers to memo writing as just

plain "paying attention." Additionally, narrative scholar Luttrell (2010a) suggests that

memos require: writing for yourself; establishing a regular writing practice; and

developing a system for organizing your memos. Luttrell (2010a) offers two powerful

exercises that can stretch thinking, perspective and sense of self:

(1) Three versions memo: thinking of a familiar story from your family, craft
three different version of it: as third-person narrator; as character in the
story; and as a larger social or cultural statement

(2) Sense of place memo: choosing a place that brings back a flood of
memories, collect sensory details, human activities and personal feelings
about this space

Distinguishable from narrative self-construction – a succession of incidents
forming a unified episode (Polkinghorne, 2015), memos explore emerging ideas, reflect
on content learning, and just wonder. Additionally, memos are a multimodal visual
literacy, presenting as drawings, audio or video clips and multimedia journals. Finally,
Luttrell (2010a) reminds me "that practice makes practice, not perfect" (p. 469).
Therefore, the space to write regularly along with the habit of memo creation allows for
self-reflection opening space for identity and self-esteem development – both part of the
important practice of identity exploration.

Further Research

This research reveals - through two case study analyses - adolescent visual voices
yearning to be free, validated and exhibited. *Photovoice* participatory action,
intermingling images and words representing lived experiences and encouraging group
dialogue, inspired multimodal exhibitions of student work. Discussions exploring this
freedom, validation and exhibition warrant further research. Thinking around outliers
stimulates further analysis along with an extended *photovoice* participatory action
research study. Further, Case Study I culminated in a digital publication, The Sketchbook
Project, while Case Study II celebrated voice, music, art, image and zine publication with

The Girlhood Project participants, family, community and staff. The Sketchbook Project

and zine publication clearly contribute to the conversation on pedagogical spaces and

deserve further study.

Outliers.

Outliers stimulate further research regarding their outlier origins. Outliers in Case

Study I (*My Cat*; *My Favorite Cousins*) share commonalities with Case Study II

participants (defining relationships) while one outlier in Case Study II (*Easter Egg*)

resembles the creative posturing and demonstration of knowledge in Case Study I.

Therefore, these outliers can be seen to validate this study's cross-case finding –

participants use photographs to demonstrate what they know. However, these outlier

discoveries introduce a powerful study to follow – the significance between suburban

(Case Study I) and urban (Case Study II) participants. Due to the limitations of

participant demographic statistics in this study, further research is warranted to explore

this interesting dynamic. New study foci include the following inquiries: what is the

importance of geographical place in the development of adolescent identity; and would a

larger study create more cross-case findings?

Extended *photovoice* participatory action research study.

I am drawn to the question, would a larger study create more cross-case findings?

An expanded *photovoice* participatory action research project with images and words

intermingling showcasing lived experiences and promoting group dialogue in larger and

longer settings is an exciting prospect. Possible projects might include: yearlong

classroom inquiries; senior project theses; and community service initiatives

incorporating Positive Youth Development (PYD) models. Bringing pedagogical spaces

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into traditional educational settings presents challenges (my actions are shared in

Recommendations). However, as all classrooms practice cultivating the habits of mind,

heart and work, adding the habit of art (any form of art making) is an opening. A

conclusion of this study (Conclusion 1) is that photographs are actually multiliteracies

opening up diverse learning options. Expanding and harnessing that opening is exciting.

Any camera phone will do, followed by discussion and scribed/self-scribed thinking.

Several research questions emerge: how can multiliteracies (*photovoice,* for one!) anchor

classroom practice and inform student work through collaboration, creativity and literate

behaviors; and, as a classroom habit, might *photovoice* reveal alternative possibilities and

reimaged identities for students and staff?

Arts infused pedagogical space and student publications.

The Sketchbook Project (a product created during Case Study I) is a powerful

vehicle for digital exhibition of student perspectives, a traveling library of sketchbooks

created by anyone across the globe who registers at groups@arthousecoop.com. Upon

registration and a small fee, students receive a blank sketchbook, to be returned to The

Sketchbook Project, and the fun begins. Book content can vary and often includes:

photographs, travelogues, memoirs, narratives, atlases, almanacs, chronicles, sketches,

documentations and photo logs. The Sketchbook Project drives sketchbooks across North

America for "on tour" viewing before they become permanently archived in the Brooklyn

Art Library, Brooklyn, New York. Sketchbooks are also digitized and can be experienced

by anyone with an Internet connection. An exciting new collection, *The Sketchbook

Project World Tour* (Peterman & Peterman, 2015) showcases sketchbook entries from 6

continents, highlighting a gallery of individual work from each geographical area.

Research possibilities include: how does sketchbooking compare to reading and writing

workshops as routine features in content classrooms; and, how do multimodal responses

to content push student thinking?

Another striking student publication born out of pedagogical space is a zine - a

product created at the conclusion of Case Study II. Zines are defined as a small magazine

written by people (who are not professional writers) pertaining to particular subjects.

A zine - derived from *magazine* - is customarily created by physically cutting and

gluing text and images (photographs and drawings) together onto a master for

photocopying. Also prevalent is the production of a master by typing and formatting

pages on a computer. The end product is usually folded and stapled. Zine production is a

multiliteracy notable for revealing current and controversial subjects through multi-modal

genres. Research on this expressive medium contributes to conversations around spaces

for self publication. A powerful publication showcasing zines, *The Riot Grrrl Collection*

(2013), is an archival collection of riot grrrl – the collective brainstorm of a small group

of women in the early 1990's calling for the liberation of young women by taking over

control of the means of subcultural production. Riot grrrl encourages women to play

instruments and start bands, write and distribute zines and share experiences in safe

spaces (Darmes, 2013). A striking research question emerges: how do girls negotiate

emerging identities in the context of social media and current culture?

Limitations – Revisited

I share anticipated limitations in Chapter Three – assumptions and confirmation

biases. I now offer two more troubling limitations:

(1) Lack of demographic data (as shared above) – both O'Maley Innovation Middle

School (site of Case Study I) and Tutoring Plus (site of Case Study II) offer

limited demographic data on participants in this study. Therefore, initial

observations and hypotheses based on anecdotal data around suburban and urban

learning environments have no framework for study without further biographical

information on participants. My findings suggest a different theme development

in pedagogical spaces for suburban Case Study I (ideas) and urban Case Study II

(self) participants. Therefore, my demographic data limitations warrant deeper

data collection and analysis to examine the impact of these two vibrant settings.

(2) Narrative writing cut short – both Case Study I and II participants developed

initial but not extended narrative responses to their photographs. Choosing not to

script or facilitate discussion (as co-participant) created numerous missed

opportunities for facilitating deeper narrative reflection. I now offer narrative

exploration as critical for participants and facilitators/ teachers (as stated in

Recommendation 3). Cultivating the habit of story (narration) appears crucial to

making meaning of self in the past, present and future yet was not fully explored

in this study.

Final Reflection

Space confirms reality rather than provides alternatives. Space demonstrates

knowing rather than longing. Yikes, am I surprised! My assumptions framing this study

encouraged me to be looking for participant new identities, alternative realities and

possibilities (who I am not). My findings demonstrate a counter narrative – **here's who I

am**. The depth of this revelation upends my twenty-three years of providing explorations

with art, providing spaces for student initiated responses and inquiry. My biases placed ME as the captain of this magical subversive journey and my students (participants) as brave crew members. Power was never diffused – I was still in control. In sharp contrast, this study revealed participants as skilled navigators demonstrating their knowledge, while open to the challenges of multi-modal ways of thinking – steering their authentic courses toward identity exploration.

Let's revisit my research question: what happens when space is created for middle school students to engage in *photovoice* participatory action research and narrative self-construction with perspective taking? For this study, the participant visual voices have spoken - pedagogical space reveals strengths, diffuses power and explores identity.

I experienced this.

In choosing *photovoice* participatory action research, I default to co-participant, opening up my own spaces for image creation, discussion and narration. My photograph, *Girls Group #1*, and Jade's, *I hate selfies*, stimulate large movements of thought and memory. They bring me back to my own bruised intellect and grief as I began this research process. As co-participant in student-centered spaces (diffusing power), I began my personal journey of conducting this study (revealing strength), and I'm emerging as a tentative scholar (exploring identity). Thus, I am tender and grateful to this study for surprising me with power neutral conclusions, resurrecting my strength, and awakening me to my emerging identity.

Photograph 5.2: The Girlhood Project, *Girls Group #1*, by Ann

Photograph 5.3: O'Maley Middle School Academy, *I hate selfies*, by Jade

> ***Personally and professionally, I am seeking ways to open space for self-***
>
> ***reflection about my own cultural identity and learn deeply about the lives of my***
>
> ***students in their full cultural, socio-economic and sociopolitical contexts.***
>
> ***Examining the visual content of Girls Group #1 and I hate selfies – Case Study***
>
> ***I and II, respectively – challenges me to affirm student's identities***
>
> ***authentically, listening to their stories of strength and struggle.***
>
> (Memo 5.2: Ziergiebel, 1.20.2016)

Current Thinking - Pedagogical Spaces

This study encourages me to think deeply about privileging space in my pre-

service educator classroom. I'm captivated by Ruth Nicole Brown's (2009, p. 107) vivid

vision of space, a "privileged outlaw space," creating a vibe in a community and a spirit

of artistic production or intellectual discursive moments. These spaces are not for

enrichment, embellishment or 'value added' anymore. They must become daily habits of

voice, essential to the cultivation of identity and reflexivity. Mead (1934) reminds me that reflexivity is the ability to take on the perspectives of others - switching social roles – creating self-awareness and contributing to emerging identity.

So, how do we practice the daily habit of voice through pedagogical (meaning making) spaces? Well, I offer four recommendations: new literacies; museum components; autobiographical writing; and reflexive memos. Yet, I am beginning to think that reflexivity cultivated in daily habits of voice through the opening of pedagogical spaces is a stance, an orientation. Facilitators, coaches, instructors and mentors must model this openness, this diffusion of power encouraging our treasured students to show what they know and who they are – allowing peers and trusted others to see their perspective and practice switching roles. This cultivates identity and perspective taking leading to an openness to others different from us. Isn't that the path to understanding – transferring learnings from one culture to another (Wiggins & McTigue, 2005)?

Start with art – that's my battle cry with pre-service teachers. Photographs (*photovoice*), paintings, sketches, or textiles (Freire [2001] uses line drawings) – any visual will do. Open up space for demonstration of what students know (new learning from finding 4). Keep the space open for discussion, writing, and further inquiry. Expand this space to the world through new radical public online spaces. And, perhaps through this a habit of voice is forming.

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Appendix A. Participant Consent Form

FOCUS ON *PHOTOVOICE* – Participatory Action Research

Principle Researcher:
Ann Mechem Ziergiebel, M.Ed., 474 Washington Street, Gloucester, MA. 01930,
978.590.1541, aziergie@lesley.edu

Faculty Advisor:
Erika Thulin Dawes, Ed.D., Associate Professor of Language and Literacy, Lesley
University, Cambridge, MA. 02138, ethulin@lesley.edu; **IRB Co-Chair:** Terry Keeney
(tkeeney@lesley.edu)

Description and Purpose:
This doctoral research, **FOUCS ON *PHOTOVOICE***, involves participatory action
where participants assume roles of co-researchers and share ideas through
photographs and writing. *Photovoice* participants make choices around taking
photographs and telling stories as they relate to these images. The purpose of this
research is to discover and describe experiences around the question: "would
engaging middle school students in *photovoice* participatory action research,
narrative self-construction and perspective taking stimulate emerging identities?"
Research methods include *photovoice,* critical visual methodology*,*
narrative inquiry and videotaped group discussion.

Procedure:
Session One: Introduction to perspective taking**,** self-portraits, postcard
perspectives
Session Two: Situated "selfies", "selfie" swap, introduction to *photovoice***,** camera
distribution
Session Three: 5-minutes of fame slide show and discussion, introduction to
narrative self-construction
Session Four: Voicing Our Individual and Collective Experiences (**VOICE**),
celebration of image and text

Risks/Benefits:
Every precaution will be taken to minimize your/your child's risk including loss of
privacy and physical harm. To protect your/child's privacy, in any publications
resulting from this research, no names or identifying information will be noted
unless specific written permission has been obtained from you/or your guardian.
Only the principle researcher and O'Maley Middle School staff will handle
information from **FOCUS ON *PHOTOVOICE***. Once audiotapes and videotapes have
been transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed (by November 2015). Until that time,
they will be locked in Ann Mechem Ziergiebel's home.

Benefits of participating in **FOCUS ON *PHOTOVOICE*** include: (1) youth participants
keeping their photographs, (2) youth participants creating and conveying

experiences, and (3) youth participants voicing their concerns with family, friends, and community.

Consent:
I have read the information above and consent for
_____ (youth's name) to participate in **FOCUS ON**
PHOTOVOICE.

_____
Parent of Guardian Signature (if participant is under the age of 18)
Date

_____
Youth Participant Signature
Date

Appendix B. IRB Approval - Lesley University

Institutional Review Board

29 Everett Street

Cambridge, MA 02138

Tel 617 349 8234

Fax 617 349 8190

irb@lesley.edu

DATE: December 18, 2014

To: Ann Ziergiebel

From: Robyn Cruz and Terrence Keeney, Co-chairs, Lesley IRB

RE: **IRB Number: 14-026**

The application for the research project, "Focus on photo voice" provides a detailed description of the recruitment of participants, the method of the proposed research, the protection of participants' identities and the confidentiality of the data collected. The consent form is sufficient to ensure voluntary participation in the study and contains the appropriate contact information for the researcher and the IRB.

This application is approved for one calendar from the date of approval.

You may conduct this project.

Date of approval of application: December 18, 2014

Appendix C. Visual Content Analysis Table Template

Cycle One – Visual Content Analysis Table Template
Case Study ___; Participant #___

Photo (name it)	**Things** (personal, household, technology)	**Setting** (home, community, inside, outside)	**People** (gender, age, relationship)	**Activity** (work, play, creativity)	**Posture** (gaze, positioning)

Luttrell, W. (2010). 'A camera is a big responsibility': A lens for analyzing children's visual voices. *Visual Studies, 25*(3).

Lutz, C. A., & Collins, J. (1993). *Reading National Geographic.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

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Appendix D. Frequency Counts Table Template

Frequency Counts - Cycle One – Visual Content Analysis Data Table

Codes	Case Study I	Case Study II
Photo Title		
Things		
Setting		
People		
Activity		
Posture		

Appendix E. Thematic Narrative Analysis Table Template

Thematic narrative analysis: Case Study____; Participant #____

Notes/Themes	In Vivo Codes	Meta-Themes > Theoretical Constructs

Appendix F. Thematic Narrative Analysis Data Tables

Thematic narrative analysis: Case Study I; Participant # - 4

Notes/Themes	In Vivo Codes	Meta-Themes > Theoretical Constructs
Jade *– constant references to being bored during core classes*	• Best class to draw in is science – so bored • I draw in social studies and science class • I don't know why I did it while I was doing word gen 'on steroids' - I've heard that argument a million times…it's in my workbook…where there are a lot of doodles	*boredom*
Maria *– again, bored during core classes*	• Rather bored and I wanted to draw • I get bored all the time doing Word Gen	*boredom*
Jade *– do Maria and Jade create space in a boring class to randomly think and doodle for self-preservation? How does random thinking make connections to core content?*	• I don't know why, I started drawing a fish and it turned into a kind of ying & yang • That one is on the back of Word Generation – from the anime series I like – and these are characters who propel themselves with gas tanks…his name is Aryon which is kind of funny because we've been reading a story with a character called Erin…E-R-I-N	*random thinking*

Jade – *how is Jade's identity emerging in the space she creates for random thinking?*	• I don't know how it turned into a haunted house. I don't know how I decided on the horns and tails…I just kinda went with the horns…my friends tell me I should live there • I love capturing this moment of pure peace – it means absolute perfection to me	***random thinking***
Jade – *connecting perspective with seeing differently*	• This is all about perspective….I sketched it out first – basically you draw a line an inch from the top and then place a dot in the middle of that line and all your lines go through there • Everyone sees it [drawing] differently • (peer) It's a masquarade • It's an Egyptian mummy kinda like spider web • (peer) I want to put my sister in the spider web – the one with the teeth she's almost nine years old	***perspective***
Joe – *connecting perspective to observation, inquiry and collaboration*	• Well, this…ummm. I was thinking about…I was going to name it the sky to nowhere – there is nothing in the sky but bland and nothingness • (Maria) Infinite grayness!	***perspective***

Joe – *validation in perspective taking*	• That's perfect – infinite grayness	*perspective*
Joe – *inviting close looking and perspective taking*	• Could someone, like, help…I need someone to zoom this [camera lens] in as far as it goes, I need someone to stand right there and while you are taking a picture of my eye, do you see the person taking the picture? Ya, when you step back, you can see the eye but when you're up close, you don't know what it is	*looking closely*
Joe – *does the diffusion of facilitator power and coaching invite perspective taking and authentic seeing?*	• **…**the eye is supposed to signify people – you're supposed to recognize people by their eyes – that [is] why superheroes cover up their eyes with masks • [Maria] – look closer… • If you look close enough, you will see a foot. It looks as if it is not connected to my body. But it is [the third red sneakered foot]	*looking closely*

Thematic narrative analysis: Case Study II; Participant # - 11

Notes/Themes	In Vivo Codes	Meta-Themes > Theoretical Constructs
Gabriela – *isn't your name the clearest proof of self?*	• It represents my title giving [given] to me	*proof of self*
Camilia – *how and why are people labeling Camilia and her sense of self? Does she present multiple selves?*	• Beautiful • [peer] people will always label people like you but there is no one like you	*proof of self*
Bianca – *ethnicity is proof of self, bravely displayed in a photograph*	• SOY 100% Boricua [I am 100% Puerto Rican]	*proof of self*
Kiara – *brave, powerful affirmation of self in context*	• I love myself…I thought about calling it "pretty" but it seems a bit strange	*proof of self*
Connie – *friends make me happy*	• It has my friends and we was [were] all happy and the picture was nice	*friendship*
Sadie – *friendship involves deeper connections*	• It represents our friendship – it's important 'cause when we first met each other we clicked together and became great friends	*friendship*
Bianca – *friendship is strong*	• It shows our strong friendship	*friendship*

Nell – *friendship is trust, loyalty and support*	• Me and mostly all my friends. I can trust them. They are loyal. At school and at Girl's group…they will help if I'm down	***friendship and support***
Ivanna – *family is support*	• I want to print [out] my family. I fight with my brother but we always make up and he always has my back • They will always have my back and be there when I need them	***support***

Appendix G. Focus on *Photovoice* – Workshop Sessions

FOCUS
ON
PHOTOVOICE

Participatory Action Research

Workshop Sessions

Ann Mechem Ziergiebel

SESSION ONE

An introduction to **perspective taking**

understanding the thoughts, feelings, and motivations of others
(Gehlbach, 2013)

Postcard Perspectives

- situation

- who loves you?

- who do you love?

- what are you afraid of?

Situated Selfie

thinking about expressive content, perspective, light (Rose, 2012)

Gehlbach, H. (2013). Social perspective taking: A multidimensional approach. Retrieved from
www.uknow.gse.harvard.edu/teaching/TC104-607.html.
Rose, G. (2012). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials* (3rd Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage

SESSION TWO

Selfie Swap and perspective taking
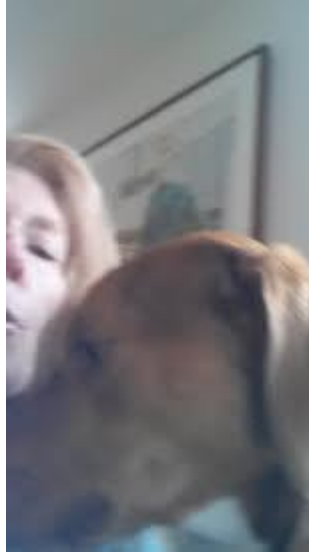
rescuee or rescuer?

Photovoice and **Participatory Action Research**

taking photographs and telling stories relating to the images (Palibroda,
2009)
participants tell their story (Wang & Burris, 1997)

A week with **Cameras**

take 25 / choose 3

Palibroda, B. (2009). *A practical guide to photovoice: Sharing pictures, telling stories and changing communities*. Winnipeg, CA:
    Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence.
Wang, C., & Burris, M. A. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessments. *Health
    Education and Behaviors, 24*(3), 369-387.

SESSION THREE

5 – Minutes of Fame

slide show and discussion

Narrative Self-Construction

- orientation

- complication

- resolution

SESSION FOUR

VOICE

Voicing **O**ur **I**ndividual and **C**ollective **E**xperience (Palibroda, 2009)

"...aware of themselves appearing before others, speaking in their own voices...to bring about a common world." (Greene, 2000)

Greene, M. (2000). *Releasing the imagination*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
Palibroda, B. (2009). *A practical guide to photovoice: Sharing pictures, telling stories and changing communities*. Winnipeg, CA: Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence.