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LINGÍTX HAA SATEEYÍ, WE WHO ARE TLINGIT: CONTEMPORARY TLINGIT  
IDENTITY AND THE ANCESTRAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE LANDSCAPE

A

Dissertation

Present to the Faculty  
of the University of Alaska Fairbanks

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

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## Abstract

Divergent views on the Tlingit ancestral relationship to the landscape of Southeast Alaska often leads to conflicts between Western-orientated government agencies, public entities, and the Tlingit people themselves. To better understand this subject, I collected nine personal narratives from research participants from within the Tlingit nation. The narratives provide insight into the dynamics at the intersection of conflicting worldviews, and the role this plays in shaping contemporary Tlingit identity.

The results of exploring these diverging worldviews has illuminated three factors influencing contemporary Tlingit identity: the loss and struggle with maintaining the Lingít language, implementation of subsistence regulations and resultant conflicts, and diminishment of the ceremony called a *kóo.eex'* (a memorial party). In addition, within the Tlingit worldviews there are oral histories, traditional values, and concepts such as balance, respect, and *at.óow*, which define ancestral relationships and identity. These findings also reveal that the means of imparting cultural knowledge and worldviews have changed.

The narratives are organized into themes reflecting common factors: Residing in the ancestral landscape, Lingít language and thinking, the Tlingit artist and the ancestral relationship to the landscape, and contemporary Tlingit identity. The results demonstrate the significance of identity markers, such as the Lingít language, as a means for healing social trauma. Moreover, the lives of the Tlingit artists illustrate that maintaining an ancestral relationship utilizes both traditional and contemporary methods. In addition, the

narratives provide documentation concerning the changes in a subsistence lifestyle that affect the social lives of the Tlingit in contemporary society.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction to Tlingit *Aani*

#### *The purpose of the study*

The purpose of this study is to understand how the ancestral relationship to the landscape contributes to identity in the Tlingit worldview. We need to know *where* we come from in order to know *who* we are. Our sense-of-place, our home, and the natural environment define our identity. According to Tlingit scholar Nora Dauenhauer and her husband fellow scholar Richard Dauenhauer (1994), “All clans have historical and spiritual connections to certain places in their territory that are usually the origin of ancestral covenants” (p. 861). In the Tlingit worldview, ‘place’ is the landscape filled with the narratives of shared histories and experiences. An ancestral relationship to place derives from the landscape and culture that defines a particular group of peoples.

Frederica de Laguna (1960), in her anthropological and archeological studies conducted in Angoon in the 1940s, suggested the need for further inquiry into the effects of cultural change on Tlingit society. In the Angoon study, de Laguna observed:

...the fur trade and Russian colonization at first, and later the mining, fishing, and lumbering industries, missionary and educational activities, and the growth of white settlement, including military establishments, have attacked and are continuing to reshape and shatter the configurations of native cultures. Tlingit communities today exhibit to a varying degree the effects of acculturation and assimilation. It would be of interest to discover what aboriginal institutions or

attitudes are still alive, what aspects of culture have broken down almost completely, and which ones have proved most responsive to change without losing their continuity with the past (p.7).

Now, 60 years later, this research seeks to address these questions through the examination of how the Tlingit maintain their ancestral relationship to the landscape in contemporary times, in addition to demonstrating the ancestral relationships within Tlingit identity through the means of the personal narrative.

The purpose of this study comes from my own personal inquiries. My knowledge of the Tlingit comes from forty-six years of living among them in the same physical, communal, and geographical place. Throughout my life experiences, I have noted that many non-natives do not take into consideration that Alaska has been peopled for thousands of years. Because of misunderstandings about the Tlingit ancestral relationships to place, conflicts have developed between government agencies, public entities, and the people indigenous to the landscape of Southeast Alaska.

What is known about the Tlingit is often a result of outdated sources in addition to materials exhibiting cultural biases. Often these biases develop into prejudices and even racism. Moreover, for the Tlingit themselves, an inquiry into their histories is fraught with frustration because of the often inaccurate and misrepresented portrayal in studies and literature. Thus, my inquiry is intended for two audiences: for the Tlingit people themselves who are searching for their place in contemporary society, and for the agencies and general public that will benefit from a better understanding of how Tlingit people maintain their ancestral relationships to the landscape.

### *Significance of the study*

This research provides documentation concerning the lives of contemporary Tlingit people and enhances local and regional knowledge of the Tlingit culture through an analysis of the personal narrative. The narratives I have collected provide the opportunity to change prevailing beliefs about the Tlingit. Foremost, one of the target audiences for this research is members of the Tlingit culture who are able to speak with their own unique voices. In addition, researching a contemporary relationship to the landscape among the Tlingit contributes to the body of knowledge in the field of Cross Cultural Studies, as well as Alaska Native Studies, Education, Northern Studies, and Indigenous literature.

### *The role of the researcher*

An important frame of reference for this study is my own personal experiences, and, similarly in the following chapters, the research participants provide a narrative frame from within their own lives. This is important to note because the narrative frame directly relates to the ancestral landscape. These frames of reference are essential to this study. R. Dauenhauer (1975) emphasizes that the narrative frame is “as important to the tradition bearer as his story (p. 79)”. Furthermore, R. Dauenhauer points out, “We should notice how the tale telling situation is controlled by kinship and protocol, both of which are held in high regard by Tlingits...” (p. 87). In the Tlingit culture, any formal

discussion begins with an introduction; therefore, I will introduce myself according to Tlingit protocol:

*Ch'a aadéi yei xat nay.oo. Lingít X'éináx, Atk'ahéen yoo xat duwasáakw. Dleit kaa X'éináx Vivian Martindale you xat duwasáakw. Yéil naax xat sitee.*

*T'akdeintaan áyá xat, Tax' hit áyá xat. Sáami ka Suomalaiset yádi áyá xat. Howie Martindale yoo duwasáakw ax xúx. Mitchell Prescott yoo duwasáakw ax éesh. Lorna Woods ka Kay Prescott yoo duwasáakw ax tláa. Binkley ka Amundsen dachxan áyá xa. Kachxaana.aakw dáx. Shet'ka Kwaan yei xat yatee ka Huna Káawu yei xat yatee. Gunalchéesh.*

This introduction translates as follows: Please forgive me if I do not do this correctly. My Lingít name is *Atk'ahéen*. My English name is Vivian Martindale. I am from the Raven Moiety. I am adopted into the T'akdeintaan and I am from the Snail House. I am Sáami and Suomalaiset (Finnish). My husband's name is Howie Martindale. My father's name is Mitchell Prescott. My mother's name is Lorna Woods. My step-mother's name is Kay Prescott. I am a child of the Binkley's and the Amundsen's. I was born and raised in Wrangell, Alaska. I live in both Hoonah and Sitka.

This formal introduction presents the frame of reference in the small logging and fishing community of Wrangell, Alaska where I was raised. This setting is essential to the beginnings of my inquiry into Tlingit identity in contemporary times. As a product of the public school system in the 1960s and 1970s, I wasn't taught about the Tlingit culture. In fact, the Tlingit people were completely absent from the curriculum. Eventually, in the late 70s, the subject of Alaska history became an experimental elective in Wrangell High

School. I was fortunate enough to be one of the first students who volunteered to take the class. Unfortunately, Alaska history began with Russian/Alaskan history. At that time, I had no idea how historical conflicts and social changes would influence my future and the future of my Tlingit children, who were denied an existence in history. This absence did not occur to me until I was raising my Tlingit children, and thus began searching for educational materials and information about their heritage.

What I knew about their heritage was similar to what I knew about my own. In my own culture, a deeply embedded sense-of-place surrounded me. Similarly, in the Tlingit culture, the values embedded in an ancestral relationship to the landscape shaped identity through experience. In my own upbringing, I developed a rich sense of the landscape because the early years of my educational experience were spent with direct experiential relationships to places in Tlingit *aani*. I could not name the pitch, or the process that produced the pitch oozing from the tree in my yard; yet I knew that when I rubbed it on a cut it would heal. I discovered what plants came up in the spring, when to eat them raw and how to cook them at home. My parents and grandparents shared their knowledge of the environment with me; therefore, my concept of place was grounded in the island on which I lived. It is likely that they gained much of their knowledge from living among the Tlingit. Before I went to Kindergarten, my knowledge connected me to place and, as a result, I define myself by the places I experience and the people I experience these places with, in this case, the Tlingit.

I eventually married into a Tlingit family that, in generations past, had lost essential cultural practices; consequently, my children have struggled to define



themselves as Tlingit. Due to assimilation and acculturation, many of the cultural protocols and practices were unknown. Although my children were aware that their father was from the Eagle moiety, the family lacked the information on his Tlingit maternal side to educate us about their clan and house origins. In addition, no one in the family was a fluent Lingít speaker. According to Tlingit protocol, educating my children should have come from my children's paternal grandfather's family, which is the clan affiliation that my children and I now belong to. This would be my children's father's *yadi* (his father's people). Unfortunately, all the aunts and uncles lived in Sitka and Hoonah, many miles north of where we lived. In addition to Tlingit educational protocols, I felt I was responsible for teaching my children to be proud of both their Tlingit and their European heritage; and given that we lived in Tlingit *aani*, it was especially important to build relationships with the ancestral landscape. The problem was: Where do I start my search?

My research began with the community of Hoonah, the ancestral homeland of my children and my adoptive clan. In order to form my children's Tlingit identity, I taught them aspects of the culture that I felt were important: Tlingit values, subsistence lifestyle, oral traditions, and language. Because of my experience and familial relationships within the Tlingit culture, the tribal community allowed me ready access. In my search, I discovered that the problems hindering research into the Tlingit communities derived from the same prejudices, stereotypes, and misunderstandings that continue to plague many social institutions. At the base of these misconceptions are the differences in worldviews between the Tlingit culture and the dominant Western society. Throughout my adult life, I instinctively felt and experienced these differences, but was unable to

articulate the distinctions to those who were not culturally involved or related to the Tlingit people. Once I understood the differences in worldviews, it was easier to appreciate the richness of the culture. Because of my own multi-cultural upbringing, even my own worldview differs from my Tlingit families'. Therefore, my research into contemporary Tlingit identity and an ancestral relationship to the landscape stems from my own personal and familial interests.

### *Introduction to the Tlingit landscape*

The landscapes provide the Tlingit people their spiritual and physical ancestral relationships. As Frederica DeLaguna (1972) in her Yakutat study observed, "...men are not something apart from nature, but share with 'animate' and seemingly 'inanimate' things the same being, while 'natural laws' have social, moral, and 'supernatural' aspects" (p. 7). The ancestral Tlingit landscape does not exist as a static sense-of-place. To the Tlingit people, the landscape is not only physical landmarks but also contains a spiritual, intuitive, and emotional aspect. First, I will describe the physical landscape in relation to the ancestral landscape, and provide an illustration explaining how the ancestral landscape in the Tlingit worldview differs from a Western contemporary perspective. Then, I will discuss the human landscape, including information about the Tlingit social structure: moiety, kwáan, clan, and house. I use an example from my own family's clan structure to illustrate this relationship. The description of the physical and human landscape draws correlations between the ancestral and contemporary

relationships, demonstrating that the Tlingit people do not separate the present-physical from the ancestral past.

*Tlingit aani: The physical landscape and worldview*

The Tlingit landscape is the region known as Southeast Alaska, which is located in the southern end of Alaska—also known as “the Panhandle” because the Alaska landform is shaped like the handle of a frying pan. Southeast Alaska, at its uppermost region, extends from the Copper River delta in the north downward to the north end of Queen Charlotte Islands near Dixon Entrance beyond Prince of Wales Island at the U.S. and Canadian Border. The Southeast landscape is approximately 525 miles long and 120 miles wide and includes 29,000 miles of coastline. Submerged mountain tops rise from the Pacific Ocean to form the over one thousand islands that fashion the Alexander Archipelago, which includes the 17-million acre Tongass National Forest, the largest National Forest in the United States. The forested landscape is considered a temperate rain forest, an eco-system that consists of a maritime climate and heavy rainfall. The waterways and landscape are home to numerous species of birds, fish, and mammals, in addition to abundant plant life. The route between the numerous islands and the mainland is called the Inside Passage. It is a landscape filled with ice-fields, glaciers, rivers, lakes, streams, islands, and mountains. Thus, the physical geography provides the setting for elaborate worldviews within the Tlingit culture, defining peoples who are intimately connected to the landscape. Figure 1: *Southeast Alaska map* depicts a general map of Tlingit *aani*.

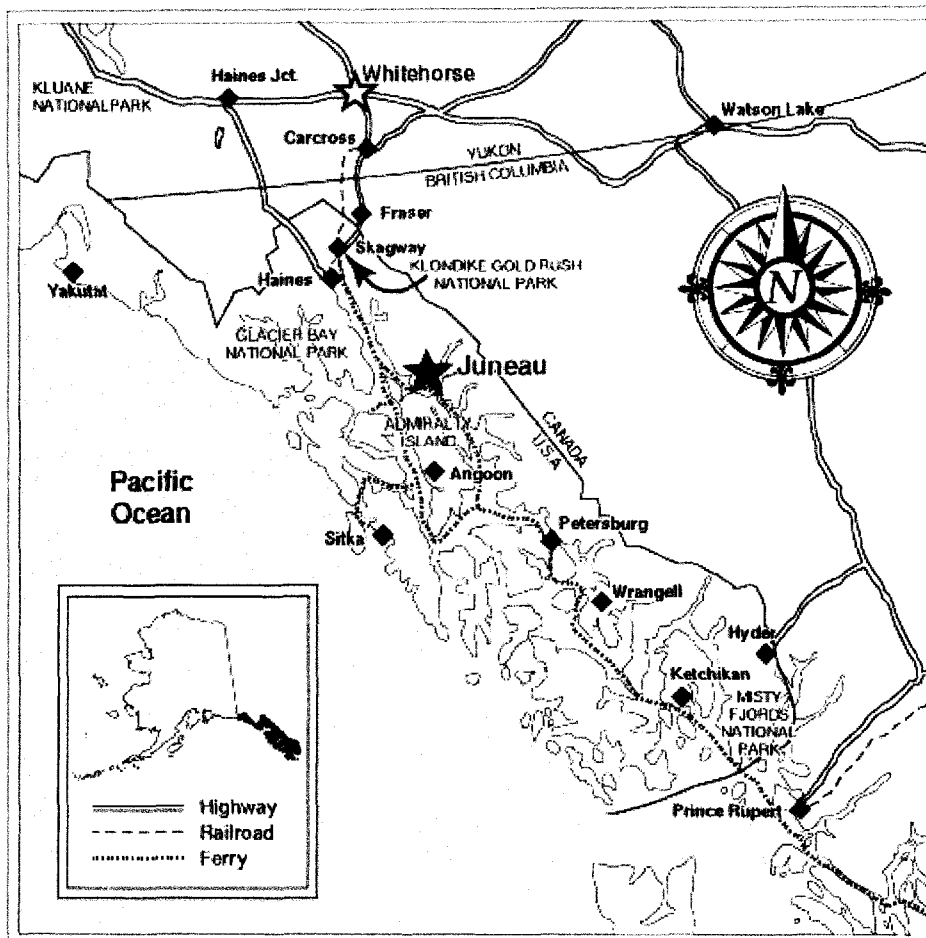


Figure 1: *Southeast Alaska map*. Resourced from Alaska's Department of Natural Resources (2008).

The Tlingit and their ancestral relationship to the landscape intertwine with the tidal landscape, directly relating their sense of self and identity to the name for themselves as a people. One interpretation of the word "Tlingit" means "People of the tides" or "Tides People." "Lein", is a Lingit word that translates to mean "tide," and "git" is a word thought to be of Tsimshian origin meaning "People." Thus, the physical landscape is a part of Tlingit identity, and the origins of their name are demonstrative of a worldview that does not define boundaries between man, nature, and the spiritual, as

evident in the mutually supporting subsystems in Tlingit society. From subsistence use to ceremonies, art and the oral traditions, all are interdependent. In contrast, in the scientific world, distinctions separate the land from the ocean, night from day, and animals from man. Whereas the Tlingit, having thrived in Southeast Alaska since time immemorial, have formed a worldview unique to their landscape. Table 1: *Distinguishing indigenous worldviews* illustrates some of the differences between the Tlingit worldview and the contemporary Western worldview.

Table 1: *Distinguishing indigenous worldviews*

<i>Indigenous worldview</i>	<i>Western worldview</i>
Spirituality is imbedded in all elements of the cosmos	Spirituality is centered in a single Supreme Being
Humans have responsibility for maintaining harmonious relationship with the natural world	Humans exercise dominion over nature to use it for personal and economic gain
Need for reciprocity between human and natural worlds – resources are viewed as gifts	Natural resources are available for unilateral human exploitation
Nature is honored routinely through daily spiritual practice	Spiritual practices are intermittent and set apart from daily life
Wisdom and ethics are derived from direct experience with the natural world	Human reason transcends the natural world and can produce insights independently
Universe is made up of dynamic, ever-changing natural forces	Universe is made up of an array of static physical objects
Universe is viewed as a holistic, integrative system with a unifying life force	Universe is compartmentalized in dualistic forms and reduced to progressively smaller conceptual parts
Time is circular with natural cycles that sustain all life	Time is a linear chronology of “human progress”
Nature will always possess unfathomable mysteries	Nature is completely decipherable to the rational human mind
Human thought, feelings and words are inextricably bound to all other aspects of the universe	Human thought, feeling and words are formed apart from the surrounding world
Human role is to participate in the orderly designs of nature	Human role is to dissect, analyze and manipulate nature for own ends
Respect for elders is based on their compassion and reconciliation of outer- and inner-directed knowledge	Respect for others is based on material achievement and chronological old age
Sense of empathy and kinship with other forms of life	Sense of separateness from and superiority over other forms of life
View proper human relationship with nature as a continuous two-way, transactional dialogue	View relationship of humans to nature as a one-way, hierarchical imperative

Note. Adapted from *Wisdom of the Elders: Sacred Native Stories of Nature* by David Suzuki and Peter Knudtson (1992) in *Education Indigenous to Place: Western Science Meets Native Reality* by Ray Barnhardt and Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley (1999).

A predominant belief system ingrained in the Western worldview is that man has dominion over plants and animals, i.e., man occupies a position of dominance over the earth. In contrast, the Tlingit worldview places man on an even plane with nature. In the Tlingit world, respect is highly valued as evident in the oral traditions and through the observation of taboos. One does not speak negatively about nature because, not only man, but also animals and plants, have spirits and those spirits must not be offended. For example, it is recognized that the shadow of a tree is the spirit of the tree and the tree is afforded respect because it gives its life for a canoe, the frame of a home, or its roots for a basket. In the Tlingit worldview, there exists a balance between natural and supernatural forces rather than a clear demarcation (see Chapter 5 for an explanation on the concept of ‘balance’).

In indigenous societies, a sense-of-place, i.e., belonging intimately to a place, is necessary for physical and spiritual survival. Understanding weather patterns, tidal activity, animal and fish migrations, and types of edible and inedible plants are all linked to the survival of a traditional lifestyle. Thus, the landscape provides the basis for the formation of Tlingit identity, an identity they are born into through the matrilineal clan structure. In turn, this social construction identifies them with the landscape through oral traditions including cultural heroes, migrations stories, and narratives depicting sacrifice and struggle. Consequently, the Tlingit are culturally linked to the land through a process of inter-dependency between people and the environment.

*The human landscape*

I begin with an explanation of Tlingit social structure in contemporary Tlingit society. For a more detailed explanation about the intricacies of the Tlingit social structure, see N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1987, 1990, 1994), De Laguna (1972), and Kan (1989). My inquiry reflects that of a Tlingit scholar's search for cultural knowledge: "the starting point of understanding my culture is the clan structure" (Hope & Thornton, 2000, p. 7). Andy Hope (2000) claims that, "traditional Tlingit social organization, e.g., Tlingit common law, provided a rock solid foundation for such contemporary manifestation of Tlingit life as subsistence and tribal government" (Hope & Thornton, p. 8). Thus, in order to understand the complexities of the Tlingit worldview, one begins with their social structure.

Contemporary Tlingit society is organized by two moieties, or half-divisions: Eagle/Wolf and Raven. These divisions are reciprocal in nature and are consistent with the Tlingit worldview of the importance of balance. The Tlingit social system is matrilineal; meaning that the social structure and kinship follow the mother's bloodline, i.e., a child is from his or her mother's clan. Tlingit marriage laws dictate that a member from one moiety marry a person from the opposite moiety, thus providing the necessary balance to maintain the matrilineal society. Although this marriage tradition is not always followed, the importance of marrying your opposite is encouraged in contemporary Tlingit families. Politically, Tlingits are recognized as a federal tribe through the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska. In addition, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 created organized village and urban corporations. Sealaska is



Southeastern Alaska's regional corporation. Through this new political structure, a new sense of identity is emerging, though adding another identifying layer rather than replacing it.

The Tlingit are organized into social units called 'clans'. The clan unit is the main independent political organization; and at first contact with outsiders, there were around 60 to 70 clans in Southeastern, Alaska. Today, there are fewer. The various communities or regions in Tlingit Aaní are known as *kwáans*. Clans are further broken down into units called houses or "hít" in the Lingít language. In addition, the ownership of property is shared among those from a common ancestry within the clan group. Each house or subgroup is ancestrally connected to a story, person, migration, or landscape, which is depicted through their crests. The clan crests are a significant connection to an ancestral past, as well as a means of social identification in modern society. The Tlingit are most identifiable by their clan crests. For example, someone from the T'akdeintaan clan is recognized by the sea pigeon, black-legged kitty wake (tern) crest, as the story relates to a sea pigeon that saves a village from starvation. This crest and story are a component of the T'akdeintaan ancestral connection to the landscape, thus an element of their identity. Crests contain the spirit of an animal, person, or object and are addressed as though containing a human essence. These crests are an important aspect of Tlingit lineage in contemporary society. An example of a lineage would be Raven, T'akdeintaan, *Tax' Hít* (Snail House). Persons of that lineage would be able to use Raven and snail as a crest. The sea tern is used by all *T'akdeintaan* because of their ancestor. Interestingly, Kan (1982) suggests, "Members of a clan were believed to share some behavioral features

with the animal that served as their major crest” (p. 35). T’akdeintaan women, with the Raven, Sea Tern, Snail as a part of their crests are known for their weaving, a metaphor for creating a nest or a safe place. Yet, similar to the Raven, the T’akdeintaan portrays an adventurous side and the clan members are recognized as communicators. Thus, the relationship to animals through the crests is multi-layered through identity, behavior, oral traditions, and spirituality.

To gain an in-depth look at a *kwáan*, I provide Table 2: *Xunaa káawu, Hoonah people*, which depicts the moiety, clan, and crest divisions of a particular community, Hoonah. A majority of the research participants in this study maintain ancestral connections to *Xunaa Káawu*, Hoonah, Alaska.

Table 2: *Xunaa káawu: Hoonah, people*

<i>Yéil: raven moiety</i>	<i>Ch'áak': eagle/wolf moiety</i>
T'akdeintaan (clan) <i>Takdein Hit: T'akdein House</i> <i>X'áaw Hit: Freshwater Marked Coho house</i> <i>Yéil Hit: Raven House</i> <i>Yáay Hit: Whale House</i> <i>K'óox Disí Hit: Marten Moon</i> <i>Teet Hit: Wave House</i> <i>Tax' Hit: Snail House</i> <i>Kaa Shaayí Hit: Head House</i>	Chookaneidí (clan) <i>Naanaa Hit: Up the Bay House</i> <i>Xáatl Hit: Iceberg House</i> <i>Xóots Saagí Hit: Brown Bear's Nest House</i> <i>Wandaa Hit: Around the Edge House</i> <i>Xóots Hit: Brown Bear House</i> <i>Yan Wulihashi Hit: Drifted Ashore House</i> <i>Aan Eegayaak Hit: Iceberg on the Beach House</i> <i>Shux'aa Xaay Hit: First Yellow Cedar House</i>
Koosk'eidí <i>Xaas Hit: Cow House</i>	Wooshkeetaan <i>Wooshdaa Hit: Overall House</i> <i>Tóos' Déx'i Hit: Shark Backbone House</i> <i>Noow Hit: Fort House</i>
Gaanax.ádi <i>Gaanaxaa Hit: Gaanxaa House</i>	Kaagwaantaan <i>Xóots Kúdi Hit: Brown Bear's Nest House</i>
	Kadakw.ádi <i>Xáay Hit: Yellow Cedar House</i>

Note. Resourced *Will The Time Ever Come: a Tlingit sourcebook* (Hope & Thornton, 2000).

The people from Hoonah *Káawu* are tribally connected to the landscape. The name Hoonah means “People from the Direction of the Northwind,” or “People Sheltered from the North Wind.” Accordingly, their social identity is bonded to the landscape, linking them to specific stories, dances, and songs. The Hoonah clans originally occupied the area now known as Glacier Bay National Park and Lituya Bay on the outer coast. The L'uknax.ádi and the T'akdeintaan resided on the Outer Continental Shelf in the Lituya Bay region and the Chookaneidí, Wooshkeetaan and the Kaagwaantaan lived on the

inside areas closer to Icy Strait. In addition, several clans are intermarried among the Hoonah clans: The Shangukeidí and the L'eeneidí, people (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, 2006)

At one time in Hoonah, where my family's history originates, the relationship to the house, *hit*, was both physical and spiritual. Many of the physical houses no longer exist; however, the spiritual and social house remains as an aspect of Tlingit identity. For example, my families' house in Hoonah appeared as the photo in Figure 2: *Snail House in Hoonah, Alaska*.



Alaska State Library-Historical Collections

Figure 2: *Snail House in Hoonah, Alaska*. Resourced from the Alaska State Library Historical Collection, Juneau, Alaska.

Due to missionary pressures and policies towards abolishing the traditional house structure, thus moving the Tlingit into nuclear family homes, the houses in Hoonah stand

in disrepair or are non-existent. However, some communities, such as Angoon and Sitka, still maintain traditional houses and utilize clan caretakers to maintain these houses.

Although Hoonah's Snail House is gone, the people, stories, songs, and *at.óow* related to the clan house remain an aspect of T'akdeintaan identity, resulting in a house that exists more in the spiritual and social realm than the physical (see Chapter 5 for an explanation of *at.óow*).

For instance, Tlingit are recognized in a formal introduction by their relationship to their ancestral past, including both their maternal lineage and their paternal, i.e., *haa yatx'i*. Thus, the Tlingit introduction provides an oral basis for balance through the understanding of ancestral lineage. For example, when a person is from the Snail House, the recognition is both spiritual and social. A person giving the introduction is giving their spiritual and social connection, i.e., their ancestral relationship to the landscape, and the listener recognizes that connection. An example from my daughter's lineage:

*Ch'a aadéi yei xat na.oo. Lingít X'éináx, Yéilk' yoo xat duwasáakw. Dleit kaa X'éináx Vivian Mork yoo xat duwasáakw. Yéil naax xat sitee. T'akdeintaan áyá xat. Tax' hit aya xat. Teikweidí yádi áyá xat. Hawaiian ka Norwegian yádi áyá xat. Kaagwaantaan dachxán áyá xat. Saami ka Irish ka Suomalaiset áyá xat. David Mork yoo duwasáakw ax éesh. Vivian Martindale yoo duwasáakw ax tláa. Kachxana.aakw kuxdzitee ku.aa Xunaa kaawu dax. Gunalchéesh.*

In the translation, my daughter is giving her English and Tlingit name including her moiety (Raven), in addition to her clan and house name, the *T'akdeintaan* from the Snail house (*Tax'*). She is a child of the *Teikweidí*. Her yádi (father's people) are also

Hawaiian and Norwegian. She is a grandchild of the *Kaagwaantaan*. She gives her father's, mother's names and mentions that she was born in Wrangell (*Kachxaana.aakw*) and her *kwáan* comes from Hoonah.

Memorizing a formal introduction is a form of respect displayed towards their moiety and their opposites. The introduction also connects the speaker to their ancestral landscape, thus the ability to introduce oneself in the proper manner gives respect to all the past generations in his/her lineage. The inclusion of the formal introduction into the concept of Tlingit cultural competency requires the recitation of the introduction in the Lingít language, even without the person being fluent. The introduction may be elaborate, often taking 15-minutes or more to recite. However, in less formal settings, the introduction may be brief, only touching upon one's Tlingit and English names, moiety, clan, house, and *kwáan*. Ultimately, the Tlingit introduction provides a continual means of linking contemporary Tlingit culture to their ancestral past.

In conclusion, the landscape is not separate from the worldview of the Tlingit, even in contemporary times. Through the clan-based matrilineal system, the Tlingit people are ancestrally linked to the landscape, e.g., the Chookaneidí are linked spiritually to icebergs through the loss of their ancestors in Glacier Bay (see research participant Carol Williams's rendition of the Glacier Bay Story in appendix A). In contemporary times, the ancestral relationship to the landscape is maintained through a variety of means: art, writing, language revitalization, scholarly pursuits, and oral traditions. Yet, on a daily basis, the Tlingit must deal with changes in traditional modes of cultural transmission resulting from the preceding generations experience with boarding schools,

the loss of language, and the loss of traditional ceremonies. Despite these changes, however, traditional values are being taught to the younger generation through inventive means, which I will discuss in Chapter 5.

### *Research considerations in Tlingit aani*

In this section, I outline two significant considerations that I encountered while conducting research among the Tlingit people: language and cultural and intellectual property rights (CIPR). Although all of the people I encountered in my study spoke English as their first language, this study contains terms that are unfamiliar to the general audience. Therefore, I provide a preview to the Lingít language. As well, because many of my research participants in this study refer to cultural property, I include a discussion about what cultural and intellectual property rights mean to the Tlingit.

### *A preview of the Lingít language*

Firstly, “Lingít” is the term used when referring to the language spoken by the Tlingit; and the term “Tlingit” refers to the people. Throughout this study, I use many Lingít ‘common’ words; therefore, I provide a glossary in appendix I. Although many of the research participants in this study are not fluent in Lingít, there are pronunciations, common words, and cultural understandings that can only be known if one is somewhat knowledgeable about the language. In Southeast Alaska, common Lingít words are used in everyday English conversation; words such as *éshaan*, *hit saati*, *koo.éex’*, *kwáan*, *gunalchéesh*. Thus, through the study of the Lingít language, I gained a greater

understanding of my research and the people that I am intimately involved with every day of my life. Learning the Lingít language is not easy as Lingít scholars claim it is one of the most difficult languages in the world to learn (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1987, 1990, 1994). There are 50 letters in the Tlingit alphabet and 24 of those sounds are not found in English. There are various dialects as well: Northern, Southern, Interior Canada, and Tongass. At present in the U.S. and Canada, there are some 250 to 500 speakers of the Lingít language remaining.

Throughout this document, words written in the Lingít language are italicized for formatting and linguistic reasons. In Lingít orthography, a number of letters are underlined to indicate a technique of making a particular sound in the back of the throat. Therefore, if I were to utilize the ‘underline’ to indicate that a word should be italicized, one could misunderstand or misinterpret a Lingít word. Another consideration is the Lingít alphabet, which I have outlined in the following tables. The tables include pronunciations that will help the English speaker when he or she encounters the Lingít words in the remaining text. The Lingít consonant chart, Table 3: *Lingít consonants*, provides the letter in Lingít in the first column, an example word in the Lingít language in the second column, and, in the third column, an English definition for the Lingít word.



Table 3: *Lingít consonants*

<i>Lingít letter</i>	<i>Lingít x'einax' example word</i>	<i>English definition</i>
.	<i>wa.e/ naa.át</i>	you/ clothes
ch	<i>cháas'</i>	pink salmon/humpy
ch'	<i>ch'áak'</i>	bald eagle
d	<i>dís</i>	moon
dl	<i>dleit</i>	snow/white
dz	<i>dzánti</i>	flounder
g	<i>gooch</i>	hill
g	<i>gooch</i>	wolf
gw	<i>a gwéinli</i>	hoof
gw	<i>jigwéina</i>	hand towel
h	<i>héen</i>	water
j	<i>jánwoo</i>	mountain goat
k	<i>kóoshdaa</i>	land otter
k'	<i>k'wálx</i>	fern root
k'	<i>k'eik'w</i>	sea pigeon
kw	<i>kaháakw</i>	fish eggs
k'w	<i>k'wát'</i>	egg
kw	<i>naakw</i>	devil fish/octopus
k'w	<i>k'wátl</i>	pot
l	<i>(du) lí</i>	nose
l'	<i>l'ook</i>	coho/silver salmon
n	<i>náayadi</i>	partially dried salmon
s	<i>séew</i>	rain
s'	<i>s'oow</i>	green
sh	<i>sheey</i>	limb knot
t	<i>toowú</i>	mind
t'	<i>t'ooch'</i>	black/charcoal
tl	<i>tleikw</i>	berries (general)
tl'	<i>tl'éx'kw</i>	soil
ts	<i>tsaa</i>	hair seal
ts'	<i>ts'itskw</i>	small songbird
w	<i>waat</i>	fathom
x	<i>xóon</i>	north wind
x'	<i>x'áax'</i>	apple
x	<i>xáat</i>	salmon
x'	<i>x'áal'</i>	skunk cabbage
xw	<i>xwájaa</i>	skin scraper
x'w	<i>x'éishx'w</i>	blue jay
xw	<i>(du) húnxw</i>	older brother
x'w	<i>x'waash</i>	large sea urchin
y	<i>yéil</i>	raven

Note. Table 3 & 4 resourced from *English/Tlingit Dictionary: Nouns* (Davis & Leer, 1996). Sitka, Alaska: Sheldon Jackson College ; Dauenhauer, N. & Dauenhauer, R. (2000). *Beginning Tlingit*. Juneau, Alaska: Sealaska Heritage Foundation Press.

Table 4: *Lingit Vowel chart* exhibits the eight vowel sounds in the Lingít language. The chart provides the Lingít vowel in the first column and a Lingít word that uses that particular vowel in the second column. The third column provides an English definition of the word followed by a fourth column citing an example in English that is similar to the Lingít vowel sound.

Table 4: *Lingit vowel chart*

<i>Lingit vowel</i>	<i>Lingit word</i>	<i>English definition</i>	<i>English sound sample</i>
á	<i>t'a</i>	salmon (general)	America, was
aa	<i>aan</i>	town/land	Saab (the car)
é	<i>né</i>	hairy sea grass	pet
éi	<i>dleit</i>	snow/white	vein
í	<i>hit</i>	house	hit
ée	<i>neech</i>	shoreline	keep
ú	<i>du</i>	he/she	put
óo	<i>dóosh</i>	cat	boot

Note. Table 3 & 4 resourced from *English/Tlingit Dictionary: Nouns* (Davis & Leer, 1996). Sitka, Alaska: Sheldon Jackson College; Dauenhauer, N. & Dauenhauer, R. (2000). *Beginning Tlingit*. Juneau, Alaska: Sealaska Heritage Foundation Press.

### *Cultural and intellectual property rights issues*

Inquiry into the culture and language of the Tlingit uncovers rich oral traditions, values, worldviews, and ceremonies. In the Tlingit worldview, intellectual property includes writings, oral traditions, language, their image as a people, and aspects of their culture that are inseparable with their spiritual and physical identity. Land, art, customs, dress, rituals, and burial sites are all considered cultural property. However, within indigenous communities, including the Tlingit, the concepts of intellectual and cultural

are not separated into two distinct categories. As evident in the worldview of the Tlingit, who view themselves as part of a whole, cultural and intellectual property cannot be dissected and disconnected nor reduced to simple terms. Tlingit cultural and intellectual property rights (CIPR) are protected by Tlingit law, therefore, inquiry into the oral traditions, as provided by research participant Carol Williams, means a familiarization with Tlingit protocol: Which clan owns the story? Who has permission to tell the story? Which stories are in Tlingit public domain? In what context, educational or family use, is the story conveyed? According to R. Dauenhauer (1975), "...most oral materials are owned and pass along reciprocal lines from tradition bearer to audience" (p.3). In addition, it is important to note that there is often more than one version of a story as distinguished by a clan's association with a particular version. Dauenhauer (1975) also notes, "The concept of absolute truth has serious implications in Tlingit folklore research. The idea of clan ownership includes the idea that the clan-sanctioned version is accurate" (p. 36). Thus, the cultural property of a particular clan is socially connected to one's identity. In a keynote address to an Alaska Native Educator's Conference, Gordon Pullar (2000) made the following point in defining CIPR claims:

... Cultural property rights may refer to one's inner identity. It is about ancestors and ways of doing, saying and knowing things. It is about culture and everyone on earth is entitled to a culture. It is about the past, the present and the future. It is about life. (p. 2)

Therefore, an inquiry into a particular culture's knowledge system and worldview is to seek out their innate reflection of self and identity. This is why it is considered 'taboo' to

remove a portion of identity, in any manner, from a community without permission. Unfortunately, the world's pursuit of CIPR is rapacious and those who are seeking this knowledge reflect an endless list of organizations: federal governments, non-governmental agencies (NGOs), pharmaceutical companies, private for profit companies, research institutions such as universities, private scientific organizations, and artists, among many others. As an example, the United States National Park system seeks knowledge about local Native's customs and sacred sites. Often they are well-meaning, desiring to protect those areas that Native peoples deem as sacred. "The inherent difficulty is that the tribal members must keep secret the same information that must be shared in the process of trying to protect sacred sites and religious objects threatened by external change" (Pinel & Evans, 1994, p. 44). As a result, plant knowledge, songs, dances, and other customs and knowledge are at risk: they are in danger of being lost to a consumerist society.

An example of one tribal agency acquiring control over CIPR is found in Southeast Alaska. In the spring of 2003, the Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHTA) met and made a recommendation to the United Nations regarding their cultural and intellectual property rights. In this document, they assert their recognition to manage "their traditional knowledge themselves, but [are] willing to offer it to all humanity provided their fundamental rights to define and control this knowledge are protected by the international community, including the State of Alaska" (2003, p. 2). This document makes recommendations to the United Nations, as well as the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian tribes, and to state, national, and international agencies. Among the

topics are recommendations on how to deal with biodiversity and customary environmental management and cultural objects. The document stresses that the Tlingit are recognized as owners of their own cultural property and points out their experiences with exploitation of CIPR. Moreover, the record establishes that the knowledge of the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian peoples can benefit all humanity.

The assertion of this aspect of tribal sovereignty protects cultural and intellectual property and affirms the cohesive identity of a particular group of peoples. However, the creation of codes of ethics does not ensure that these guidelines are followed. There must be involvement at all levels; from the creation of the documents to the overseeing that their guidelines are adhered to. The documents make the statement: we are in control over our own knowledge and we decide when to share our knowledge and with whom. We are in control over who we are.

#### *The Tlingit worldview and CIPR*

Intellectual property rights and the legal regimes behind this concept are strictly from a Western worldview. CIPR was “first developed in European and North American law as a mechanism to protect individual and industrial inventions” (Posey & Dutfield, 1996, p. 1). Even today, copyrights, trademarks, and patents operate under concepts that are foreign to many indigenous communities. The Western worldview’s concept of ‘ownership’ means that a person who *owns* something could legally and morally sell or trade that item, e.g., songs, music, and art. Western CIPR laws are designed to protect and to allow for commercial use of similar items and ideas.

Author Marie Battiste and James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson (2000) in *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage*, explain that the partial definitions of indigenous knowledge are problematic, thus attempting to fit indigenous worldviews into Western knowledge systems. This knowledge is a part of an indigenous community's CIPR. Therefore, when one begins to study what constitutes indigenous cultural and intellectual property, one cannot begin with a Eurocentric thought process within Western parameters. For example, in the Tlingit culture there is a claim of 'oral copyright.' Knowing the intricacies about Tlingit oral copyright can be difficult, but not insurmountable. The most important basic concept to understand is that Tlingit CIP is collectively clan-owned.

Collective ownership is a common thread among Indigenous communities including the Tlingit culture. Posey and Dutfield (1996) claim that each generation of indigenous peoples have an obligation to safeguard their traditional knowledge and that stewardship is collective. Indigenous people do not view themselves as 'owners' in a singular manner, but owners in a communal or sharing venue. Battiste and Henderson (2000) write, "Indigenous peoples do not view their knowledge in terms of property at all—that is, something that has an owner and is used for the purpose of extracting economic benefits—but in terms of community and individual responsibilities" (p.71). The crucial term is "responsibility", which is a predominant theme in CIPR, since it is often the responsibility of a person such as a medicine man, or healer, to keep certain knowledge from the rest of the public, as it may be sacred in nature. There is also a

responsibility, inherent within the community, to make sure that the knowledge is being passed down from generation to generation (often through the oral traditions).

Hence, the idea that things such as stories, plants, and art symbols can be ‘owned’ is not new among indigenous peoples. For example in the Tlingit culture, rights are defined through clan stewardship and use. As with many other indigenous cultures, either clans or societies within the tribe communally own CIP; and with ownership derives communal responsibility. The Tlingit person sees himself or herself as part of a whole, thus the community takes precedence over the wishes and desires of the individual. In the Tlingit worldview, the individual is taught that what he or she does affects the entire community. As an example, the research participants in this study were acutely aware of their responsibility to convey their knowledge to the next generation. An intimate connection between indigenous knowledge and culture is an integral part of the Tlingit community. Battiste and Henderson (2000), stress the importance of respecting CIPR as “a reciprocal with, the human beings, animals, plants, and places with which the song, story or medicine is connected (p.71).

Traditional knowledge, and the protection of that knowledge, must not be seen through a Western view of “property”; it must be viewed from the perspective of community. My examination of the oral traditions surrounding Glacier Bay National Park includes further discussion about the importance of sacredness to Tlingit identity, and how CIPR fits into the concept of being a Tlingit in contemporary society. As with any oral tradition in the Tlingit culture, Glacier Bay, as a frame of reference for the research participants “...establishes the geographical and genealogical context of the story and the

tradition bearer's relationship to the material" (R. Dauenhauer, 1975, p.94). Although some disputes arise over who should be the rightful caretaker because of matrilineal laws, in today's contemporary Western society, the Tlingit people still recognize matrilineal descent and property laws. Greaves (1994) inquires, "Why should an indigenous society, with its own concepts of property and civility, adopt the assumptions, rules, and institutions of the dominant society in order to claim its rights?" (p. 6). Thus, the Tlingit culture has its own sets of protocols regarding traditional knowledge.

Researchers are sometimes frustrated when confronted with the realization that indigenous communities require a reciprocal relationship. Investigating and collecting indigenous knowledge is no longer a free-for-all because CIPR is knowledge that cannot be separated from the whole of indigenous communities. From language to art, cultural ceremonies to land, all are intertwined within the spirit of the Indigenous person and community. In Tlingit society, as in many indigenous cultures, cultural and intellectual property are often under the care of Elders, medicine men, or healers, or other 'specialists' within their communities, however, the ability to share varies among cultures. Developing a relationship with the community and the people are the most important aspects of research, because some researchers seek individual experts only to discover that they are not considered 'experts' by their communities. In most cases, without proper permission, an individual cannot take that knowledge from the experts within that community and pass that information on to an outsider.

Because my research led to discussions about oral traditions, clan property, *at.óow* and other clan related topics, an overview of CIPR is essential. Tlingit CIPR



protocols are a means to hold onto specific values and beliefs. There is a responsibility that ensues with protecting traditional clan knowledge, in addition to comprehending how and in what context that knowledge can be used. During the course of my research, I was acutely aware of and maintained this responsibility. I did not always adhere to that belief in the past. Because of the influence of Western laws and confusion caused by assimilation in my own community of Wrangell, CIPR issues were never discussed. Therefore, my learning began eight years ago as I began to search for answers to specific research questions for my family and myself. Although issues concerning the cultural and intellectual property rights (CIPR) of indigenous peoples are complex and varied, a general understanding and appreciation has been essential to my study.

### *Conclusion*

Yup'ik scholar and Professor, Oscar Kawagley (1995) puts my task of collecting narratives into perspective, "One does not do research nor write the results in isolation, especially when dealing with people" (p. vii). Kawagley's groundbreaking book, *A Yupiaq Worldview*, legitimized this type of study where the researcher, working in a traditional setting, interprets through his or her own eyes (p. 3). Kawagley entered his study with an established relationship to the people and landscape he was studying. An 'outsider' could not have accomplished this substantial piece of research. Kawagley's research epitomizes the eventual goal of tribal peoples: to conduct their own research in their own communities. Thus, the personal narratives in this study are an opportunity for the Tlingit to speak for themselves as well as their communities. This inquiry into the

ancestral landscape and the relationship to place in contemporary Tlingit identity is an exploration into *Lingítx Haa Sateeyí*, We who are Tlingit.

### *Chapter Summaries*

In Chapter 2, *Examining literature within Tlingit aani*, I address the issues I discovered during my inquiry into the literature written about and by the Tlingit people. Because my search parallels others in my own family, especially my children, who led their own inquiries, I argue that this is a similar approach for many Tlingit who are searching for a sense of identity. I also discuss the importance of contemporary literature written for both children and adults. In addition, I discuss what I term as “tourist literature” and how this genre influences how Tlingits view themselves, in addition to how others perceive the contemporary Tlingit experience.

In Chapter 3, I explain the methods I selected and why I chose to use personal narratives to examine the contemporary relationship to the ancestral landscape among the Tlingit. I address my own perceptions about research through examining the history of research, thus facilitating my understanding of the Tlingit worldview. Also, appreciating the protocols unique to the Tlingit culture and working through the problems related to collecting narratives in a culture that discourages bragging, made me acutely aware of how my study and other studies can have either a positive or a negative affect on a community or peoples. Ultimately, the inquiry into the worldview of the Tlingit assisted in decolonizing my own worldview.

Chapter 4 identifies the cultural changes that affect contemporary Tlingit identity. From my research, I identified three major factors resulting in changes in Tlingit identity: the loss and struggle with maintaining the Lingít language, implementation of subsistence regulations and conflicts resultant from divergent worldviews, and changes in or the loss of the ceremony called a *kóo.eex*' (a memorial party). All of the narratives provided by the research participants in the appendices present insights into these changes.

Chapter 5 explores the Tlingit worldview and how it is expressed in contemporary lives. In this chapter, I investigate how the worldview is essential to understanding the social being and the interrelationships with the ancestral landscape and how assimilation and acculturation has affected the worldview. From their own perspectives, the research participants provide a discussion about the values that are essential to contemporary lives. In addition, I explain and outline the concepts of respect and balance, two key components that underlie every aspect of Tlingit society. Finally, I explain the concept of *at.óow*, said by some to be the most important concept in the Tlingit culture. In the last section, I illustrate how the Tlingit worldview and values are passed on to the next generation using non-traditional modes of transmission.

Chapter 6 provides a conclusion to this study. I present a summary of the study including major findings through an analysis of each narrative, comparing and contrasting the ancestral relationship to place in contemporary Tlingit society. I examine the narratives in the context of contemporary Tlingit identity and the ancestral relationship to the landscape. I also discuss new discoveries and explain the significance of providing the opportunity for the Tlingit research participants to speak for themselves.

I reiterate what elements of the worldview and values have remained, and explore in what manner those beliefs define the Tlingit person in contemporary society. As well, I point out the implications of the study for further exploration of contemporary Tlingit worldviews in *Lingít Haa Sateeyí, We who are Tlingit*.

The research participants narratives are found in appendices A, B, C, and D. Appendix A presents, *Glacier Bay and Hoonah káawu: Residing in the ancestral Landscape* that I have divided into subcategories: *The oral traditions and the ancestral relationship*, which includes the sacred Glacier Bay story provided by a research participant, Carol Williams, who is also the tradition bearer for the story. This segment sets the stage for the subsequent narratives, providing the background and the story behind a sacred landscape—the ancestral home to a majority of the research participants. Also included is a section titled *Tlingit values, Tlingit worldview*; a detailed interview provided by Carol Williams on the subject of teaching the Tlingit values to the next generation. The second section addresses a contemporary sense of a sacred landscape in *Relating to a sacred landscape*. Research participant, Breanne Mork, imparts a version of a historical account of the meeting of her clan and the Whiteman and then provides a personal interpretation of the meaning of her ancestral homeland, Lituya Bay, now part of Glacier Bay National Park. The final section, *Living in a landscape of change*, is the narrative by research participant, Sam Wright, who lived through changes in the fishing industry, as well as dramatic changes in the social lives of the Tlingit people. Sam's narrative is oriented in the same landscape as the previous research participants, Hoonah, Alaska and Glacier Bay National Park.

Appendix B, *Lingít X'einax'*, *Tlingit Yooxatangi: Lingít Language, Tlingit Thinking*, presents narratives and poetry from research participant, Vivian Mork, who is involved in the Lingít language revitalization effort. This section is divided into five separate narratives: *Educational experiences in a non-traditional setting*; *Strengthening our spirits: Perspectives from a Lingít language instructor*; *The language is ours: Examining the Lingít language revitalization*; *Haa shagoon: Knowing who we are*; and five poems that serve as another form of narrative. These narratives illustrate the significance of the Lingít language as a tool for healing social trauma, as well as a means of allowing the exploration of contemporary Tlingit identity. The narratives illustrate this study's conclusions about the impact of language loss on contemporary Tlingit identity as identified in chapter 4.

Appendix C, *The Contemporary Tlingit Artist and the Ancestral Relationship to the Landscape* two accomplished artists speak from their own unique perspectives. The first section is the narrative from Teri Rofkar: *Teri Rofkar: Journeying with the ancestors' knowledge*. The second section is the narrative provided by Clarissa Hudson: *Clarissa Hudson: Weaving into a state of grace*. Both artists utilize traditional methods, as well as contemporary style, to convey their ancestral relationships to the landscape. These narratives demonstrate how the ancestral relationship to the landscape is evident in the lives of the Tlingit artists, as well as illustrating how one maintains that relationship in changing times.

Appendix D, *Tlingit identity and the Ancestral Landscape*, provides three perspectives on the contemporary Tlingit relationship to the ancestral landscape. In

Chapter 4, I identified changes in the subsistence lifestyle as being a significant factor contributing to the loss of social and cultural identity. Therefore, the first section by Owen James, explores this lifestyle in two separate narratives: *Haa atxaayi, Our food is our lifestyle*, and *Reflecting a traditional worldview*. The second section in this appendix is a narrative from Mitch Mork, a young man in his twenties who has incorporated some of the traditional subsistence life into his contemporary world. His narrative, *Contemporary Tlingit identity* provides a comparison between growing up in a highly assimilated Southeast Alaska community with the narrative of Owen James, who lives in the village of Hoonah. Lastly, the narrative provided by Elizabeth Martin is titled *Elizabeth Martin: An elder's cultural landscape*. Elizabeth is a 93-year-old elder whose narrative illustrates the dramatic changes in her lifetime and the difficulties of maintaining her Tlingit identity in a multi-cultural family. Mrs. Martin's narrative provides a contrast to the younger research participants' worldviews, yet Mrs. Martin's narrative illustrates similar struggles dealing with the conflicts that arise between Western and Tlingit cultures.

## Chapter 2

### Examining Literature within Tlingit Aani

#### *Introduction*

For some contemporary Tlingit, the inquiry into their own identity and history is a lifelong search, as they continue to sort through literature dating back to first contact. Indeed, the recounting of first contact is an oral tradition familiar to many Tlingits. An account of this event is described in Nora and Richard Dauenhauer's (1987) publication of Tlingit oral traditions, *Haa Shuká, Our Ancestors: Tlingit Oral Narratives*. In this text, George R. Betts conveys the story of The Coming of the White Man:

People lived in Lituya Bay looong ago....at one point one morning a person went outside. then there was a white object that could be seen way out on the sea bouncing on the waves and rocked by the waves... "What's that?" ... "Is it Raven?".... (p. 303).

This story is reflected in my own family's oral traditions. It is an aspect of the T'akdeintaan's tribal identity. Nevertheless, for Tlingit, "who were we at first contact?" is a different inquiry from "who are we now?" In contemporary times, to remain situated in an ancestral relationship to the landscape, we must look beyond the written text and include non-written sources as well, e.g., oral histories, taped materials, mapping projects, and other creative works. The following review will incorporate all forms and sources of information related to Tlingit identity.

In this chapter, I discuss the various literatures available to pursue this scholarly inquiry. My inquiry into the written literature about the Tlingit originated with my own children's curiosity about their Tlingit ethnicity. In *Tlingit Thinking, Lingít Tundataanee*, a small publication by Katherine Mills (n.d), the narrator instructs on the subject of Tlingit identity: "Long ago, our ancestors knew what it meant to be a real person" (Mills, Olsen & Olsen, p. 1). Since there has been a breakdown in cultural transmission from the traditional methods to contemporary Tlingit culture, my first inquiry began with investigating *where* to find the knowledge that I sought. As a result, I discovered a large body of scholarly and scientific studies about the Tlingit, including several accomplished ethnographic studies from the Southeast Alaska region and the Yukon. As well, I investigated literature by and about the Tlingits consisting of government and tribally funded studies, dissertations, and articles written about the Tlingit, as well as several obscure books. I also chose to include what I call 'tourist' literature because often this is what people refer to during their own inquiries.

According to Tlingit scholar, Joyce Walton Shales (1998), "Our understanding of that [Native American] history is limited because the voice of the Native American is rarely heard" (p. ii). Much of the research I reviewed is from an outsider's perspective, meaning that the authors are not Tlingit nor do they live among the Tlingit. This 'etic' standpoint reflects a worldview that originates outside of Tlingit Aaní, thus residing in outside landscapes. The literature, as well as the scholars who authored the studies from this outside landscape, however, is still relevant to my inquiry on ancestral relationships



to the landscape because these perspectives provide a framework for comparative analysis conducted within the landscape.

A sense-of-self is influenced by how others perceive themselves, which is one of the reasons for the popularity of the memoir genre. Therefore, in order to facilitate self-reflection, I leaned toward the personal narrative as the most effective means of approaching my research. In Tlingit literature, narratives provide an insight into elders' experiences while growing up in a changing society, in addition to how the older generation perceives their Tlingit identity. Moreover, contemporary literature adds to the inquiry about how younger Tlingit experience cultural change. As a result, I discovered that the narrative is not always fixed in a traditional format; narratives can be found within the genres of poetry, essays, and short stories. Also, many Tlingit writers are not published in a single-author book, but one finds bits of their writings sprinkled across multiple anthologies or journals. Finally, there are those writers who publish material drawing upon oral traditions. From that perspective, a discussion on literature written about or by the Tlingit is incomplete without examining the relevance of oral traditions.

In addition, the inclusion of non-traditional literature in the form of government documents and maps is an important component of this study. For many tribal governments, mapping has become a popular method for contemporary ethnological research. Researching place names within Tlingit *aani* results in impressive maps depicting detailed place names and linking them with oral traditions, subsistence

activities, and specific clans. When studied, these maps provide an insight into a relationship to the landscape.

For the Tlingit, an inquiry into literature is a journey towards understanding the self. Several participants in this study have undertaken a similar investigation. Such an inquiry, however, does not come without internal conflicts. Some of the issues that arise are racism, assimilation, abuse, alcoholism, and cultural genocide. Internal conflicts can also occur while researching government documents and historical references because these documents describe history from a Western perspective. Frequently, the errors are interpreted as racism, and the gaps in history and literature can be problematic in reaching an understating of one's self in relationship to how he or she fits into Tlingit society. This is especially so for a Tlingit person who resides in a community or household that suppresses a portion of their identity. Yet, despite these difficulties, historical perspectives are of interest in how one's ancestors or grandparents lived in comparison to contemporary Tlingit society. Often, ceremonial conduct, taboos, language, traditional education, and spiritual beliefs are examined. Many of these inquiries lead to a new awareness of 'self.' For example, in 2004 a couple recreated a traditional Tlingit marriage ceremony, based upon what some elders remembered in addition to searching through old documents and scholarly works to find mention of traditional practices. This resulted in the first traditional Tlingit marriage ceremony held in Southeast Alaska in many generations.

Thus, the inquiry into what has been researched about the Tlingit contributes to an understanding of Tlingit identity. As I examined each work of literature, I sought to

understand whose perspective was presented, in addition to whether or not the voice of the persons/informants was acknowledged. For indigenous peoples, an important aspects of self-determination is the ability to conduct research with a voice that is distinctly their own. Accordingly, the narrative format allows Tlingit participants to say, “*Haa Tlingit Sateeyí*, we who are Tlingit, this is who I am,” rather than tolerate a definition by means of an etic methodology.

### *Ethnographic studies*

#### *Dated perspectives*

Ethnographic studies provide focused areas of inquiry regarding the lives of the Tlingit. Erna Gunther translated a study by Aurel Krause that was subsequently published as *The Tlingit Indians* (Krause, 1956). Until its publication in English by the University of Washington Press, this book was largely unavailable to Tlingit because it was originally written in German under the title *Die Tlinkit-Indianer*. The research was a result of an expedition for the Geographical Society of Bremen ranging from 1878 in the Chukchi region of Northwest Alaska to 1881 in Southeastern Alaska. The first place that they landed in Southeast Alaska was my own birthplace of Wrangell. There they recount missionary efforts, including the perception that one cannot be a Christian and still participate in cultural activities. This theme is prevalent throughout the older texts and is still problematic for many Tlingits today. Themes such as what constitutes ‘civilized’ underlie much of the text. One example discusses cleanliness habits and another describes the missionary efforts at civilizing the Tlingit. Eventually, Krause

makes the connection that cultivating potatoes is a sign of moving towards civilization (p. 231). The bulk of Krause's work, however, occurred in the village of Klukwan in the upper region of Southeast Alaska. Throughout his research, the outsider's perspective shapes his interpretation. What did he see and how did he interpret it? And how is a Tlingit to interpret these early ethnological perspectives in relationship to who he or she is today?

Another early study, *The Tlingit Indians* (2002) is the product of the 1888 work of ethnologist George Thornton Emmons. The study is an interpretation of data collected under the auspices of the American Museum of National History in New York. In 1991, nearly fifty years after Emmons's death, the study was finally published. Anthropologist Frederica de Laguna, assigned the task of editor, interpreted Emmons' notes, including the Tlingit worldview. Early on de Laguna realized the enormity of this task. Importantly, she adds other ethnological data from other sources including early explorers and researchers such as Von Kotzebue (1830), Lisiansky (1814), and Krause (1885). Despite its voluminous nature, lacking therein is the narrative providing credibility from a Native perspective for understanding the concept of landscape through the Tlingit worldview. It is one matter to acquire stories and information from Tlingit 'informants', and yet another to interpret that information without any input from the original Tlingit participants.

Ignoring the Tlingit worldview is typical of early studies. For example, early observers claimed the 'function' of the Tlingit memorial party, the *koo.eex*' is an economic one. This myth is perpetuated in study after study, with no one questioning

the myth until Kan and the Dauenhauers in recent years. As Sergei Kan (1989) points out in his book on the memorial potlatch, “Unfortunately, they [scholars] approached the ritual with already formed theoretical ideas about its ‘function’ and meaning, ignoring the native view of the potlatch and of other death rituals” (p.1). Thus, researchers must include an awareness of their preconceived notions. Reading contemporary works from the Tlingit perspective first, and then moving to older books and ethnological studies provides the first step towards decolonizing one’s worldview.

*The Social Conditions, Beliefs, and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* by John R. Swanton (1904) was based on observations collected during two months of field study. Swanton’s task was to collect Tlingit myths as part of a collection of stories from the Northwest coast for the Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology. An interesting feature of his report is the plates containing illustrations and explanations of face painting. In the text, Swanton explained which clan owned the particular patterns, the colors, and the meanings behind the names. This practice is still used today. After studying the plates, the impression is that the landscape is literally displayed on the faces as an aspect of Tlingit identity. Although the 1904 report is brief, Swanton’s account of social customs and clan emblems provides a juncture for his larger volume, *Tlingit Myths and Texts* (1909). Each of Swanton’s books has its place in home libraries, although the volume on social beliefs is less widely known than his popular book on Tlingit oral traditions.

Kalervo Oberg’s (1973) *The Social Economy of the Tlingit Indians*, published by the University of Washington Press in 1933, is the result of his doctoral dissertation.

Oberg's primary focus is on economics of the Tlingit: the annual cycle of production, organization of labor, distribution of wealth, trade, and consumption of wealth. From this perspective, it is worth studying. However, his interpretations are presented from an outsider's viewpoint, and many errors accrue as a result. Oberg claims that, in the Tlingit culture, the family has little unity and undermines the role of grandparents in Tlingit society (p. 24). Interestingly, he does not mention the importance of *at.óow*, or property, when discussing the role of the potlatch, one of the most important aspects of Tlingit worldview as described by participants in this study. Moreover, as with other studies, Oberg perpetuates the anthropological myth of the purpose of the potlatch being one that elevates totem crests and the status of the hosts. For Tlingit, this interpretation is confusing, especially for those who actively participate in the *koo.éex'*, or potlatch. This is not the reality in contemporary Tlingit society.

The search for what *was* practiced in relation to what *is* practiced is now dependent upon when the study was completed. Oberg's study, undertaken in 1933, relied heavily upon historical interpretations citing many texts as truths. He writes, "In 1867, the United States bought Alaska from the Russians for \$6,500,000, and established its military and legal machinery there. The Tlingit, however, were little affected by these changes" (p. 5). Despite his claim, from the Tlingit perspective, there were dramatic changes under American military rule (see Case, 1984; N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1987, 1990, 1994; Haycox & Mangusso, 1996, & Haycox, 2002). Some families' oral traditions include stories about relatives crying on the day that Alaska was 'purchased' from Russia. In 1869, the Kake villages were destroyed and in the same

year the Tlingit village located on Wrangell Island was shelled. Then, in 1882, the U.S. military bombarded the community of Angoon, resulting in deaths and the destruction of food stores. Throughout this era, the American military ruled with an 'iron hand.' Communities in Southeastern Alaska have a long history of struggles between the military and the Tlingit during post-Russian 'military rule.'

Despite this, ethnographic studies more than 50-years old are still relied upon for information. Frederica de Laguna's (1972) extensive monograph on Yakutat, *Under Mount Saint Elias: The History and Culture of the Yakutat Tlingit*, is one such study. This monograph is termed a Museum Study as the Smithsonian Institution funded de Laguna's work. Frederica de Laguna gathered the data for this study in 1949 and 1952-54. She includes narrative accounts of myths, legends, and memories. De Laguna mentions the storytellers' names as well as their clan affiliation. Interestingly, one of the outcomes of reviewing these studies today is that, when the informants are named by de Laguna, they are often remembered by current elders as related to themselves or someone who the inquirer is associated with. Often, the Tlingit names mentioned in the older studies have been bestowed upon a person from the next generation, someone familiar or related to the reader. For example, Kadashan was the Lingít name of an 'informant' in Swanton's *Tlingit Myths and Texts* (1909) and is also the Lingít name of a contemporary author from Yakutat. From my own experience, in Swanton's book I came across my daughter's Lingít name, once held by a man from Klawock in southern Southeastern Alaska. Thus, the names and the places mentioned in the older ethnographic studies are still connected to contemporary Tlingit families and

communities. Studies such as de Laguna's have long-reaching effects, as critiques regarding de Laguna's 'informants' are still whispered in certain social circles. At a documentary film showing that I attended about a reunion between de Laguna and the people of Yakutat, a man from that area informed me that some Yakutat residents believe that de Laguna's informants were not accurate with their information. In addition, for whatever reason, some resent the study altogether, not wanting the information to be included in a form that is available to the public.

Frederica de Laguna also contributed another work to the field of Tlingit literature: *The Story of A Tlingit Community: A Problem in the Relationship Between Archeological, Ethnological, and Historical Methods* (1960). The data in this study was collected over a period of two summers in 1949 and 1950. The first summer was spent investigating the communities in which she would conduct the study. The goal of the study was to incorporate several disciplines: archeology, ethnography, and acculturation studies. She visited Yakutat, Angoon, and the Chilkat-Chilkoot (Haines, Klukwan) regions before finally settling on Angoon, assisted by Lloyd R. Collins, Francis A. Riddell, and Catherine McClellan. The book relies heavily upon *Swanton's Myths and Texts* (1909) and other accounts of the historical record. Such research is very much dependent upon the accuracy or inaccuracy of previous research, which then influences how history is interpreted in the future. De Laguna (1960) assumed that Tlingits who were college graduates, teachers, town officials, and even commercial fishermen, were estranged from their clan heritage and traditional values. Even in 1950, her conclusion was that those who adopted the Whiteman's world, i.e., jobs and education, could not



adhere to an ancestral worldview. In contrast, the ancestral worldview continues to be evident within the contemporary perspectives of Tlingit writers as well as the participants in this study.

Another ethnographic study by Catherine McClellan concerns the Inland Tlingit, *My Old People Say: An Ethnographic Survey of Southern Yukon Territory* (1975). The fieldwork was conducted during the years 1948-1950 in the Southern Yukon Territory of Canada among the Tlingit, Tagish, and Southern Tutchone. This fieldwork resulted in a two-volume ethnography and a monograph on oral narratives, which together created a baseline for current anthropological research in Yukon Canada. Through this ethnographic study, one can make comparisons between the cultural changes experienced in Alaska and those in the Yukon.

Several less available studies on the Tlingit offer insight into traditional clan life: *A Study of the Thlingets of Alaska* by Livingston Jones published in 1914 and R.L. Olson's (1967) *Social Structure and Social Life of the Tlingit in Alaska*, an unpublished but widely cited PhD dissertation from the University of California. Because the clan structure is still vital in the lives of contemporary Tlingit's, knowledge about clan respect, protocols, *at.óow*, and oral traditions is vital to the understanding of the clan-self (social self). Understanding the social self begins with a reflection on earlier ethnographic studies that describe the clan structure that is the basis for the Tlingit worldview.

*Contemporary ethnographic studies*

Ethnographic studies provide insight into how ancestors viewed the Tlingit person in relation to the landscape. *Symbolic Immortality: The Tlingit Potlatch of the Nineteenth Century* by Sergei Kan (1982) is a comprehensive study on the memorial potlatch. Sergei Kan's dissertation, eventually published as the book *Symbolic Immortality*, points out that traditional rituals and beliefs are still practiced in the Tlingit culture but not accessible by outsiders: "... it became clear to me that many indigenous, pre-Christian beliefs and rituals were alive and well, but hidden from outsiders..." (p.2). Kan understood that many Tlingit rituals are indeed alive and well, although not openly talked about. The *koo.eex*' the subject of Kan's study is not readily available for outside scrutiny, yet it has been studied by outsiders from various perspectives.

Importantly, the cultural landscape of the Tlingit is revealed in *koo.eex*', the Tlingit name for the memorial potlatch. Kan illustrates the Tlingit view of death and the concept of the real human being. Tlingit views of the human being consist of a many-layered identity: the skin, bones, and spiritual, all depicting the body as the center of the universe (1982, p. 49). Thus, the care of body, mind, and spirit become an important aspect of Tlingit identity. The social person is at the center of the ancestral relationship. Terms such as *Shagoon*, *Shuka*, and *at.óow* become important aspects of Tlingit knowledge. Death is a part of the life-cycle, including the funeral potlatch. Thus, death in itself does not end the identity of the person who has passed on. A person is unfinished until the memorial party is completed (1982, p. 181). Ancestral heritage is a central aspect of Tlingit identity (1982, p. 65), with the clan being at the center of this

relationship fulfilling its role in the social being of the Tlingit person. The foundation is the ancestors. The clan-centered role is most evident during the *koo.eex*’ when a formal expression of grief is enacted. During this ceremony, the Tlingit shares his or her social being with other members of their clan, facilitating the healing process through their opposites (1982, p. 149). And yet, even after the memorial, the deceased’s social identity continues through the use of *at.óow*, conferring names and knowing one’s lineage. Thus, the ancestral relationship is maintained. For those researchers who study the *koo.eex*’, change is evident through participation in a contemporary *koo.eex*’ and comparing that experience to historical and ethnological studies.

Kan’s (1982) study also explains how politics and ritual are interrelated, “how competition and hierarchy and quality...are related to each other” (p. 250). They are not opposing forces that cannot be resolved, since they are an aspect of the Tlingit concept of balance. From a non-indigenous perspective, death rituals do not deny the finality of human life, and neither are rituals ‘symbolic’ (Kan, 1982). The concept that the identity of the Tlingit person is embodied in their crest and that the life of our ancestors is still apparent, particularly during ceremonies (Kan, 1982). Yet, for some, this is a reality—not simply a ‘feeling’ as Kan suggests. He acknowledges that, “The Tlingit peoples still control their own destiny...the potlatch continues to link the past to the present” (p. 301). To the extent that much of the literature about the Tlingit is written from the etic perspective, indigenous ‘reality’ often becomes ‘symbolic’ through the act of outside research.

Ethnological studies can help us to understand the relationships between and among peoples: The Tlingit and the Haida, the interior Tlingits and coastal Tlingits, clan splits, and clan migrations. For example, the book, *Gágiwádu.át: Brought Forth to Reconfirm The Legacy of a Taku River Tlingit Clan* (1993) by Elizabeth Nyman and Jeff Leer, is based on six narratives told by Tlingit elder Elizabeth Nyman. The narratives include oral traditions, historical stories and remembrances, maps, photos, and an index to personal and place names. Again, the inclusion of maps links the people and their stories to the landscape.

Thomas Thornton's *Being and Place among the Tlingit* (2007b). Thornton's work is important to the discourse about Tlingit and the relationship to the landscape. Tlingit tradition bearer and Sitka elder Herman Kitka provides the narrative in Thornton's research. Thornton's work demonstrates that there is a new interest in the subject of place, as he analyzes the sense of being in a particular landscape by exploring mostly elders' relationships to the land through subsistence use, stories, and language. Although I am similarly interested in how the elders, as teachers, view the landscape, the participants in this study are younger; thus, I examine how the ancestral relationship to the landscape has changed and in what ways has it remained the same.

In reviewing the literature by and about the Tlingit, the first litmus test for me is to ask if I would use this particular literature to teach my children about themselves and their Tlingit culture. Many such studies, for example Nyman & Leer (1993), Thornton (2007b, 2007c), Kan (1982), pass this scrutiny because of their significant focus on the Tlingit culture. The Tlingit have known all along the results of these studies, yet the

interpretation of the studies could possibly differ. In addition, it is important to remember that just because the information is published in a book does not mean that the knowledge or the ‘discovery’ is new. Unfortunately, many such studies do not bring about change, but only lead to further studies. The National Park system and the State and Federal subsistence entities create study after study related to traditional use of the land and resources. As the papers pile up, the relationships to the landscape changes because of the inability to use those places in a traditional manner. This is one of the problems with government- and university-funded studies, pointed out by Johanna Dybdal, President of Hoonah Indian Association, at an Alaska Native Science Commission meeting:

One of the concerns I have is that in the community of Hoonah, for one reason or another, we are inundated [with] many studies that need to be done before we can get regulations changed...I think that’s a real problem. So there is a real duplication of information.” (Alaska Native Science Commission, 2005, p. 12)

Who then is benefiting from the studies? For example, if I read yet another study on the failure of the public schools to teach Native students, i.e., the statistical data documenting drop out rates, how do I interpret that information: anger, frustration or indifference? It causes me to recall the day that the high school principal informed my daughter that she would not succeed in college because she was from a Native family.

How one interprets literature, government documents, and research studies, is dependent upon the reader’s own paradigms. Joyce Walton Shales’ (1998) unpublished dissertation, *Rudolph Walton: One Tlingit Man’s Journey Through Stormy Seas, Sitka,*

*Alaska, 1867-1951* is about her grandfather Rudolf Walton. It is an important look into Alaska history and the changes that the Tlingit experienced in the last century. As Shales discovered during her research, “Much of what I found in my research was offensive and appalling. But I also found things that surprised me and were positive.” (1998, p. 4). Shales stresses that “the researcher must avoid the imposition of modern thought patterns on an earlier era,” a concept described in theory as “presentism” (1998, p.12). Presentism is a method of analyzing history from a modern perspective. However, this is not entirely possible because the researcher cannot be totally removed from his or her research.

Shales’ work depicts a ‘change of consciousness’ on the part of her grandfather, Rudolf Walton, as well as other Tlingits, who were faced with overwhelming change during a short period of time (1998, p. 59). This transformation is illustrated by a ‘break with the past’ including suppression of tribal and land identity. Thus, the changes evolved quickly to conclude in a modified perception of how the relationships to the ancestral landscape were viewed, or ceremoniously acted upon. Shales calls this historical period in Tlingit history “survival time”, a term most aptly named due to the difficult choices faced by most of the Tlingit population (1998, p. ii). Thus, as Shales argues, the social choices were connected to larger issues in both Alaska and the rest of the United States. My argument is that Tlingit identity is linked to these larger issues as well. The changes in the larger society ultimately influence how one views oneself in relation to tribal and individual identity. The Tlingit are tribal peoples, exhibiting a social identity connecting them to their ancestors; nevertheless, that relationship

changed with encroachment of the American ideal: the individualistic and capitalistic society. Thus, analyzing the social context is a means of understanding the Tlingit relationship to the landscape.

One cannot conduct a study of the ancestral relationship to the landscape without positioning place in a social context. Place, in itself, is a setting for social activities, whether it be a traditional healing ceremony or hunting or fishing activity. In her dialogues with Tlingit/Tagish Elder Angela Sidney in *The Social Life of Stories*, Julie Cruickshank (1998) points out that Mrs. Sidney emphasized that her role was not only as a teller of stories but also as a teacher. She put the stories into the social context of the here-and-now while relating them to the past:

Her narrative is as much about social transformation of the society she lives in as it is about individual creativity. Her point is that oral tradition may tell us about the past, but its meanings are not exhausted with reference to the past. Good stories from the past continue to provide legitimate insights about contemporary events. (p. 43)

The importance of the oral traditions as related to identity is of utmost importance because stories, both in the mythical (distant time) or historical time, occur in a specific place. The narratives Cruickshank collected provide frameworks for the women to refer to in adding another dimension for further discussion. Also, the researcher was told a traditional story in its entirety, and thus, in subsequent interviews, the story was never repeated at length but only briefly or alluded to because there was an understanding that the information had already been conveyed. "...Our conversations were able to build on

that shared knowledge” (p. 28). Thus, shared knowledge becomes an intimate part of the research process. Similarly, shared knowledge through the written medium is capable of developing a sense of intimacy or connection with the people from the culture that is being conveyed.

Julie Cruikshank’s (1990) other collection of life stories of three Yukon Native women, Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith, and Annie Ned, is an example of how the oral traditions are interwoven into everyday lives. *In Life Lived Like a Story*, Cruickshank’s narrators tell about a relationship to the present and history, to ideas and experiences. They describe how the women are interconnected to those experiences, even when the experiences happened to his or her ancestors (p. ix). Angela Sidney explains that she is connected through *shagoon*, “First I’ll tell you our Shagoon, our family history. This is for our family to know” (Cruikshank, 1990, p. 37). Thus, she illustrates how everyday lives are stories; and the literature, whether oral or written, is known from within this worldview.

Today, any serious inquiry into Tlingit culture must begin with the three-volume series prepared by Nora and Richard Dauenhauer. *Haa Kusteeyí, Our Culture: Tlingit Life Stories* (1994) consists of life stories told in the third person through a selection of elders’ biographies, including a few autobiographical entries. *Haa Shuká, Our Ancestors: Tlingit Oral Narratives* (1987) is a collection of traditional stories, and *Haa Tuwanagú Yis, For Healing Our Spirit: Tlingit Oratory* (1990) is a compilation of Tlingit oratory conducted in ceremonies and public settings. All of these volumes include a Lingít translation of the English texts. N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer



(1990) claim, “By living example, the speeches are part of the transmission of culture from one generation to another and the communication of the human spirit from one state to another” (p.21). For the Tlingit, ancestral life and knowledge is not fixed in any particular time or place, as evident in the Tlingit concepts of *Shuká*, which means ‘ancestor’. In the Tlingit worldview, the ancestors are not relegated to the past, but are referred to as “those born ahead of who are now behind us, as well as those unborn who wait ahead of us” (1987, p.19) The Tlingit concept of ancestors is not someone from the past; the ancestral relationship to the landscape does not exist only in the past, but in the future as well through the *Shuká*.

An increased understanding of oratory, through the traditional stories or elders’ speeches, assists in addressing the social issues affecting contemporary Tlingit culture. One of the underlying afflictions is grief over separation from and loss of land. Dauenhauer’s (1994) point out that, under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), tribally owned areas were converted to the Western corporate model and most of these were for-profit entities. However, the corporate structure conflicts with the worldviews of most Alaska Natives. The reality of the corporate economic world changes subsistence into a commodity, as reflected in research participant Owen James’ narrative (see appendix D). The Dauenhauer’s (1994) assert that traditional Native values risk being replaced by a corporate culture. These recent interpretations on the effects of ANCSA and other federal and state legislation have created an awareness that perhaps ANCSA, although well intentioned, does not fit into the Alaska Native worldview. This becomes apparent when reading the elders’ perspectives. You begin to

understand their loss, their strengths, and the effects of the cultural changes that still influence their lives, as well as our own.

At the time of this study (2008), there is already a twenty-year gap between the present and the time that the Dauenhauer's collected the narratives included in their texts. Another substantial work such as this could take another ten years to collect, thus I realize that Tlingit oratory is a fleeting concept. Nevertheless, the role of these volumes in the lives of contemporary Tlingit culture cannot be underestimated, because the narratives and Tlingit oratory presented are an interpretation of Alaska history written from an Alaska Native perspective, which is a rare find.

#### *Related landscapes*

The Haida nation has lived among, and geographically near, the Tlingit for hundreds of years. Moreover, the Tlingit have intermarried among the Haida for many generations. As a result, the assimilation experiences of the Haida nation are similar to the experiences of the Tlingit nation. Therefore, a mention of Margaret Blackman's *During my Time: A Haida Woman* (1982) is essential. Blackman's study adds to the genre of literature about Northwest coast women in contemporary times. Recording life histories and personal narratives complements academic, museum, and governmental ethnographic studies. Blackman's account of the life of Florence Edenshaw is one of cultural change, "Though the feasts and potlatches have been altered in both form and content, the wealth orientation is very apparent..." (p. 139). At first, it seemed as if the rush to collect artifacts, including stories and myths, from Native American's was based

upon the concept of the ‘vanishing Indian.’ There was a belief that Natives would be either dead or fully assimilated to the point of not identifying oneself as ‘Native’ in the near future. Many decades later, we are still recording life histories, although not for the same reason. This need to collect life-stories parallels the memoir phenomenon in Western literature. Life-histories, or personal narratives, are enlightening and self-reflective. As Blackman points out “...life histories are increasingly being read and understood as texts that reveal the multiple ways in which people conceptualize, integrate, and present their lives to others” (p. xviii). Edenshaw’s narrative addresses assimilation for the reason that the lives of indigenous peoples continue to experience cultural change. Ultimately, as culture changes, so does one’s own experience. Thus, static indigenous cultures are a myth.

The historical perspective is not complete without comparing related peoples in the region of Southeast Alaska. *In Honor of Eyak: The Art of Anna Nelson Harry* (Harry & Krauss, 1982), edited by M. Krauss, combines a historical perspective in the structure of narrative and oral traditions. The words of Anna Nelson Harry are included with commentaries by Krauss including the history and decline of the Eyak people and language. Krauss recorded the oral traditions in Eyak and then translated them into English; both languages are represented. Each section has an introduction offering background and details on the stories. The Eyak people traditionally lived in the Gulf of Alaska near the communities of Yakutat and Cordova and their language, Eyak, is a branch of the Athabascan languages. Eyak was spoken in the 19th century from Yakutat along the Southcentral Alaska coast to Eyak at the Copper River Delta. Today there are

only about fifty remaining Eyak peoples and only one Native speaker of the Eyak language (who died in Jan. 2008). For the Tlingit scholar, the comparison between cultural contact and assimilation experiences of the Eyak and the Tlingit provides the opportunity to reflect upon what is occurring in contemporary Tlingit society in regards to acculturation and assimilation. For the Eyak people, grief over losing their language and aspects of their culture is very real. Poignantly, Anna describes this grief in *The Lament for Eyak*: “All alone here I’ll go around. Like Raven’s I’ll live alone. My aunts are dying off on me and alone I’ll be living” (p.155). How does one perceive a life, or his or her role in life, if he or she is the last speaker left in existence?

Although ethnographic studies provide diverse perspectives, more research is needed from the insider or emic worldview; therefore, Tlingit scholarship should be encouraged. The inclusion of narratives in this study is intended to enrich the inquiry into how contemporary Tlingits express their ancestral relationship to the landscape.

#### *Government and tribal research*

Many government and tribal documents provide a resource for understanding the Tlingit culture. The Goldschmidt and Haas (1998) report, “*Haa Aani, Our Land: Tlingit and Haida Land Rights and Use*,” was first published in 1946, 13 years prior to Alaska statehood, as a federal Indian land claims document. Although this report by the federal government clearly proves the relationship between the Tlingit and their subsistence lifestyle, it could not convince Alaska’s legislature that subsistence laws should include preference for Alaska Natives regardless of where he or she resided.

Republished in 1998 by Sealaska Heritage Foundation, the study has become one of significant cultural interest to Tlingits, rather than simply a government report documenting continuous traditional use. This interest occurs as well with other reports and studies originally intended as government data. Contemporary generations are taking interest in these documents, desiring to learn about land struggles and the relationships their parents and grandparents experienced with the ancestral landscape.

The Goldschmidt and Haas (1998) format conveys the foremost usage of “narrative” into a scientific study. The inclusion of narratives in “scientific” studies is becoming a popular methodology. The elders’ statements regarding customary and traditional uses on the land became essential to the Tlingit and Haida land settlement claims. The connections between the Tlingit and the land, their histories, social groups, and, more specifically, territorial claims, characterize these brief narratives. Because it is a government document, the interpretation about the ancestral relationships to place is left to the reader. For example, I noted that throughout the document the symbol of the smokehouse repeatedly defined ownership, a marker of usage. But from an ‘outsiders’ perspective one might not understand the ownership significance of the smokehouse symbol.

More recently, in 2005, the U.S. Forest Service, under the Dept. of Agriculture, published *Haa Atxaayí Haa Kusteeyíx Sitee; Our Food Is Our Tlingit Way of Life* (Newton & Moss, 2005). The interviews, collected in 1978, and only recently released for publication, led me to consider how many government studies are sitting idle awaiting an interest in publication. *Haa Atxaayí Haa Kusteeyíx Sitee* contains excerpts

from oral interviews regarding the food-gathering practices of the Tlingit. This type of work is useful for the preservation of subsistence practices. Such research simultaneously preserves traditional ecological knowledge and provides information about an older and less technological way of life. This book expounds detailed information about food acquisition and preparation as well as location. In using these texts to analyze the ancestral relationship to the landscape, I discovered that food is intimately connected to Tlingit identity. An elder told me once that her seal oil was her 'soul food.' Many elders who do not live near areas where seal are abundant or are unable to go out and get seal depend upon the younger generations and smaller communities such as Hoonah for their soul food. My own children, while at college, often pine being away for home. However, they described their longing in terms of food. They not only hunger for halibut and salmon but hunger for the activity that ensures they will get a fish to eat. The gathering of the food does not exist apart from eating the food.

A common factor I perceive among the works of Newton and Moss, as well as Goldschmidt and Haas, is that the publication date on these materials is new, but the data collected is over 20 years old and, in the case of the latter, beyond 50-years old. There is no contemporary documentation beyond the recent addition to the Goldschmidt and Haas report carried out by the Sitka Tribes, though the co-authorship is by the federal government. Information on clan territories and the relationship to subsistence lifestyle is documented in the *Final Report: Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Traditional Territories Report* by Sitka Tribe of Alaska and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service (2003). This report is an extension of the study conducted by Goldsmidt and Haas. The Sitka Tribes document contains the cultural and intellectual property of the Sitka Tribes, including elders' and tradition bearers' information regarding traditional subsistence use. The project was conducted for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife using GPS mapping technology. The study contains brief narratives concerning traditional clan territories and usage and is a valuable addition to the Goldsmidt and Haas report as well as documenting traditional ecological knowledge for the tribe. Traditional tribal boundaries, concepts of ownership, and subsistence relationship to place are discussed in the study. The framework for this study is based upon the concept of the ability of elders and tradition bearers to speak for themselves.

*The Hoonah Coastal Management Plan* (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, 2006) another government document, concerns the community of Hoonah. This plan provides short narratives about the importance of subsistence hunting and gathering, which is backed up by Western-style data. The plan is a cooperative endeavor between several government agencies, such as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) and the Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources. In the Hoonah study, I was able to analyze the number of pounds of deer meat per household. Significant amounts of food are harvested in Hoonah, noting that most households rely upon subsistence foods for their well-being. Statistically, one hunter/fisherman can provide food and traditional livelihood for many families, which is demonstrated by research participant Owen James. The Hoonah Coastal Management Plan connects the Tlingit with their ancestors through continued interaction with their landscape.

And, yet another study, *The Social Cultural Effects of Tourism in Hoonah, Alaska* by Lee K. Cervený and funded by the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station, provided an in-depth examination on the affects of tourism in a contemporary Tlingit village. The document, completed in October 2007, echoes contemporary Tlingits views on tourism from the perspective of Hoonah residents. Since I live in Hoonah, I find the comments familiar, echoing the struggles of implementing a tourism industry in a small, predominantly Tlingit village. When reading government documents, it is important to find out who funded the research and why, and inquire as to how many (and who) Tlingit were involved in the study. Was the role only as consultant or was there active participation in the gathering of data? And lastly, were there any elders consulted during this research?

Recommended further readings are the *Southeastern Alaska Regions Meeting Report* from the Alaska Native Science Commission (2005) funded by the National Science Foundation. These scientific documents, especially the studies that include a form of Tlingit narrative, provide a contrast to earlier studies. Many of these people lived the subsistence lifestyle in my generation. Interestingly, the voices and perspectives on the subsistence lifestyle have changed in only one generation. As well, depending on where the study was conducted, the differences are apparent. I compared how a person from Hoonah was living in the 1970s with how I was living in Wrangell during that same time period. Importantly, I discovered that the relationship to our subsistence foods and the relationship to the ancestral landscape are inherently linked to the well-being of the Tlingit family.



*Alaska history: Whose perspective?*

During my attendance at a high school in Southeast Alaska in the 1970s, no Alaska history course was required to graduate. Fortunately, I was among the first of a handful of students to test an innovative idea: teach Alaska history to high school students. The Alaska history course was offered as an elective, therefore only a half dozen kids eventually enrolled in the class. The instructor began our instruction with Russian history, disregarding history from a Tlingit perspective. A generation later, my children were taught in the same manner. While growing up in Wrangell, the community boasted about being the only city in Alaska governed by three nations and under three flags: Russia, Britain, and the United States, although in 2008, this information was corrected to read that Wrangell was governed under four nations, including the Tlingit nation. However, tour guides still refer to Wrangell as being the only White-founded community in Southeast. The claim is that there were not native people living there prior to non-native inhabitants. A tour guide once claimed that the eight thousand year old petroglyphs near downtown could be made by 'anyone', even a non-native who wasn't related to the Tlingit (anonymous personal communication). I learned later, through my own studies, that the Naanyaayí, a prominent clan in Wrangell, resided in a village near what is now called Shoemaker Bay located on the land once used by the boarding school, the Wrangell Institute. This village site pre-dates non-native settlement at the head of the other bay on the north end of the island. In

addition, there were other Tlingit settlements on Wrangell Island, the mainland, and the back channel.

Books on Alaska history fill the shelves in bookstores, yet their larger size hinders visitors' purchases. *An Alaskan Anthology: Interpreting the Past* (1996) edited by Stephen W. Haycox and Mary Childers Mangusso is one of the more comprehensive volumes on Alaska history. Covered in Haycox and Mangusso is the Tongass Timber Act, education, Jim Crow, The New Deal, Project Chariot, and Alaska statehood. The essay format in this text reads better than a linear progression style found in older history textbooks. Other historical perspectives worth noting are: *Anooshi Lingít Aani Ka, Russians In Tlingit America: The Battles of Sitka, 1802-1804* (Black, N. Dauenhauer, & R. Dauenhauer, 2007); *Alaska: An American Colony* by Stephen Haycox (2002); and *Alaska: A History of the 49<sup>th</sup> State* by Naske and Slotnick (1994). In addition, there are McClanahan (2002), Dombrowski (2001), Case (1984), Hinkley (1982), DeArmond (1978, 1990), Gruening (1954, 1966, 1967), Getches (1977), Grinev (2005) and Grinnell (2007). Moreover, annotated bibliographies provide a stepping off point: Falk (1995); Valerian (1998); and Kan (Hope & Thornton, 2000a). In reviewing all these resources, however, only a few provide an Alaska Native viewpoint.

*The missionary perspective*

As I examined the historical documents, I discovered that many of the ethnographic studies display the missionary perspective. Books written by missionaries to Alaska are worth exploring due to insights into the events that affect contemporary Tlingit society. The participants in this study are influenced by the boarding school generation, a direct result of missionary education in Alaska. There are several major problems with these accounts: one is that there is an impression that the missionary perspective is 'historical,' thus containing accurate accounts. Second, the influence of churches is still being felt in Alaska today. The Dauenhauer's (1987, 1990, 1994) discuss these complex issues in their books. So does Dombrowski (2001) in *Against Culture: Development, Politics, and Religion in Indian Alaska*. Although the latter book is not from the missionary perspective, it discusses three villages in Alaska, Hoonah, Hydaburg, and Kake, describing the contemporary effects due to a clash of worldviews. Dombrowski writes, "In the Autumn of 1992, ...several converts of a native led Pentecostal church started a bonfire of 'non-Christian' items..." (p.1).

Another perspective on the Christian influence in Alaska is from Sergei Kan in *Memory Eternal: Tlingit Culture and Russian Orthodox Christianity through Two Centuries* (1999). This book illustrates the Tlingit's experiences with the Russian Orthodox Church in the late 1700s. Kan analyzes history through exploring the relationships between the Church and the Tlingit worldview, including the colonization of Alaska. Kan addresses the question of why there are a significant number of Tlingits who attend the Russian Orthodox Church. A perspective on the missionary influence

facilitates understanding the agents of historical change in Tlingit society. In fact, most of these missionary resources can be viewed from the perspective of change.

Those who served as missionaries and teachers to Alaska formed their opinions of the Tlingit because of direct contact, and those opinions were filtered through the times they lived in. Territorial Governor John Brady originally arrived in Alaska as a missionary. His life is portrayed in *Alaskan John G. Brady: Missionary, Judge and Governor, 1878-1918* (Hinckley, 1982). Also, the life of Saint Innocent of the Russian Orthodox Church is depicted in: *Saint Innocent of Alaska: Apostle and Missionary* (Cowie, 2005); Kamenskii's *Tlingit Indians of Alaska* (1906); and the missionary experiences described by Michael Oleska, *Orthodox Alaska: A Theology of Mission* (1993). Missionaries Carrie and Eugene Willard spent time in Wrangell, Sitka, and eventually settled in Haines. Carrie Willard's letters home are the source of the book *Among the Tlingits: The Letters of 1881-1883*. The Salvation Army's influence in Alaska is portrayed in *A Century of Service in Alaska, 1898-1998: the Story & Saga of the Salvation Army in "the Last Frontier"* (Gariepy, 1998). S. Hall Young (1915, 1927) wrote two accounts of his life in Alaska. In addition, numerous books and papers on the life of Sheldon Jackson include *Alaska, and Missions on the North Pacific Coast* (1880), *Sheldon Jackson the Collector* (Carlton, 1992), as well as Lazell (1960), Yaw (1985), Tower (1998), Stewart (2006) and Faris (2006).

Moreover, in the early years of territorial Alaska, teachers often served dual roles as missionary and teacher. One of the first and most racist is O.M. Salisbury documented who wrote the book *Quoth the Raven: A Little Journey into the Primitive*

(1962). Salisbury was a teacher who came to Alaska and taught in Klawock in the 1920s. It is common for teachers to Alaska to arrive in the smaller villages to teach for a couple of years and then leave. There are numerous books written for children by these same teachers, all providing an outsider's perspective of Native culture. There appears to be a continued perception of the need to 'save' the Alaskan Native, though the early missionary influx and influence has been replaced for the most part by professional educators.

Despite some of the racist ideologies and colonial attitudes, a look through the works by missionaries to Alaska provides a basis for understanding how racism affected the lives of the Tlingit.

#### *Mapping through the ancestral landscape*

One of the rewarding aspects to studying the Lingít language is that when you learn a new word, or are able to dissect a word linguistically and then relate it to a particular place, the word takes on a new cultural dimension. A renewed interest in Tlingit place names and maps opens up this possibility. Ethnographic studies provide an excellent resource for Tlingit peoples' inquiries. There is a current popular trend towards recording traditional place names, and place name maps take on a new role in the search for identity.

The results of *The Southeast Native Subsistence Commission Place Names Project* (Thornton, 2002) can be found on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network website ([www.ankn.uaf.edu](http://www.ankn.uaf.edu)). This project was primarily government and tribally

funded by several agencies, including a National Park Service Heritage Preservation Grant, the Sealaska Heritage Foundation, the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative, Ecotrust, and the Sitka Tribes of Alaska. Sitka Area Native place names provide the user with nearly 400 traditional Tlingit names for geographic features within the Sheet'Ka Kwáan's territory. This project began in 1979 by Charlie Joseph and was completed in 2001. Preparation of the map was a collaboration between Sitka Tribes of Alaska and the Southeast Native Subsistence Commission (SENSC). A goal that began in 1999, their purpose was to collect additional place names including cultural information pertaining to the Sitka region. The information was then deposited into a database and mapped by means of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software.

For many Tlingit, the concept of a two dimensional map does not capture their ancestral landscape. De Laguna (1960) states:

The land also has special places or regions of particular significance derived from the myths, legends, and histories associated with them, modified or overlaid for each individual by his sib affiliation and by the personal experience of himself and his family. (p. 20)

For the Tlingit culture, there are many layers of names, stories, subsistence foods, ancestors, etc., all connected to the ancestral map.

Another map project, *The Tlingit Country map* (Hope, A., n.d.) depicts clan and house locations and names circa the late nineteenth century. The map was compiled using many resources, both published and unpublished. It was supported by Sealaska Heritage Foundation, Alaska Federation of Natives, Sitka Tribes of Alaska, the National

Science Foundation, and the University of Alaska Fairbanks, among others. Through the use of place name maps, language is learned, including relationships to place, people, stories and foods. For Thomas Thornton, working on the maps “helped me see how Angoon Deisheetaan Tlingits connect their regalia and crests to personal and social identity and how the threads of Tlingit identity always lead back to the land” (Hope, 1999). This connection is the most important aspect of researching tribal identity with the new media and the interactive place names maps. Importantly, the dissemination of Tlingit knowledge and worldviews are crucial to maintain a sense of Tlingit identity in a changing society.

In an article by Thomas F. Thornton, *Know Your Place: The Organization of Tlingit Geographical Knowledge in Ethnology* (1997). He claims that “to be born Tlingit means to be placed in a sociogeographic web of relations indexed by geographical names” (p. 295). Thornton’s analysis of how geographic names form an essential part of Tlingit social being draws the conclusion to the intimate connections between place and person. Thus, the ancestral relationships to locations inhabited by the Tlingit, even today, are important means of understanding oneself in relation to the community at large. The knowledge gained from investigating place names maps then points the inquirer to specific locations where stories, people, and habitats come alive. It becomes a living multi-dimensional map, one that is cognitive, not paper.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks’ Project Jukebox (Schneider, 1981) incorporates ethnographic community study as part of their oral history program. The project includes cultural atlases and audio-files, based on recordings of local elders and

tradition bearers. One of interest to the Tlingit is the Dry Bay Jukebox project. The Dry Bay Project is a collaboration between the traditional clans of Dry Bay, the National Park Service (NPS), the National Forest Service (NFS), and the University of Alaska Oral History Office. The project includes interviews, maps, and oral traditions. The internet opens up a completely new world of exploration. More and more is being published about the Tlingit on the internet: oral traditions such as Raven and the Art, Raven and the Whale, and stories from the Boulder House and the Frog House; and maps, such as the Lituya Bay map with place names in the Lingít language. Again, the relationships between the landscapes and the maps are drawn between the language, oral traditions, and the subsistence use of the land.

At the same web location, The Sitka Project Jukebox includes fourteen oral history interviews and photographs. The project provides an overview of the history of Sitka National Historical Park. Incorporated into this particular project is the perspective of meaning and place: how the landscape creates meaning for a community. The interviews consist of a diversity of Tlingit and non-native peoples, including T'akdeintaan weaver Teri Rofkar. Tlingit elders Ellen Hope-Hayes, Mark Jacobs Jr., Al Perkins, and Louis Menard are interviewed. Contemporaries include Dave Galanin, Tommy Joseph, and Louise Brady. The Tlingit use of the park is especially important since the park is evolving to co-management between the federal government and the local Tlingits. These interviews reflect the concept that the landscape shapes the community as much as the community shapes the landscape. Thus, maps that include narratives from the perspective of the Tlingit provide an in-depth look into the ancestral



relationships to the landscape. Language comes alive with meaning. Clan affiliation with the land is strengthened.

*The artist's journey*

Knowingly, the Tlingit artist searches for inspiration and tradition in a cultural context. Artists explore literature on Northwest coast formline, Chilkat and Raven's tail weaving, basketry, and carving methods. The Tlingit artist's journey is sometimes fraught with conflict over the concept of 'tradition'. The concept is inherently linked to Tlingit identity, i.e., how one perceives his or her tradition is related to how one perceives his or her identity. Aldona Jonaitis (2007) explains that contemporary Tlingit artists struggle with the expression of Tlingit identity. As Jonaitis points out, "For someone living in today's world, identity emerges within the commercialized, globalized world in which Native people are a minority" (2007, p. 9). Jonaitis, in *Five Contemporary Tlingit Artists*, explains the two basic methods used in analyzing Northwest Coast Art, which are the formal and iconographic formal, meaning how the art appears visually, and iconographic indicating what the artwork means (p. 1). For the Tlingit artist, the formal often links to the formline so predominantly identified with Northwest coast art. In addition, for the artist/inquirer, 'meaning' is connected to his or her identity. As Jonaitis suggests, contemporary artists are using art to portray their own identity through significant cultural change. Through this medium, not only have the great-grandparents and grandparents undergone rapid cultural change, today's young Tlingit are also living with cultural change. For the artist, what is considered

‘traditional’ is a term that is subjective. One can argue that button blankets, common regalia items, and beading were not considered traditional. However, both button blankets and beading are now recognized as ‘traditional’ art and crafts.

Interestingly, for some Tlingit, the recognition of art forms is an important aspect of their identity. It has become a marker of cultural competency. One should be able to recognize the difference between a formline eagle and a formline raven simply by the way the birds’ beak is formed. In addition, recognizing cross-hatching on the tail of an animal indicates the artwork is depicting a beaver. Basic identification of formline art produces a sense of accomplishment. One can recognize a person from his or her own clan at a large gathering such as Celebration, by means of the beaded or buttoned crest forms on the blankets, formal regalia, or play clothes (*koolyát kanaa.ádi*) worn by both participants and attendants.

For contemporary artists, such as Clarissa Hudson (2005) the writing of *Jennie Weaves an Apprentice* is in itself a narrative journey about how she came to understand her own identity as a T’akdeintaan clanswoman and a weaver and artist. Hudson, one of the participants in this study, reflects on her relationship to her ancestors through the art of weaving. In addition, her relationship to her Teacher, Jennie Thlunaut, is an interesting and self-revealing journey. Like many Tlingit, the search for identity is a re-orientation. Hudson reoriented herself to the landscape of her ancestors in order to overcome her ‘clumsiness” (p.45). As with Hudson, for some Tlingit artists, art is a form of medicine—a healing. In addition, the relationship between the ancestors, as reflected in the artists’ work, continues even as the art leaves the hands of the artist. For

the weaver, the relationship with the robe becomes a relationship with the person who is dancing in the robe.

The Tlingit weaver's journey also challenges non-natives who are expert weavers and teachers of the ancient weaving arts because the Tlingit artist brings their own 'inside' perspective, i.e., their own worldview. Cheryl Samuel, who is neither Tlingit nor Haida, authored two instructional books on Raven's Tail and Chilkat weaving: *The Raven's Tail* (1987), and *The Chilkat Dancing Blanket* (1990). Oral traditions, designs, and photos are included in both of Samuel's books. For the Tlingit scholar, the exploration of weaving opens up a new dimensional landscape; most notably are the patterns and their descriptions. For example, the echo-of-the-spirits-voice-of-the-tree-reflected-in-shadow "...endows all nature with spirit-life, which manifests itself in various ways" (p.22). The pattern descriptions reflect the Tlingit intimate relationship to the landscape. Simply by learning the names of the patterns one acquires a sense of the traditional knowledge of the Tlingit

Comparisons between older and newer publications on Tlingit art provides a view into traditional Tlingit knowledge, such as Francis Paul's (1944) *Spruce Root Basketry of the Alaska Tlingit* and a contemporary publication, *A Celebration of Weavers* (Dangel, 2006). Books on Northwest coast art also provide insight into traditional art and artists. As with the books on weaving, books on carving and formline design are popular though are not limited to artist inquiries. Bill Holm's *Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form* (1971) includes a historical background as well. For the Tlingit scholar or artists, the inquiry into Northwest Coast design is a source of

fascination. Symbolism blurs with realism and learning. To describe the Tlingit stylistic characteristics in art leads to a better understanding of one's own culture. Relationships between artist, medium, animals, and clan structure become apparent. Thus, the Tlingit artist is constantly exploring the relationships between the secular and the sacred art. This leads to questions regarding tribal identity. What crests can I use in my art? Who are the owners of these particular crests? What is traditional? Aldona Jonaitis (1986) argues that the tradition of Native arts continues to be shaped by contemporary society, and that first contact greatly affected Tlingit art including 'tourist art.' Traditional baskets were made smaller and labeled to suit the tourist trade. As well, carvers resorted to smaller carvings, including totem poles and plaques in order to make a living in the new cash society.

There is a set of popular 'tourist' books depicting a how-to of northwest coast art that are often the first step towards understanding Tlingit art. *Learning by Designing: Pacific Northwest Coast Native Indian Art* (Gilbert & Clark, 2001a) and *Learning by Doing: Northwest Coast Native Indian Art* (Gilbert & Clark, 2001b) continue to be popular items in bookstores that cater to tourists. I know Tlingit artists who have utilized these books prior to acquiring a mentor for instruction on formline drawing or traditional carving, familiarizing themselves with the language of Northwest coast art. And yet for others, a familiarity with the terms and styles means that he or she is comfortable discussing regalia, crests, or totem poles in traditional as well as contemporary art. In addition, a familiarity with Northwest coast art assists with identifying fraudulent or amateurish works. Subsequently, acquiring knowledge about

the basics of Northwest coast art, traditional and contemporary, he or she can link their knowledge with the knowledge of their ancestors.

The relationships between secular art and ceremonial art are depicted in Jonaitis' *Art of the Northern Tlingit* (1986). Understanding the ceremonial life of art is especially important to the Tlingit, since ceremony is where the concept of *at.óow* is fully expressed. Thus, Jonaitis draws a correlation between the secular/social world and the spiritual/ceremonial world. Sacred art, Jonaitis claims, is used by shaman. In the past, this was probably true, but today shamanic duties are often conducted by novices or people in fields that allow for shamanic-like expression. For example, drums or feathers, which could be categorized as 'secular' art are used in the *xaay* in healing sweat ceremonies and or in talking circles, which certainly have an element of sacred and spiritual nature. However, through use in modern healing ceremonies, items are transformed into the spiritual realm. As evident in the *koo.eex*', secular art has the opportunity to become 'sacred' through the element of sacrifice and protocol, i.e., it must be properly brought out at a *koo.eex*'. Yet, in some contemporary Tlingit families who do not practice the memorial parties, there are other ways of knowing that an art piece has become sacred. As an example, a blanket is commissioned, and then used in a healing ceremony. The healing is successful, thus the blanket takes on a new 'image' as one with healing properties. In addition, a drum is created explicitly for healing in an alcohol and drug center and it is used only for that purpose. The drum has then taken on a spiritual significance for those who use it. Thus, in contemporary times, the art is being created for inventive purposes. The art adapts along with the culture.

A great deal has been written on the subject of Northwest coast art over the past century that is worth exploring: Boas (1897, 1900, 1955), Emmons (1907, 1916, 1930), Keithahan (1962), Davis (1949), Gunther (1966), Holm (1971, 1972, 1983, 1987), Jonaitis (1986, 1988, 2006), Brown (1998, 2000), Shearer (2000), and Stewart, H. (1979). The list is lengthy but worth the journey because more and more contemporary works on Tlingit art are including ethnographic sketches. These sketches, along with the exploration of older art forms by contemporary artists, leads to the conclusion that there are a variety of self and tribal expressions. The perceptions of the Tlingit artist leads the researcher to a greater understanding of the Tlingit worldview. To illustrate this, I provide an interpretation worth noting, which was recounted to me about the origin of Northwest coast art. Chilkat weaver and artist Clarissa Hudson (2005) relates her theory of formline design as an expression of the artists' ancestral relationship to the landscape. The artist in her story is reflecting on his natural surroundings: the tide, the fire, the ocean, and sunset. He is considering the interrelatedness of the landscape when he begins to poke at a piece of wood in the fire with a stick:

The tip of the stick followed the grain, leaving a trail of charcoal following the lazy lines that he felt in his mind. He liked the fluid movement...he could see where lines widened, where they flowed in motion around one another. (p. 31)

Another artist informed me that the 'ovoid' shape came from the image left on an alder after it is cut for carving, or the smoke house. There is a definite oblong 'eye' shape where the branch once protruded from the trunk of the tree. In the artists' mind,

formline art directly relates to the landscape. The artist in her story remembers this poignant and self-discovering event as a “journey.” And so it is.

### *Contemporary Tlingit literature*

Contemporary Tlingit literature reflects current social conditions including loss of language and identity, values and beliefs. And, at the same time, it reflects what is being done to maintain Tlingit identity. Alaska Native writer John Smelcer states:

To read our literature is to learn who we are today, to understand where the past has left us, and to recognize the beauty and the horror of our lives as we live them desperately (at times) in the shadow of mainstream American culture.

(Seeds, 2002)

As the artists and their work are affected by cultural change, so is the Tlingit writer. Writing about the self is not new to the Tlingit. Today, Tlingit writers have overcome what is considered ‘traditional’ in the form of storytelling and oratory to write the memoir, essays, poetry, and scholarly works. The written word is proven a powerful venue for self and tribal expression. In *Reinventing the Enemy’s Language* (Harjo & Bird, 1997), an anthology of contemporary Native women authors, editors Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird talk profoundly about the importance of telling stories from the Native point of view.

But to speak, at whatever the cost, is to become empowered rather than victimized by destruction. In our tribal cultures, the power of language to heard, to regenerate, and to create is understood. These colonizers’ languages, which

often usurped our own tribal languages or diminished them, now have back emblems of our cultures, our own design; beadwork, quilts if you will. We've transformed these enemy languages." (p. 24)

*The Blonde Indian* by Ernestine Hayes (2006) is one such text. Hayes reinvents the way the English language, particularly the essay or narrative is formed. Traditional stories and remembrances are interwoven into the contemporary landscape. Hayes' narrative is organized around the concept of landscape: Retreating glacier, emerging forest, climax forest, and bog. In essence, the landscape shapes the story, weaving back-and-forth in time. The narrative provides the opportunity to study the complexities of growing up mixed-ancestry in a Southeast Alaska community in the midst of change. The narrative is an attempt to reconcile the loss of many cultural aspects of the Tlingit community as well as the narrator's own separation from place due to her living outside Alaska for a large portion of her adult life and returning home to a place she never spiritually left. This is a similar experience for several of the participants in this study who expressed their perspectives about being separated from their ancestral landscape. The addition of *The Blonde Indian* to the genre of Native American Women's literature, and Alaska Native literature especially, is significant encouragement to Native writers who desire to work in the genre of memoir. For Hayes, telling her own story, rather than having someone tell it for her, is a bold step culturally due to the Tlingit taboo about talking or bragging about oneself. One of the risks Tlingit authors face is the criticism of 'making money off the culture.' The written word, in the form of books, already carries status in the non-native world and this 'status' is beginning to evolve in the Tlingit community.



Nora Marks Dauenhauer's collection of poetry and prose, *The Droning Shaman* (1998) and *Life Woven with Song* (2000a), emerged six years prior to Ernestine Hayes's memoir. Dauenhauer, being an elder, also moved into the poetry/memoir genre with cultural risks. However, because of her previous publications with her husband, Richard Dauenhauer, and her accomplishments documenting oral traditions, language, and culture, Nora's 'risk' was more acceptable. The prose in N. Dauenhauer's books is about relationships to the landscape. N. Dauenhauer describes living a subsistence life during the 1920s when the fishing industry was undergoing rapid change. Through her writing, Dauenhauer takes on the role of witness to cultural change, one of the most important aspects of the memoir written by Tlingit. Both Hayes' and Dauenhauer's books are bearing witness to recent change since most readers can recall the changes in fishing and hunting regulations, the discovery of oil, the rise and fall of the logging industry, and the impacts of ANSCA and ANILCA. Not only does the prose illustrate cultural changes, but describes the resistance to the loss of language and landscape. In terms of Tlingit identity, for students of Tlingit literature and Tlingit, both Hayes' and Dauenhauer's books are an important contribution to a contemporary sense of self and place.

Another book to include is Andy Hope's (1982) *Raven's Bones*, a compilation of essays, poetry, and art by Hope, Sergei Kan, Simon Ortiz, Cecil Taylor, Mark Jacobs Jr. and Sr., and Robert Davis. Most of the contributors are Tlingit. The anthology format is the Hope's style (see *Will the Time Ever Come*, Hope & Thornton, 2000). The book is a discussion of Native traditions, towards the goal of developing a "...series of

well-made, moderately priced books...” Hope seems to have recognized that many of the larger and more expensive books were priced out of reach for the average person. Hope researched older ethnographic studies and texts in addition to Tlingit sources in order to “get some accurate, reliable information to them [young people] on the history of the region” (p. i). Through his investigation, Hope discovered the work of Louis Shotridge in the piece, *How Ats-ha Followed the Hide of His Comrade to Yéik Land*. Hope reiterates the importance of learning from Tlingit literature, “Those of us working to continue the cultural traditions of our people learn from the work of those that preceded us” (p. iv). In *Raven’s Bones*, Hope has, like Shotridge, ‘broke-ground’ for other Tlingit writers.

#### *Writing for a younger perspective*

Recent children’s and young adult books by Tlingit authors provide education for adults as well. Ishmael Hope and Dimi Macheras wrote and illustrated a comic book geared towards educating young people about Tlingit values. Ishmael, a professional storyteller, blends traditional storytelling with a contemporary medium and a mix of contemporary and traditional characters. The book, *Strong Man* (2007), is based upon an oral tradition about how strength came to a young man and he overcame adversity. Many of these books incorporate the elders instructing the youth about their heritage.

In addition, Sealaska Heritage Institute produced *Shanyaak’utlaax* (Marks, J., et al., 2004), the story of Salmon Boy. Often, the adult reader can use books geared towards a younger audience as tools. Other books geared towards children provide an

interesting means of educating adults: *Tlingit Coloring Book* by Tlingit elder Marie Olson (1998); *Tlingit curriculum resources* (Duncan, 1998); *Children of the Tlingit* (Staub, 1999); and *A Story to Tell: Traditions of a Tlingit Community* (Nichols, 1998); along with Brown & Coral (2006), McNutt, Osawa, & Dawson (1996), Munoz & Paul (1996), Steinbright (2007) and Belarde-Lewis (2005).

### *Outside landscapes*

Moving beyond the local region, a study of place through the human relationship to the landscape is found in Keith Basso's (1996) *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*. An investigation into diverse cultural landscapes outside of Tlingit *aaní* provides insight into the Tlingit culture. The ancestral landscape, for the Apache and the Tlingit exists in a social context, in the company of others who are experiencing the same sense of place (Basso, 1996). We make our places as we imagine them to be and in the case of oral traditions, which are linked to places, we then can visit or know those places through stories and experience. Citing the Western Apache model in Basso's works, the role of storytelling and narratives have "the power to establish enduring bonds with individuals and features of the natural landscape" (Basso, 1996, p. 40). This is accomplished through a variety of means including linking the place names to the people. The orator in the Tlingit culture is reciting place-names to give authenticity to the story. In an example from the Apache nation, Basso (1996) writes, ".on these occasions when Apache people see fit to speak with place-names, that vital part of their tribal heritage seems to speak to them as well "

(p. 101). Tribal heritage is reinforced by citing traditional place names within oratory. For the contemporary Tlingit writer, oratory provides a powerful means of instruction, e.g., learning the names, what they mean, where these places are, and remembering the oratory connected to the names. Basso's research among the Apache community reinforces the connection between landscape and a sense of identity. Similar to the Apache, a Tlingit sense of tribal self persists despite a changing community. Basso's work, although from an outside perspective, includes a focus on the use of language to sense the ancestral landscape, linking the oral traditions, traditional place names and people.

Importantly Basso suggests the importance of cultural metaphors. The oral traditions provide insight into the traditional knowledge of a people and their unique worldviews. Consequently, "grasping other people's metaphors requires ethnography as much as it does linguistics" (1996, p. 69). Learning the metaphors through language acquisition is an experience that connects one to the landscape and the people. Consequently, knowing the language gives the study and the researcher an insight into how Tlingit view their landscape.

### *Tourist literature*

I use the term "tourist literature" to describe the small books pervasive in gift shops throughout Alaska, books that are usually written by non-natives. One such book, a best seller aboard tourship gift shops and in tourist settings such as the National Parks system, is *Shamans and Kushtkaas* (Beck, 2002). Others popular tourist books include

*Heroes and Heroines in Tlingit and Haida Legend* (2000) by Marie Guido Beck, and *Native Ceremony and Myth on the Northwest Coast* (1993). These books are considered a 'grey area' in regards to Tlingit cultural and intellectual property rights; meaning that these books and other tourist books sometimes contain oral traditions that are the cultural property of a specific clan. Another problem with tourist-style books is when the authors use terms that describe the Tlingit culture as past tense, such as 'used to' and 'were', alluding to the idea that Tlingit do not participate actively in their traditional lifestyle. These false assumptions confuse young Tlingits who might not have access to elders or tradition bearers for accurate information. Some learners are surprised when they discover that Tlingits still practice their traditional lifestyle in a contemporary world when the books say otherwise. In addition, I have heard elders reprimand the younger generation for learning the wrong information; and from the elders I have heard terms such as "junk-garbage-lies" describing the tourist books on the market today. Another problem area in tourist books is taboo subjects. When a culture views a subject as taboo while the dominant culture finds the subject entertaining, the result is that the stories get published and often are aimed at younger or 'outside' audiences. *Shamans and Kushtakas* (Beck, 2002) talks as if a belief in the natural world and Tlingit spirituality is past tense. In addition, the subject of the *kóoshdaa káa*, the landotter man, is a taboo subject among many Tlingit.

The worst offense committed by tourist literature is the telling and re-telling of traditional stories in children's books when they are not considered children's stories. Another taboo is writing about clan-owned stories without permission of the proper clan

authority. Tlingit oratory is often told in a Western style mimicking fairy tales and turned into books for children, a popular addition to school curricula. The Dauenhauer's stress that, "Ultimately, in our opinion, these are forms of racism—whether the effort is to exclude or diminish..." (1990, xxvii). Many tourist books accomplish the same thing, diminishing the social context and sacredness of the stories.

Hancock, (2003), Olsen W. (2001), D. & N. Napier (1978), Halliday (1998), Ritter (1993), and Langdon (2002) all offer small publications that are popular with tourists and bookstores. All are written by non-natives about Native culture for a non-Native audience, including tourists. The source of the tourist books can originate from unlikely places and unlikely authors. As with many ethnographic studies, museums publish small books and pamphlets on the Tlingit, and these days they make an effort to be more accurate. *The Authentic History of Shakes Island and Clan* by E.L. Keithahn (1981) was produced by the Wrangell Historical Society and gives a good description of the Native heritage in that area, although the orthography is confusing.

In contrast, Lorie K. Harris (1985) writes in the *Tlingit Tales*, how her son was interning at a Native medical hospital in Southeast Alaska when he heard some of the oral traditions from an ailing elder. For Harris, the presumption was that the stories were unheard of before that occasion. Although she cites the person who told the stories, the implications of making herself the author creates serious cultural and intellectual property rights dilemmas in the Tlingit worldview. I mentioned a specific story from Harris' text, about the man who invited bears to a feast, to a tradition bearer

for that particular clan story, and he was dismayed that his clan's story was published in a book.

People still read John Muir (1915) and Robert Service (2006) as guides to understanding Alaska and Alaska Natives. The tourist industry has an effect upon the identity of Tlingit. For example, whether they are Tlingit or non-native, those working in the tour industry are taught to say specific points regarding culture and are often discouraged from telling the truth about history because it might create 'discomfort' for the tourist. This omission or dilution of facts spreads beyond the tourist industry into the local communities, thus perpetuating myths and stereotypes. Young Tlingit are exposed to local tourist jargon, such as the Wrangell tour guides boasting about being the first non-native settlement in Alaska. As well, Tlingit children grow up with attitudes that say you are not native because you do not carve, dance, bead, or know any traditional songs, or other 'identity-markers' that they learn from tourist books.

While researching tourist literature in Southeast Alaska bookstores, I discovered that quite often tourists balk at the idea of reading the lengthy volumes provided by the Dauenhauer's (1987, 1990, 1994). Instead, they purchase the smaller pocket books. One gift shop manager worked hard to convince the tourist patrons to purchase *Haa Shuka* but they were dissuaded because of the style of the book, i.e., the inclusion of the Tlingit language text, and the length of the book (anonymous personal conversation). The smaller, convenient to carry, and low-cost books make their way into classrooms around Alaska and elsewhere. Consequently, tourist books are sometimes included in a 'tourist

curriculum' (Reese, 1996). For the Tlingit, it is another instance of the dominant culture attempting to (re)form their identity:

The most serious problem with tourist curriculum is that it often perpetuates negative stereotypes and neglects to recognize the present-day existence of a culture. Invariably, children go away from these experiences believing that cultures such as those of American Indians existed only in the past. (Gutierrez-Gomez & Pauly, 2006).

For visitors to Alaska, tourist literature provides the first exposure to the Tlingit. Tourist literature and tourist curriculum has the potential, in the hands of uninformed teachers, to perpetuate another generation of Euro-centrism. In 2007, in a conversation I had with a first grade teacher in the Matanuska Valley in Alaska, the teacher relayed to me a perplexing experience in her classroom. The teacher had a student in her class who had recently moved from the lower-48 states, and the student informed the class that she didn't know any 'Indians' and proceeded to tell the class how the Indians lived in the woods and in teepees. The teacher promptly explained the tribes in the region and asked if there were any Alaska natives in class. One boy said that he was Athabascan, and in order to demonstrate to the new student that Alaska's Native peoples were still around, the teacher asked him if he lived in the woods, the boy said, "No I live in a house." Several other students, who were also Alaska Native, then participated in educating their fellow first grader about where they lived and who they were. The child had no idea there were any "Indians" sitting next to her. This incident illustrates how



stereotypes and the myth of the ‘vanishing Indian’ are still perpetuated in contemporary society.

### *Unique perspectives*

In a discussion of Tlingit literature, there is room for unique perspectives.

*Because we cherish you: Sealaska elders speak to the future* (Dauenhauer N. & Dauenhauer, R., 1980) is one such perspective. *We cherish you* is a fascinating look at Tlingit oratory and traditions, providing insight into the metaphors within the Tlingit culture with familiar and unfamiliar cultural terms, and concepts are described within their cultural context. Another book, *The Tides People* by Cyrus E. Peck (1975), is a narrative depicting Tlingit values and culture. Peck identifies himself with the land and the sea, “The sea is as much a part of me as the land...” (p. 2). Peck’s perspective re-defines himself as a result of acculturation and assimilation. Thus, Peck describes his assimilation experience as a state of ‘peaceful conflict.’ The American ideal of the ‘melting pot’ is the catalyst for Peck’s self-discovery. Tlingit values, law, and lifestyle are changing and his is in ‘revolt.’ The stories of the ancestral relationships to the landscape define a history that is unique to place and clan, not a single ethno-history. Oral traditions take the form of re-telling Tlingit history.

Examining the historical perspective presented in the literature is an inquiry into how contemporary identity has been formed by means of the differing worldviews of competing dominant culture ideologies. *Conflicting Visions in Alaskan Education* by Richard L. Dauenhauer (1997) offers a unique perspective comparing the Russian

Orthodox missionary effort with the Presbyterian missionary effort. Originally presented as a conference paper, it is now a small chapbook. Originally written in 1979, R. Dauenhauer notes that although he wrote it 18 years ago, "...how little has really changed in prevailing public attitude and education policy regarding the image and survival of Alaska Native languages." Dauenhauer claims that the book is "... popular with Alaskan educators" (p. 3). However, if *Conflicting visions* is widely read by educators, then why aren't those educators changing the way the Tlingit ways-of-knowing are presented in the classrooms? Unfortunately, during an examination and comparison of older ethnographic works and newer studies, this topic of change continually arises. One can then question in regard to education or other social issues: Does it appear that the Tlingit culture has changed and yet the struggles remain the same?

Contemporary Tlingit perspectives are addressed in *Will the Time Ever Come: A Tlingit Source Book* (2000), edited by Andrew Hope III and Thomas Thornton. This book evolved from a landmark conference of Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian tribes held in Haines, Alaska in 1993. *Will the Time Ever Come* addresses histories and how they are connected to identity. As Frederica de Laguna (1960) suggests, "It is obvious that we cannot lump all Tlingit together as one nation if we wish to understand their past and their present and what these mean to them, nor can we take one tribe as a single entity in discussing events..." (p. 202). De Laguna recognized the autonomy of clans in Tlingit culture. As well, Tlingit scholar and author Andrew Hope III struggled with this dilemma during his research into Tlingit clans. Hope's article *On Migrations* (2000)

demonstrates that focusing on a particular clan history is an important addition to Tlingit literature. Tlingit history is found within the oral traditions of a particular clan. “A good historian by Tlingit standards is someone who knows the history of his clan, its origins, developments, subdivisions, settlements, migrations, and material and symbolic property (Hope & Thornton, 2000, p. 23).

An inquiry into Tlingit identity through cultural knowledge is a common occurrence. The Traditional Tlingit Map and Tribal List Project, included in *Will the Time Ever Come*, was the result of an inquiry into having a comprehensive list of clans available for Tlingit. Hope states:

During my research, I became aware that whatever lists existed of Tlingit tribes, clans and clans houses did not belong to Tlingit—we had no ownership. Almost all of the existing lists were developed by non-Tlingits: ethnographers, anthropologists, artifact collectors, linguists...etc. This is one of the major obstacles to Tlingit ownership. (Hope & Thornton, 2000, p. 8)

Hope’s research discovered that much was written about the Tlingit, though hardly anything was authored by the Tlingit. He felt that although there was much being researched and written about him and his people, he did not claim ‘ownership’ to that knowledge. Ultimately, Hope’s frustration led to the clan conference, which subsequently led to the publication of the book and a clan poster, providing a unique Tlingit perspective.

Native ways of knowing is important to the discussion of Tlingit literature because more is being narrated from the Tlingit perspective. More and more Tlingit are

conducting studies into their own culture. Barbara Fleek's (2000) Master's research is titled *Native Ways of Knowing: Experiences, Influences and Transitions of Tlingit women Becoming Leaders*. Barbara Fleek, from the Raven Moiety, L'uknax̄.adi Coho Clan, and Frog House wrote her thesis on leadership, which is interconnected with an important concept in the Tlingit culture: respect. Fleek views "society changing very quickly and civility and respect are often not valued in our busy lives." Her thesis includes a history of the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) and influential women leaders such as Marie Moon Orson, Tillie Tamaree, and Elizabeth Peratrovich. In addition to the profiles on Tlingit women in history, the participants in her research were four contemporary Tlingit women considered to be leaders in their communities. Fleek's observations are important to note here:

The women recognized at a young age that life was about cultural and spiritual differences, education, politics, power, and ultimately, about the land, resources, and economics of their people. Common themes that emerged in the narratives of the women in this study were responsibility, reciprocity, community, continuity, and respect. (Fleek, 2000)

Again, the common theme of cultural changes these women experienced reflected their choices in life. Politics, education, and land claims were, and still are, issues that direct their own personal lives. Fleek's participants in the study conveyed their experience of being, "isolated from the mainstream (white) culture and yearned to belong to a community. Their parents spoke Tlingit but not with their children." Through the

exploration of 'belonging' to the Tlingit culture, Fleek has, for herself, explored her own cultural identity.

Other dissertations, master's thesis, and conference papers provide a means to obtain knowledge, since much has been written about the Tlingit in academic studies. Many of these dissertations concern areas of social change, including Worl's (1998) study titled *Tlingit at.oow: Tangible and Intangible Property*, as well as *Conversations with Richard G. Newton: The Life Story of 'Klgak'eesh', a Tlingit Elder* (Marr, 1998). Older dissertations can provide a historical look at research and how research has changed over the decades in addition to providing another look at historical change among the Tlingit: Stanley, 1958; Scott, 1953; Tollefson, 1976; and Wyatt, 1985. As well, more recent dissertations and master's thesis provide unique perspectives on subjects such as Tlingit beadwork (Smetzer, 2007), in addition to controversial subjects such as the landotter (Barazzuol, 1988) and Tlingit Louis Shotridge (in Milburn, 1997).

Many people continue to write about the Tlingit culture, yet the gap still remains: the perspective of the Tlingit is overwhelmed by the 'outside' perspective. This leads to the inquiry that Frederica de Laguna (1960) suggested: that the interpretation of history involves more than just reading, it involves understanding the "motives of human beings" and that history should be interpreted by those who participated in a particular event (p. 201). De Laguna explains that "The biases and prejudices of the white man's records and of the native's traditions must not only be perceived and reconciled if possible, but the reasons for the bias must be understood" (1960, p. 201). What are a researcher's motives and what is their level of awareness of

their biases? My motive was to understand my own family and the people I live among, my friends and associates. My biases are that my own perspective is influenced by an indigenous worldview from my Samí and Suomalaiset family which resembles the Tlingit's in many ways, though I cannot speak as a Tlingit, so to that extent I must recognize that I bring both an outsider's and an insider's perspective to this work

### *Oral traditions as literature*

Examining Tlingit literature is not complete without understanding the role of oral traditions, because it is through the oral traditions that the Tlingit form their ancestral relationship to the landscape. According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), "Writing has been viewed as the mark of a superior civilization and other societies have been judged, by this view to be incapable of thinking critically and objectively, or having disease from ideas and emotions" (p. 29). In Western culture, there exist contemporary prejudices against oral testimony to history. Yet in the Tlingit culture, the oral traditions provide an integral means of cultural transmission.

Western science continually attempts to define the boundaries of indigenous oratory. Basso (1996) classifies 'narratives' into four major genres: myth, historical, sagas, and gossip. However, these categories are not easily defined. For example, *Lit.uya* (Lituya) Bay is sacred to the T'ak̄deintaan people because it is part of their migration story. From a historical perspective, Lituya Bay is the scene of first contact with the Tlingit, thus a symbolic representation of assimilation. In addition, many tales of sea monsters, avalanches, earthquakes, and drownings emerge to form an identity

with the landscape. As well, a familial story emerges in both the 'gossip' and 'historical' genre through the story about an earthquake that caused an avalanche, which in turn created a giant wave that our uncle rode over an island in Lituya Bay. This happened in the 1950s; therefore, the story resides within our clan's and families' recent memory. From this story, and the myths surrounding the bay, a cousin created a Raven's tail robe depicting, not only hers, but our relationship to the bay, our ancestral landscape. Subsequently, the oral tradition comes alive in both the ancestral and historic past through the physical act of dancing or wearing the robe. We wear our literature, our history.

From a Tlingit viewpoint, the oral traditions are the most important form of literature and should be included in the broader genre of American literature. Interestingly, in Tlingit culture, to be considered literate, one should know how to tell a clan story. However, the competency includes knowing which stories are 'owned' by his or her clan, in addition to other protocols such as what time and place are appropriate to tell certain story or sing a particular song. Literacy, then, is not only written but dependent upon being literate in the oral sense and being knowledgeable of taboos, lineage, protocol and other important aspects of being Tlingit. Thus, the oral traditions are intimately connected to the social structure.

When viewing the relationship of oral traditions to the community, the concept of ownership in literature about the Tlingit becomes problematic. *Image of a Peoples: Tlingit Myths and Legends* (DiGennaro & Pelton, 1992) includes a few oral traditions from Southeast Alaska, however the authors relied upon early missionaries and

anthropological and ethnographic publications of those oral traditions. Admittedly, the authors were conflicted about the research and publication of these stories. “We tried to verify information from the Tlingit perspective with the Sitka Native Educational Program, a Tlingit organization, but were told that the information could not be made available (1992, p. xi). Naively, the authors concluded that there was “...hostility toward[s] books and literacy...” (1992, p. xi). However, in actuality, the hostility towards outside interest is a result of clan ownership protocols, as well as Tlingit cultural and intellectual property rights, including a distrust of being misrepresented in books.

According to N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1990):

[Oratory is] an integral part of [this] natural and social context. The orators derive their images from the physical and cultural environments, and the speeches are delivered according to patterns and protocol of social structure. A full understanding and enjoyment of the speeches (as well as of Tlingit visual and performing art) require familiarity with the basic concepts of Tlingit social structure. (p. 4)

An investigation into oratory leads one to a better understanding of the social context of oral traditions. Therefore, in order to study oral traditions, it is *more* important to understand the social structure behind the speeches and stories. It is imperative that one realizes that a culture’s social structure includes morals, values, and taboos; how one should conduct themselves is conveyed through the oral traditions.



### *Conclusion*

The inquiry into literature about and by the Tlingit is one of self-discovery. My own search for knowledge led me to unexpected resources: maps, Internet sites, government scientific studies, tribal documents, poetry, and oral traditions. Whether it is a narrative told by a Tlingit elder or a poem by Nora Dauenhauer or Andy Hope, culture lives through the medium of language, written or spoken. Native American poet Paula Gunn Allen (1992) explains how stories are interactive and alive with culture, “For in relating our separate experiences to one another...a sense of wholeness arises...by virtue of our active participation [an] immediate comprehension of ourselves and the universe (1992, p. 117). Thus, the participation in studying literature is an active one and whether or not the literature is in written form or delivered through oratory, Tlingit literature is rich in information.

The ethnographic studies are a form of historical stories. The government documents, and map studies are a form of storytelling. The artistic works, the poetry, the thesis and dissertations, all are conveying stories. Relating experiences through the exploration of literature can bring a sense of healing. The discovery of self, of heritage, and of ancestral relationships provides the means of understanding his or her place in culture. The social problems facing the Tlingit culture are a result of a culture of constant change, where traditions struggle to hold a place of importance alongside contemporary ideals, “...the questions of personal and cultural identity almost always end up the same: Who am I? How Am I related to others in the community? How am I

related to my personal and cultural past?” (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990, p. xxii).

Living my life in a multi-cultural family, which includes Tlingit members, it is to be expected to have conflicts with communication and worldviews. “These are my own children,” I’ve often said to myself, “yet they view the world differently from many of their non-Tlingit friends and relatives.” Through the search for literature, I discovered a shared discourse: others were searching too. And by means of this common ground, the Tlingit authors and scholars demonstrated that the ancestral relationship to the landscape is vital in contemporary lives.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

#### *Introduction*

In this chapter, I explain the methods I used during my eight-year course of inquiry: the context, participants, and procedures. Second, I provide my research background and discuss my participant/observer fieldwork. Then I present a case for appropriate literature about and by Native Americans. Subsequently, I discuss the significance of utilizing the personal narrative to provide a venue for the Tlingit perspective, including the issues related to data collection. I present an argument for appropriate research with a discussion on research methods and responsibilities. Lastly, I provide an overview of my data analysis and a summary.

#### *The general perspective*

The qualitative method in this study includes the collection of nine personal narratives from research participants from within the Tlingit nation. The narrative format permitted the exploration of personal histories to facilitate an understanding of how Tlingit contemporaries maintain their cultural identity, i.e., their ancestral relationship to the landscape. The narratives also provide insight into the dynamics at the intersection of conflicting worldviews, and the role this plays in shaping contemporary Tlingit identity.

### *The research context*

Predominantly, past research among the Tlingit emphasizes the knowledge of elders; however, the scope of my study reflects diverse voices from people who were born during a time of continual change. Therefore, I conducted four of the interviews in Hoonah, the largest Tlingit village in Southeast Alaska, because Hoonah still adheres to many traditional cultural activities. I conducted subsequent interviews in Juneau, Anchorage, and Sitka and one interview by telephone and through e-mail. In addition, I acted as a participant/observer in the Hoonah City Schools, the communities of Wrangell, Sitka, and Juneau, along with participating in three Lingít language immersion camps throughout Southeast Alaska. In addition, I examined a large body of scholarly and scientific studies about the Tlingit people.

### *The research participants*

The research participants in this study were chosen by several factors: availability, involvement in the Lingít language revitalization, artists, elders, subsistence providers, and tradition bearers. First, I compiled a list of twenty or thirty potential research participants, followed by contact to determine willingness to participate in the research project. Sometimes the initial exchange consisted of many conversations and further personal or indirect contact. Most of the research participants I selected on the initial list of potential interviewees were busy people who were involved in their art, subsistence, education, and daily responsibilities. The responses to my inquiry for participation were varied, though I never received an outright 'No thank-you.' When I was questioned about

the subject of my research, several people whom I knew as friends and acquaintances asked to be included without my asking. Eventually, five of the potential participants declined participation in the project for varying personal reasons.

Since I was living in my children's ancestral homeland, Hoonah, and because this study began as a scholarly inquiry into my Tlingit children's cultural history, several research participants are from the extended Mork family and T'akdeintaan clan. This result was inevitable since many Hoonah residents, a locality where I sought participants, are clan affiliated. In addition, many of the research participants I interviewed maintain ancestral relationships in Hoonah, Alaska and the surrounding areas. The two T'akdeintaan artists and weavers, Teri Rofkar and Clarissa Hudson, are both from my own and my children's clan, with ancestral ties to Hoonah, Glacier Bay National Park, Lituya Bay, and the Yakutat region. Teri Rofkar's interview coincided with Breanne Mork's visit to Hoonah to reacquaint her with her ancestral homeland. Clarissa Hudson's interview corresponded with her visit to Sitka, Alaska to participate in the Sharing our Knowledge Clan Conference in 2007. Another Hoonah link is the narrative provided by Sam Wright from the L'uknax.adi clan, whose origins are connected to the T'akdeintaan.

In addition, Vivian Mork's, Mitch Mork's, and Breanne Mork's interviews provided a variety of experiences and levels of cultural awareness in a multi-cultural family. Regarding the examination of one's own family and community, several Alaskan scholars previously demonstrated precedence for this type of inquiry. Nakuttuk Virginia Ned worked with her father Johnson Moses for her master's project at the University of Alaska Fairbanks; and Dr. Beth Leonard's dissertation *Deg Hit'an Narratives and Native*

*Ways of Knowing* (2007) included interviews with her father, James Dementi. Joyce Walton Shales' (1998) University of British Columbia dissertation on assimilation and acculturation focused entirely on the life of her grandfather, Rudolph Walton. Tlingit scholar Nora Dauenhauer's works consist of oral traditions and personal narratives of elders within her family and extended tribal community (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1987, 1990, 1994). These research models stem from the desire to preserve the oral traditions, language, and ways-of-life that are in danger of disappearing. They also acknowledge a personal interest in examining changes within indigenous communities, therefore generating an interest in one's own history, ways-of-knowing, and cultural practices.

Of the research participants I selected, the oldest is elder Elizabeth Martin, age 93, who was born in Killisnoo, located near Angoon; a community no longer in existence in Southeast Alaska. I chose to interview Elizabeth Martin because she was the oldest person I knew personally and I was aware that she had once lived in a community that no-longer exists. I assumed her interview would provide comparisons or contrasts to the younger research participants. Mrs. Martin's narrative contrasts the contemporary perspectives, and yet her narrative shows similarities with her multi-cultural life experiences and traditional ways-of-life.

In Table 5: *Research participants*, I list the research participants in this study by letter and provide recording and transcription information. I then provide a brief description of each participant. The narratives can be found in appendices A through D.

Table 5: *Research participants*

<i>Assigned letter and recording/transcription</i>	<i>Research participants</i>	<i>Brief description</i>
<b>A</b> A-07-1, January 07 digital rec. Transcript: 27 pgs. Lines 1-630	C. Hudson	Female: Chilkat/raven's tail weaver& artist from Juneau, Pagosa Springs, CO. & Hoonah, AK.
<b>B</b> B-05-2, B-07-2 mic/cass 6/17/05, dig, 5/07 Transcript: 36 p. Lns. 1-795	O. James	Male: Age 50, subsistence hunter/fisherman. Traditional dancer. Born in Kake/Lives in Hoonah.
<b>C</b> C-06-1a,b,c, 12/06 digital Transcript: 25 pgs. Lines 1-544	E. Martin	Female: 93 yr. old elder Born in Killisnoo/Angoon Lives in Juneau, AK.
<b>D</b> D-06-1a, b, Dec. 2006, digital rec. Transcript: 9 pgs. Lines 1-203	M. Mork	Male: 26 yr. old. college student/UAA. Born/raised in Wrangell/Sitka, AK. Ancestral ties w/Hoonah.
<b>E</b> E-07-1 July 17, 07 digital rec. Transcript: 19 pgs. Lines 1-396	B. Mork	Female: College student Fort Lewis, CO. Born/raised Wrangell & Sitka, AK.
<b>F</b> F-03-5, F-04-5, F-05-5, F-03- 5,F-07-59-10/03, 4/7/04, 03/05,11/21/07 dig/cass. Transcript 40pgs: Lines 1-95	V. Mork	Female: 30 yr. old Lingit language/culture specialist, college student Born/raised Wrangell AK. Lives in Sitka, AK.
<b>G</b> G-07-1, Jan. 22, 2007, digital rec. Transcript: 26 pages. Lines 1-531	T. Rofkar	Female: Raven's tail/ basket weaver from Sitka, AK. Ancestral ties w/Hoonah, Alaska.
<b>H</b> H-02-3, H-01-3, H-02-3 Kaasteen, Oct. 2001; Tlingit Values, 12/4/02; GB 3/4/02 micro/cass./field notes Transcript: 14 pgs. Lines 1-296	C. Williams	Female: Tradition bearer Chookaneidi story/Lives in Hoonah/employed at Hoonah City Schools.
<b>I</b> I-06-4a, b, c, I-07-4, Digital 1, 2, 3,4, Fall 2006, May 2007 Transcript: 37 pgs. Lines 1- 742	S. Wright	Male: Late 40s. Hunter/ Lingit language student. Born/raised in Hoonah.

*Procedures used*

I devised the interview questions around a basic format based upon my participant/observations over the past several years. I used a semi-structured format with open-ended questions. I inquired as to: where one was born, grew up, their relationships with the landscape, oral traditions, the arts, subsistence, language, education, and ceremonies (See appendices G and H). I formulated additional questions based upon the participants' occupations and interests, previous knowledge of the person, and their responses to the initial questions.

This study utilized several instruments and recording processes: a micro cassette recorder and a digital audio-recorder. I also utilized field notes to advance the interview process. I transcribed the interviews into the narrative format, using line numbers to facilitate reflection and analyses. The narrative format provides the opportunity for the research participants to speak with their own unique voices in order to convey prevailing beliefs about the Tlingit.

*Background of the researcher*

My research originated from a scholar's perspective. In 2000, I began fieldwork among the Tlingit in Hoonah, Alaska in order to share the knowledge with my own Tlingit family. This inquiry was a result of growing up and living in the heavily assimilated community of Wrangell, Alaska, that had lost essential cultural practices. I grew up in Southeast, Alaska during a time of extensive developments, such as logging



and tourism, in addition to a resurgence of cultural identity among the Tlingit. Along with the Tlingit, I observed and experienced many of these change, including the recent renewal of many cultural activities. For some Tlingits involved in their cultural revitalization, recent means the past twenty to thirty years struggling to maintain a sense of Tlingit identity. For the younger generations, participation in the Tlingit culture and language revitalization has occurred within the last five years. Moreover, my family is an active part of this cultural revival.

#### *Participant/observer fieldwork*

An inquiry into the Tlingit ancestral relationship to the landscape allowed me to participate in cultural ceremonies, and Lingít language immersion programs in an era where identity is a central issue. My extensive fieldwork began with learning the Lingít language followed by my work within Hoonah City Schools. I, along with Carol Williams and Daphne Wright, designed a college-level Lingít language course to fulfill a language requirement for my undergraduate degree. I sought to devise my own educational experiences because the village of Hoonah, where I lived, had limited access to the academic community. As a result, the language course became the catalyst for my own family's work within the Lingít language revitalization effort. As I studied the language, the dynamics of diverging worldviews and the role this plays in shaping contemporary Tlingit identity became evident.

My fieldwork also included participating in the *koo.éex'*, commonly known as a potlatch, memorial, give-away, or payback party. I attended several *koo.eex'* participating

as a guest, and on a separate occasion as a host. My work in Hoonah also consisted of assisting with the organization of a weekly Lingít language family night, in which I participated as well. As a part of my college-level coursework, I worked on script-writing for the local school *koo.éex'* (formerly called a potlatch by the Hoonah City Schools). I composed skits for the children in the Lingít language, creating the opportunity to further my skills in Lingít orthography.

The three Lingít language immersion camps I participated in were held in Glacier Bay National Park, the village of Angoon, and at Dog Point Fish Camp near Sitka. I was also involved in creating Lingít language curricula for Hoonah City Schools, in addition to accompanying the schoolchildren on two trips to Glacier Bay National Park. I participated in several university courses directly related to the Tlingít worldview, e.g., oral traditions, literature, and linguistics. Today, I am at a point in my Lingít language education where I am considered an intermediate learner. My linguistic abilities allow me to be able to speak Lingít to my husband and a few of my children, whose learning level reflects my own ability. In two generations, this is the first time our family is able to communicate in the Lingít language.

I participated in elder apprenticeships with Tlingít elder Marie Olson in the field of Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights and with author Nora Dauenhauer on Native American literature. As a scholar of the Lingít language and culture, my teachers are Nora and Richard Dauenhauer, Marie Olson, and Florence Sheakley, in addition to other elders in Sitka Hoonah, and the Yukon, Canada. Daphne Wright and Carol Williams of

Hoonah answered most of my initial inquiries and mentored me on the subjects of the Lingít language, Hoonah history, and community.

*A case for appropriate literature about the Tlingit*

Maori scholar, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) points out, “Indigenous peoples want to tell our own stories, write our own version, in our own ways, for our own purpose.” For the Tlingit, narrating their own stories it is about accuracy, especially portraying the Tlingit point of view. Maori writer Patricia Grace (as quoted in Smith, 1999) claims that books are dangerous:

Books also leave out Native peoples as if they don’t exist and when they do write about Native peoples the writings are often untrue and portray Native peoples in a negative manner. Books often promote the idea that Native cultures are, in some manner, primitive or less civilized than European and Euro-American cultures (p 35).

Many books about the Tlingit do not reinforce their values, customs, and identity; as a result, Tlingit youth who are searching for identity can become confused. In fact, many indigenous peoples are wary when looking to books for knowledge about their own cultures. Therefore, an inquiry into the Tlingit culture requires the initial step of counteracting preconceived ideas, images, and misrepresentations acquired from mainstream depictions in older literature and studies. This includes tourism products such as videos, ads, brochures, tourist guides, and misinformed naturalists who are employed within the tourist industry. Many of these resources still portray stereotypes, a common

problem that depicts Native American's as lazy, savages, unclean, wild, and alcoholic. For example, an English word that continues to arise in Tlingit scholarly literature is the term 'pollution.' For some Tlingits, this word carries a negative connotation and would best be described using the Lingít term '*ligas*', meaning taboo. Especially when it comes to rituals involving women or the dead, the English term is culturally loaded. Concerning literature written about the Tlingit, an elder expressed her frustration, "Some books just fall short of calling us savages. They don't talk about us as existing in the 'now'. We are educated; we have doctors, lawyers. They talk about us as if we only existed in the past" (M. Olson, personal communication, 2003).

Literature is an important aspect of our society, however, reading material containing misinformation that harbors stereotypes and prejudices eventually leads to problems concerning identity among Tlingit youth. My youngest child identified herself with a stereotypical Pocahontas, perpetuated by Disney's release of the popular film of the same name. And, until recently, there were virtually no children's books written by Tlingits for Tlingit children, as pointed out by a Tlingit elder, "People think that there are no other Native peoples in Alaska other than Eskimos" (M. Olson, personal communication, 2003). For the Tlingit, 'omission' is a means of devaluing the Tlingit worldview.

Another example originates from the region of my children's ancestors, Glacier Bay National Park. In 2000, the Alaska Natural History Association's bookstore, located inside Glacier Bay Lodge, was still selling *Glacier Bay: A Guide to Glacier Bay National Park* (National Park Service, 1983). The handbook begins exploring the park's history

with John Muir's visit and the only reference to the first inhabitants includes a fold-out in the middle of the book consisting of a short paragraph. The book does not include the worldview of the Tlingit, a notable absence.

According to Grant and Gillespie (1992), "Over the centuries, the stereotypical Native American in literature has shifted from simple, superstitious child of God to blood-thirsty savage to noble savage to victimized dispossessed nomad". There is a shift in the manner in which Native Americans are portrayed in literature; however, that portrayal is nevertheless inaccurate and prejudiced. Native peoples are still portrayed as the "other" (1992, p. 2) and worse, inaccurate textbooks and children's books have infiltrated public schools, presenting their knowledge as fact:

However, the accepted canons of literature exclude works by American Indians and Alaska Natives. Furthermore, the few literary works about Native Americans that have secured a place in the secondary school curriculum were written by non-Natives, are unauthentic, portray cultural information inaccurately, and perpetuate negative stereotypes. (Grant & Gillespie, 1992, p. 3)

Grant and Gillespie use the term 'ourness' to counteract the concept of 'otherness.' The personal narrative provides the inclusion of 'ourness' into the canon of Native American literature and has the potential to dissuade negative stereotypes. Unfortunately, as Grant and Gillespie point out "...many secondary students and even Native people themselves have come to believe the stereotypes" (1992, p. 3). Therefore, literature presenting a voice from the Tlingit perspective, or approved by the Tlingit, is the only way to ensure that the general public, including children, are receiving accurate information.

Fortunately, Tlingit authors continue to offer an insight into their own culture. Nora Dauenhauer, Miranda Belarde-Lewis, Ernestine Hayes, Andy Hope, Robert Davis and others are among authors contributing to recent publications of Tlingit literature. Tlingit elder Marie Olson stresses that “Maybe some people will think we will go away, but we are necessary and important” (M. Olson, personal communication, 2003). Thus, the inclusion of the personal narratives, into the canon of Native American literature provides a more accurate description of the contemporary lives of indigenous peoples.

### *The personal narrative*

In this section, I address the issues pertaining to collecting personal narratives within indigenous communities. This discussion includes the history, taboos, and conflicts with outside research, in addition to acting as a participant-observer and inside/outside researcher.

I utilized the personal narrative in this study as a means to elucidate the Tlingit ancestral relationship to the landscape. The narrative format also provides a venue for cultural expression, directing the research participants’ experiences and perspectives towards others within their culture, in addition to those residing outside of the Tlingit nation. In order to decolonize my methodologies, as outlined in Smith (1999), the first step was to rename the participants in my research. I sought to include the Tlingit as research participants rather than the widely used term “informant.” For many indigenous peoples, the term “informant” causes a negative reaction because those who participate in research often feel a pull between wanting to disseminate and share their knowledge, and

how much and to whom their knowledge is being shared. Also, for the Tlingit, the autobiography format consists of social and personal concerns. Krupat (1985) explains that Native American autobiographies are a result of “contact with the white invader-settlers, and the product of a limited collaboration with them” (p. xxvii).

One of the concerns is that early anthropologists and explorers, teacher/missionaries, public health officials, and military personnel, often solicited the narratives (Bataille & Sands, 1984). The colonizers constructed the images and identities of the indigenous peoples they came into contact with. Moreover, in Tlingit *aani*, writers such as John Muir, Carrie Willard, Sheldon Jackson, and S. Hall Young left their impressions on the future sense of identity among the Tlingit. Internal conflicts occur while researching these documents because they describe history from a Western perspective and sometimes include prejudices and stereotypes.

The second concern is a taboo found among many indigenous cultures, including the Tlingit, concerning ‘bragging.’ For example, some phrases that English speakers use everyday in regards to future predictions, could be construed as bragging or excessive talking about oneself. This can be challenging for researchers since the narrative format is a form of talking about oneself, which is why the autobiography, memoir, or narrative, is foreign to many indigenous cultures. Krupat (1985) explains, “Unlike traditional Native literature, the Indian autobiography has no prior model in the collective practice of tribal cultures” (p.31). Moreover, in the past, writers have collected narratives from the “belief that the ‘savage’ has no intelligible voice of his own, that the ‘civilized’ man of letters must speak for him if he is to be heard at all” (Krupat, 1985, p. 51).

In *Haa Kusteeyí, Our Culture: Tlingit Life Stories* by Nora Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer (1994) discuss the “Tlingit cultural aversion to talking about one’s own life...”(p. xxv). The authors explain that in the Tlingit culture ... “talking about others may be acceptable under certain social circumstances...[however] talking about oneself is often problematic” (1994, p. x). The Dauenhauers bring up the dilemma, which I also encountered during my research: I am not special, so why do you want me to talk about myself? Nevertheless, I am in agreement with the Dauenhauer’s (1994) reasoning behind their decision to collect narratives concerning ordinary/everyday lives of Tlingit, because the lives of contemporary Tlingits contributes to Native American literatures.

Today, contemporary Tlingits live less by cultural taboos than their predecessors, however there remains a concern about how they will be perceived by their clan members. In addition, some people will not talk as if they are experts, only as they view their knowledge or how that knowledge is passed on to them. And for researchers like myself, who have some pre-existing knowledge about their subjects, some interesting phenomena occur. On one occasion, a research participant that I interviewed perceived my role as a researcher/scholar, despite our past relationship. The research participant was reluctant to reveal specific techniques and traditional knowledge in regards to hunting and fishing; and yet revealed this same information in a personal setting.

In addition, when collecting personal narratives among the Tlingit, direct questioning can be a concern because often the research participants need plenty of time to think about their responses in order to decide what information to share. It often took days, or even weeks, from the time I submitted the questions to the time of the interview.



In the Tlingit culture, the research participants' individual identity is blurred with the clan identity, therefore speaking for and about oneself proves to be something that is only tolerated.

In contemporary times, the personal narrative is a 'transitional genre' as evident in Ernestine Hayes memoir *Blonde Indian: An Alaskan Native Memoir* (2006). Hayes, along with Nora Dauenhauer (2000a), implements a combination of oral tradition, adapting their ancestral relationship to place to the written format (Bataille & Sands, 1984). As more and more Tlingit begin to speak for themselves, the genre of Tlingit narratives will expand to include the memoir form. As I began to analyze the narratives resultant from the interviews, I noted that the narratives fit into the constructs of the autobiography, which concerns the rationalization of life. Yet, the collaborative process of collecting narratives is difficult because the collector and the interviewee are searching for inner perspectives. Therefore, the autobiography can be defined as literature rather than simply an ethnography (Bataille & Sands, 1984). Consequently, the 'sense of discovery' is a recognition, not only of the individual self, but also of the tribal self: the tribal-self paradigm still exists within the contemporary Tlingit worldview. The contemporary framework is not without the tribal consciousness that includes a connection to the tribal past.

### *Data analysis*

From my research, including the research participants interviews, I identified three major factors resulting in changes in Tlingit identity: the loss and struggle with

maintaining the Lingít language, implementation of subsistence regulations and conflicts resultant from divergent worldviews, and changes in or the loss of the ceremony called a *kóo.eex'* (a memorial party). In the course of participating in the Lingít language revitalization effort for several years, including extended conversations with my elders, it became clear that the loss of language was a significant factor in shaping contemporary Tlingit identity. By participating in subsistence activities in Hoonah and through my interview with research participant Owen James (Appendix C), I came to recognize the importance of subsistence to maintaining Tlingit identity. Subsistence foods also showed up in the interviews as an important contemporary identity marker. It was also apparent after participating in the *kóo.éex'* ceremony that much of the cultural knowledge and worldviews were not transmitted to the next generation due to the diminishment of the *kóo.eex'*. Moreover, after analyzing the research participants' interviews it became apparent why my family, and other Tlingit families, were not aware of important cultural practices and worldviews. By participating in developing skits in the Lingít language for the Hoonah City Schools *kóo.eex'*, in addition to helping the students with their Lingít introductions, the importance of the *kóo.eex'* to maintaining culture became evident. The research participants' interviews confirmed the significance of these vital cultural events. Vivian Mork (Appendix B) employed participation in the *kóo.eex'* as a means of teaching the students about Tlingit identity. Sam Wright's (Appendix A) narrative illuminated the fact that important cultural knowledge is maintained through direct participation.

I further developed these subjects by considering in what ways the changes influence the research participants in this study, which I formulate in Chapter 4. I subsequently analyzed the research participants' worldviews, noting the differences between the Tlingit worldview and the Western worldview. I also inquired as to what means the research participants used to acquire their cultural knowledge, how they were raised, and what influences led to their chosen occupation. In addition, I analyzed the theory of ethnic identity, e.g., identity markers as described in N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (2004). This led to questions, which assisted in the formation of my conclusions: Did the community in which a participant was raised affect their level of identification as a Tlingit, or somehow affect their function in the Tlingit culture? In addition, what aspects of the Tlingit culture does he or she identify with and why? And how does identity as a Tlingit today relate to their ancestral landscape?

After reflecting on the research participants' interviews, and by means of extensive research into the literature written about and by the Tlingit, I concluded that the modes of transmission were important to clarify. I answered the question: where would a Tlingit person go in order to learn about his or her own culture? In addition, I discovered, through my own participant/observer role, which contexts provided learning opportunities, e.g., the language immersion camps, language curricula, tribal conferences, and the bi-annual Celebration. After identifying the contexts, I analyzed in what ways those contexts remain the same or have changed; and the significance of those contexts to perpetuating Tlingit culture and identity. These findings are presented in Chapter 5. I then compiled my field notes to define common themes found in the research participants'

narratives, which are found in the appendices A through D. The narratives are organized into themes reflecting these common factors: residing in the ancestral landscape, Lingít language and thinking, the Tlingit artist and the ancestral relationship to the landscape, and contemporary Tlingit identity.

### *Research methods in indigenous communities*

In this section, I discuss two topics: research methods in indigenous communities, including how these methods differ from research in a Western community, and the issue of responsible and respectable research. I also provide an outline called *Guidelines for Researchers* from the booklet *Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge* (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 2000) which are research guidelines adopted by the Assembly for Alaska Native Educators in 2000 and published by the Alaska Native Knowledge Network at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. Subsequently, I relate these topics to my own research within the Tlingit culture.

Indigenous peoples have always resisted colonialism in one form or another, and among the Tlingit, Frederica de Laguna's research was not immune to such resistance and scrutiny. As Frederica de Laguna (1960) noted:

Archeological investigations in the Chilkat area were disappointing, for while the Chilkat village of Klukwan was still an ethnological treasure house, the inhabitants were so suspicious and hostile that work with them would have been difficult or unproductive. (p.ix)

As de Laguna noted, the Tlingit from the Chilkat region did not allow her to conduct research in their community. Eventually, in 1949 and 1950, de Laguna, Catherine McClellan, and several other fieldworkers, traveled to Angoon to conduct a study published as “The Story of a Tlingit Community”. The researchers found an ‘informant’, whom they felt did not appear to fit in with the traditional peoples because he was educated in “Western ways.” According to de Laguna (1960), the man was willing to discuss his culture:

He is a middle-aged man who had received a much better education in white schools than most Tlingit of his generation....but was now largely withdrawn from much of the ordinary community life. He finds himself caught between the white man’s and the native’s worlds, yet not fully belonging to either. (p 13)

This Euro-centric perspective views a traditional education as having less value than a Western education. The fieldworkers interpreted the Angoon Tlingits’ behaviors as being ‘suspicious’ and ‘hostile’ towards the intrusion into their community, rather than interpreting the Tlingits’ reactions as being ‘cautious’ and ‘protective’ of their people and traditional lifestyle. However, I would suspect that some Angoon community members believed that their knowledge should not be passed on to non-natives.

Today, there is a desire to lessen the adverse affects of colonization; and to do so means to take back the control over tribal life. Historically, the resistance to assimilation is intended for survival: survival from disease and war, from dislocation, oppression, and from losing one’s culture and language (Smith, 1999). The loss of culture and language greatly affects subsequent generations influencing how people view themselves, i.e., their

sense of identity, in addition to how the dominant society's governing institutions, perceive indigenous communities.

Research, defined as a scholarly or scientific investigation, is seldom questioned, which is problematic when collecting narratives about indigenous peoples. Formulated from Western worldviews, research can contain views contrary to indigenous culture. Research centers on a theory of knowledge: measuring and gathering facts are the basic tools. Unfortunately, the desire to acquire knowledge is often confused with an unquestionable 'right' to obtain that knowledge. This thought process has its roots in imperialism and colonialism. Contrary to widely accepted beliefs, Western research is neither neutral nor objective in its dissections of indigenous societies, but is subjective to multiple foreign ideologies. In actuality, the Western perspective is one from a cohesive group of people, which includes their worldview and language (Smith, 1999). Indigenous people, including the Tlingit, resist the framing of their identity within Western worldviews. From a Western perspective, research and the interpretation of results is a means towards the enlightenment of Western culture, while the voices of the people, who are the subjects of the research, remain silent. Accordingly, literature about the Tlingit sometimes reflects gross errors, disrespect, and even overt racism. Thus, the narratives concerning the contemporary lives of the Tlingit provides for an expression of identity that is not subject to outside misinterpretation.

Smith (1999) claims that indigenous communities continue to resent the intrusion of Western research into their lives, "escape[ing] the penetration and surveillance" of colonialism under the guise of scientific endeavors (p. 39). Despite a letter of

introduction addressed to the community of Angoon, and a claim to having influential Tlingit friends, de Laguna (1960) and her research assistants had difficulties obtaining 'informants' in Angoon:

But of course, some individuals [in Angoon] remained suspicious and unapproachable. We tried, therefore, to create and retain good will by proceeding slowly and respecting reticence, rather than to jeopardize future success by trying to pry out information that was not already given. (p. 12)

For some Tlingits, documenting the lives of the 'ordinary' person is important in order to provide an accurate view of themselves and give testimony to history. As of 2007, Hoonah Indian Association continues to develop research protocols for their community. In addition, several members of Hoonah's tribal community have organized the first Alaska Native writers group in Hoonah whose larger goals are the protection of local clans' oral traditions, as well as critiquing literature written by and about the Tlingit. Thus, the community's role is re-centered, from participating as the subject of the research to being in control of the research.

In conclusion, it is important to develop a shared discourse between research institutions, researchers, and communities, enabling indigenous peoples to discuss their concerns regarding research. Accountability and a safety net or watchdog groups enable communities to look after one another, as well as provide a way for indigenous communities to glean from similar experiences. Therefore, restructuring and re-examining research agendas is a process allowing for indigenous peoples to decolonize and define themselves. For indigenous communities, the ability to derive their own

agendas, guidelines, and codes of conduct allows them to continue to thrive as a unique culture.

*Responsible and respectable research*

When researching indigenous cultures, it is imperative that the researcher is responsible to the community by conducting research within the guidelines of respect, and following the cultural protocols of the particular community. Moreover, the role of the researcher becomes a collaborative and accountable one, involving mentorship by elders and tradition bearers. This enables the research to be culturally sensitive to the needs of the community. Over the years, my mentors have included elders, tribal agencies, and tradition bearers, who have been willing to share their lives and their knowledge with me.

There are protocols a researcher must understand in order to participate within an indigenous community. However, those protocols can vary from culture to culture. Some cultures value listening without interruptions, which includes taboos on taking notes. Others may have strict guidelines for filming, recording, and interviewing elders or other tradition bearers. For example, I was included in a discussion with a Tlingit videographer, who was raised outside of Alaska. The videographer wanted to go along with a group of spruce root gathers, but was told that he could not bring his movie camera. Willing to compromise, he gladly went along without his camera in order to learn more about his culture. And recently, in 2007, at a Lingít language immersion camp in Southeastern Alaska, the elders and participants, myself included, were informed they were going to be



filmed by an outside non-native agency, who at the last minute, were included in the camp experience. For some immersion attendees, the presence of a videographer, photographer, and editor, intruded into their personal experiences at the language camp. Everyone signed a release form, yet I sensed the pressure to do so since most of the participants had already planned to attend this camp a few months in advance; some traveled from as far away as the Yukon in order to attend. For the participants who were shy about learning to speak Lingit, the presence of outsiders made them even more uncomfortable.

In the past, many researchers have ignored cultural protocols and unfortunately, some researchers still adhere to Western-style research methodologies. Tribal organizations such as Tlingit and Haida Central Council and Sitka Tribes of Alaska, have outlined cultural protocols, guidelines, and research approval boards, designed to assist research within their communities. Smith (1999) states, “Indigenous methodologies tend to approach cultural protocols, values, and behaviors as an integral part of methodology” (p. 191). An example of one Alaskan institution that has implemented guidelines for researchers is the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). The *Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge* (2000) developed by the Alaska Native Knowledge Network, provided me with a guide for conducting this study. My extensive relationships with the Tlingit community at large were the most rewarding, providing me with positive experiences that might not have otherwise been available to outsiders. In Table 6: *Guidelines for researchers*, I provide the guidelines listed in the ANKN booklet.

Table 6: *Guidelines for researchers*

<i>Researchers may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:</i>	
1)	Effectively identify and utilize the expertise in participating communities to enhance the quality of data gathering as well as the data itself, and use caution in applying external frames of reference in its analysis and interpretation.
2)	Insure controlled access for sensitive cultural information that has not been explicitly authorized for general distribution, as determined by members of the local community.
3)	Submit research plans as well as results for review by a locally-knowledgeable group and abide by its recommendations to the maximum extent possible.
4)	Provide full disclosure of funding sources, sponsors, institutional affiliations and reviewers.
5)	Include explicit recognition of all research contributors in the final report.
6)	Abide by research principals/guidelines established by AFN, state, national and international organizations representing indigenous peoples.

Note. Resourced from the Alaska Native Knowledge Network, University of Alaska Fairbanks, *Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge* at <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/Publications/knowledge.html> (2000).

Research guidelines are often designed to reflect the differences in a particular culture's values. For example, the most important aspect of conduct within the Tlingit community is respect. In respecting elders and tradition bearers, respect is given to the entire culture (Ellerby, 2001, p. 29). In addition, I must point out that 'respect' in the Tlingit culture is unlike the concept in the Western culture (Chapter Six includes a discussion about the Tlingit worldview of respect). Therefore, methodologies should be sensitive to the specific cultural setting, as well as the universal protocols, which include the value of listening, obtaining the proper permissions, reporting back, and sharing.

In the past, outsiders have constructed their own images of the Tlingit, and those images were sometimes unfavorable. Unfortunately, these impressions still provide a basis for those who are seeking knowledge about the Tlingit. For this reason, the personal narrative provides an addition to Tlingit literature. The case for appropriate literature is not difficult to argue, but often overlooked especially by the general public. After all, there are still problems relating to offensive sports mascots, and inappropriate and stereotypical Native American portrayal in books, films, and advertisements.

### *Conclusion*

#### *Summary of methodology*

To summarize this study, I utilized a qualitative method including the collection of nine personal narratives from research participants within the Tlingit nation. The ethnographical research context took place in Southeast Alaska in various communities. I formatted the questions in a semi-structured open-ended format using digital and micro cassette recorders and field notes.

My research originated from a scholar's perspective, in addition to the perspective of a mother in a multi-cultural family that includes the Tlingit. My role as participant/observer afforded the opportunity to interact as an emic researcher in many of the cultural settings. However, despite my inside/outside perspective, I gained learning experiences regarding research in indigenous communities, including the ability to identify the barriers to research, such as taboos against talking about ones self and specific guidelines of respect and protocols found within the Tlingit culture. As well, in

order to conduct the study, I identified my own preconceived notions regarding research, i.e., decolonize my methodologies, including my own worldview. As a result, the personal narratives format provided the opportunity for the research participants to speak for themselves.

## Chapter 4

### Cultural Change and Contemporary Tlingit Identity

#### *Introduction*

The ancestral relationship to the landscape in contemporary Tlingit identity is influenced by changes in Tlingit society. In this chapter, I provide the results of exploring diverging worldviews in the research participants' narratives and through my field study, which has illuminated three factors influencing contemporary Tlingit identity: the loss and struggle with maintaining the Lingít language; implementation of subsistence regulations and resultant conflicts; and diminishment of the ceremony called a *kóo.eex* (a memorial party). Changes within these cultural contexts contribute to how Tlingits form their identity, including the perception of the ancestral relationship to the landscape.

In this investigation, I include excerpts from the research participants' narratives in order to add a voice-dimension to the discussion of cultural losses and the validity of the contemporary Tlingit experience. According to Tlingit bilingual/bicultural expert Walt B. Williams (n.d.), "We spend one quarter of our lives trying to change the way we are...and spend three quarters struggling to hold on to our identity" (Williams, Indian Studies Program).

First, in section one I explore the subject of contemporary Tlingit identity through a discussion on the shift in language acquisition. I consider the historical perspectives, by means of examining the 'boarding school generation' and the impact that the boarding schools have had on perpetuating the Tlingit culture. Then, I illustrate the interconnection

between well-being, identity, and language, and the language revitalization efforts in Southeast Alaska. Finally, I conclude the language section with an examination of a contemporary issue, Alaska's English-only law, linking the monocultural worldview with the shift in language acquisition.

In section two I present the second factor, relating cultural change to contemporary Tlingit identity, addresses implementation of subsistence regulations and resultant conflicts influencing subsistence practices. I demonstrate how divergent views on the Tlingit ancestral relationship to the landscape of Southeast Alaska persist into modern times. In this discussion, research participants provide personal accounts of the effects of incompatible subsistence laws.

The third factor affecting the Tlingit relationship to the ancestral landscape is the diminishment of the ceremony called a *kóo.éex'* is examined in section three. By outlining the *koo.éex'*, I confirm its significance to the continuance of Tlingit culture and to contemporary Tlingit identity. I provide historical references that illustrate the attempts to thwart this practice. In addition, I include excerpts from research participants Sam Wright's and Vivian Mork's narratives to document several changes within the ceremony and the importance of teaching culture through participation in the *koo.éex'*. These inquiries substantiate the value of maintaining traditional education, subsistence, language, and ceremonies in order to perpetuate the Tlingit culture.

I recognize that cultures are fluid, and that change occurs at every level and aspect of culture. According to research participant Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C), "Traditions have changed, all traditions change eventually, they go along with whatever comes into

their culture” (Lines, p. 305-306, p. 560). The Tlingit culture that I examine today will not be the same twenty or fifty years from now; and similarly, the Tlingit culture today is different from the tribal culture that existed 100 years ago. During her research among the Tlingit, de Laguna (1960) sensed there was an interest in learning what customs and traditions have survived and what is no longer being practiced or taught to subsequent generations. More than a half century later, essential cultural activities are still being practiced; and a great deal of the traditional worldview has remained the same, though practiced and transmitted from a contemporary perspective. In examining these changes, I document what remains as practice within the Tlingit culture and how those traditions influence contemporary Tlingit identity.

*Section one: Loss of voice: the monocultural worldview and the Lingít language*

The first factor that I have identified is the struggle with maintaining the Lingít language and how the language relates to cultural identity, including Tlingit views about their ancestral relationship to the landscape. The experiences of the ‘boarding school generation’ directly relate to the loss of Native languages in Alaska. Lingít language instructor and participant in this study, Vivian Mork, claims, “The boarding school generation had an effect on the decline of the Lingít language. There are less than 300 fluent speakers so our revitalization is challenging” (Appendix B, lines 296-298, pp. 497). In Alaska, boarding schools were places where sexual and physical abuses were common. Children were made to feel ashamed to speak their language and were beaten if they were caught speaking with one another. Manatowa-Bailey (2007) claims that, “In

order to kill a language you must get inside someone's head; you must break their spirit and their mind, not just their body" (para. 2). In order to show the effects of the loss of language as it relates to contemporary Tlingit identity, I examine the boarding school generation, including the influence of the assimilationists' worldview. Subsequently, I point out how the Lingít language is connected to Tlingit identity and well-being and provide an overview of the Lingít language revitalization, as well as the cultural barriers to learning the Lingít language. In addition, I examine a contemporary issue, Alaska's English-only law, drawing a comparison between the early missionary Euro-centric worldview and today's recent English-only law. Finally, I outline how tribal self-determination is related to language revitalization.

#### *The boarding school generation*

Elders who were subject to the boarding school experience, i.e., 'the boarding school generation,' have influenced contemporary Tlingit identity. As young children, some of today's elders were punished for speaking their language and made to feel that being Tlingit was wrong. Their entire worldview, developed over thousands of years, was devalued to make way for the new Western worldview. Consequently, the next generation did not acquire the Lingít language, knowledge, and worldviews because they were either diminished, or not transmitted at all. This resulted in the ensuing generations' struggle to form both a tribal and individual Tlingit identity in a contemporary world.

In 1883, people from various churches, government agencies, and social groups organized a group called the Friends of the Indian whose goal was to assimilate Native



Americans into mainstream society through re-education at schools designed for that specific purpose (Dauenhauer, R., 1997; Shales, 1998). By the late 1800s, at the time the United States acquired Alaska from Russia, U.S. policy towards genocide was no longer an option. Pressure from civic-minded social groups who shifted federal policies away from murdering Native Americans towards re-educating Natives in Western ways (Haycox, 1984). The Bureau of Indian Affairs was among one of the agencies mandated to send Alaska Natives to boarding schools. Although attitudes have changed, today, many Tlingits view this manner of assimilation as a legal form of genocide because they continue to suffer from the results of the boarding school system. According to Nora and Richard Dauenhauer (1994), the key to assimilation required that Natives give up their traditions, including subsistence and language in order to adapt to white values, thus to be considered civilized. The Dauenhauer's (1994) also point out that "...Presbyterian missionary educators such as Sheldon Jackson and others argued that the native people of Alaska should be trained so as to be useful and acceptable to whites" (p.74). The missionary-implemented education system provided a means to educate the Tlingit with the purpose of providing service to the dominant culture as evident in the 'outing' system and Alaska's boarding home program (Smith, 1967; Kleinfeld, 1972; N. & R. Dauenhauer, 1994). The 'outing' system placed Native students with non-native families in order to assimilate them into Western culture.

In 1884, the Organic Act established the educational model for Alaska. According to R. Dauenhauer in *Two Missions to Alaska* (Haycox & Mangusso, 1996), William T. Harris, the head of the Bureau of Education stressed, "We have no higher calling than to

be missionaries of our idea to those people who have not yet reached the Anglo-Saxon frame of mind” (p. 83). The missionaries subsequently began a systematic destruction of the Tlingit culture, beginning with removing young children from their homes and sending them off to receive a ‘civilized’ western education. Reverend Sheldon Jackson, a Presbyterian minister, was among the missionaries who attempted to assimilate the Tlingits. Today, both within and outside of the Tlingit culture, there are those who view Jackson’s intentions as “well meaning” because of his policy to avoid the reservation system. The Organic Act, by means of the Bureau of Education, developed the assimilation policies that created Alaska’s boarding school program. By 1886, a nationwide campaign was underway, with Sheldon Jackson as the newly appointed General Agent for Education. Jackson appealed to the altruistic nature of church and political groups, asking for educational funding in order to save the Tlingit people from the ‘negative’ side of Western civilization (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1987, 1990, 1994; R. Dauenhauer, 1997).

To educate the Tlingit children, the Bureau of Education implemented a separate school system for Alaska Natives. Truant officers were present in every community whose job was to force parents to send their children to school. Officials detained families, forcing them to give up their seasonal subsistence lifestyle and move to larger towns, such as Juneau, to attend the native schools. However, some parents made those decisions themselves in order to keep their families together; other families risked arrest by hiding from authorities. In *Life Woven With Song* (2000a), Nora Dauenhauer writes, “When we stopped in Hoonah or Juneau on the

boat, my father and the rest of the family hid the children from the school authorities” (p.42). Families were deprived of their traditional educational environment: the fish camp, fishing boat, tribal relationships, and village life. The relationships to their ancestral past through the physical interaction with their landscape were severed due to enforced relocation. According to research participant Elizabeth Martin (Appendix D) her family was separated in order to send the children to Sheldon Jackson boarding school in Sitka, Alaska:

There was me and my sister and my brother....there were five of us. But my other brother was in the Sheldon Jackson school and my sister and I was there for a little while, not too long. And my brother passed away, my older brother. And my sister passed away a month after my brother died. (Lines 27-30, p. 625)

Without a connection to the landscape through language and customs, the Tlingits felt disjointed and suffered from the effects of “culture shock.” The boarding schools and the local ‘Native only’ schools destroyed the Tlingit worldview, as children were taught that the Western lifestyle was the ‘only’ way and that the Tlingit way-of-life was ‘evil’. Even traditional food consumption was discouraged. According to Nora Marks Dauenhauer (2000a) when recollecting her father’s experiences at the Chemawa Boarding School, her father describes the grief over losing his traditional foods:

He said the most terrible was when they remembered their Indian foods back at home as they passed from bunk to bunk raw potatoes they swiped to eat after

lights-out. Someone would make the sounds of salmon boiling with seal oil and water cooking on a beach or elsewhere out of doors. (p.29)

Administrators and teachers admonished the children not to disclose the physical and emotional abuse they experienced and, as a result, elders who survived the trauma are reluctant to divulge their experiences. The life of a child that once thrived in the village was forgotten.

Adaptation to the boarding school experience and the new culture varied.

Because children were taught to perceive their world from a Western worldview and to think primarily as an individual rather than culturally, when they returned home after years in a boarding school, they viewed their parents and elders in the village as backwards. Many young adults who were raised in the boarding schools did not want to return to their village to pursue a subsistence lifestyle. Western jobs, money, and the things that money offered, were more attractive. For many Tlingits, there was no choice but to adapt the new ways in order to survive while trying to hold onto their own worldviews. Walter Soboleff (1992a) describes the impact of entrusting another culture to educate Tlingit children:

The Western culture has gradually come to our shores since 1867. There has been a gradual transition from Tlingit culture into the modern way of life. Little did our people realize that things are really changing. They were attracted by the many modern conveniences, but basically their attitudes were Tlingit, Haida, or Tsimshian. Later we were in a sense neglecting that part of being teachers and we

were letting the American school system do all of our teaching. The change brought about a very interesting cycle. (p. 7-9)

Unfortunately, the cycles included the multi-generational effects of alcohol, depression, suicide, and identity theft.

The multi-generational effects of boarding schools and the missionary education system are just now being realized. Hirshberg and Sharp's *Thirty Years Later: The Long Term Effect of Boarding Schools on Alaska Natives and Their Communities* (2005) broke the silence. Respondents to this study reported ongoing trauma related to their boarding school experiences:

...but it was those two worlds clashing and trying to find ourselves, that loss of identity and being told to think white and be a white person inside of us and that assimilation—forced assimilation was with me until probably my—close to 30 when I realized, finding my own identity about my roots...this is where I belong and was at peace with myself. (Hirshberg & Sharp, 2005, p. 19)

For a period, Alaska Natives could not deal with the trauma and unknowingly passed it on to subsequent generations. The effect of lasting trauma includes loss of cultural identity, inability to relate to the people in the community, failure to learn parenting skills, loss of language, and community disruptions such as drug and alcohol abuse (Hirshberg & Sharp, 2005; Napoleon, 1991).

Among these, some feel that the loss of language was the greatest detriment. LaBelle's and Smith's (2005) study on the boarding school experience in Alaska points out that "...the boarding schools are the second leading cause of major trauma among

Alaska's indigenous people..." (p. 4). Children were punished for speaking their Native languages and children were prohibited from speaking their languages among themselves. According to LaBelle and Smith (2005)

The constant punishment for speaking ones language, and the berating of a child's indigenous culture, finally took its toll. Many children who returned home for the summer understood less of their home language....Some were ashamed to be associated with their language and culture" (p.8).

Shame was the predominant emotion as a respondent in LaBelle and Smith's study claims: "Everything that I learned about the world was shaped in the Western image. I came away from boarding school confused and ashamed about my identity" (2005, p. 10). As a result of the boarding school experience, two generations of families were traumatized.

Despite these tragic circumstances, one result of a boarding school experience was that Native children from a variety of communities socialized for the first time. For example, Inupiaq students met Tlingit students and produced friendships that eventually led to the formation of political alliances. Boarding school children grew up to become Native educators and leaders determined to make life better for their villages and established political groups such as the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB). Many of the political contacts that Alaska Natives formed were the result of knowing one another from their boarding school years.

The boarding school effort lasted for two generations. The Wrangell Institute finally closed down in the 1970s. However, Mount Edgecumbe High School in Sitka,

Alaska remains as a State run boarding school and new talks have emerged again, as the State of Alaska considers regional boarding schools as a solution to funding difficulties for village public schools. At a 2000 Regional Learning Center forum for a group called Commonwealth North, State Representative Gail Phillips (2000) of Homer suggested, "...those old boarding schools, they used to work, maybe it's time we started looking at the boarding concept again" (para. 13). The Hirshberg and Sharp (2005) study is a reaction to the effort to rekindle Alaska's boarding school program (Also see Kleinfeld's 1972 study, *Alaska's Urban Boarding Home Program*). To this day, many elders refuse to discuss their experiences. Because of Alaska's boarding schools and the missionary run schools, the traditional route of education and cultural training, including language and worldviews, was lost.

#### *The Tlingit reaction to the assimilationists' worldview*

Colonial policy towards indigenous peoples in the Americas can be described in three phases: extermination, assimilation, and multiculturalism (Smith & Ward, 2001). Extermination was the early policy of the United States government towards Native Americans, and, in Alaska, through the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the policy moved towards assimilation. From first contact, the Tlingits have resisted colonization, including the Eurocentric worldview and the concept of one culture and one language. According to N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1998), "The loss of Native American Languages is directly connected to laws, policies, and practices of European Americans" (p. 60). The

evidence presented in early literature, society and church newsletters, and missionary correspondences suggests that these policies were intentional.

Rosita Worl (n.d.) in an interview with the Northwest Indian news on the subject of disappearing languages, explains two factors contributing to the loss of the Lingit language:

In terms of the eradication of our language, it stemmed from two sources, one was that the government, the missionaries, thought it was important to leave our traditional ways and our languages behind. ...but also the Tlingit people themselves decided that they wanted to learn English. And I think our leaders were very wise, in terms of looking at the institutions, the new political systems and they wanted to participate in those systems. And they knew they had to speak and read English in order to vote. (*Disappearing languages*, n.d.)

For the Tlingit, a sense of well-being meant the ability to speak English in order to gain educational, economic, and political power. English became a tool for resisting forced educational policies, adversarial subsistence laws, and the loss of land. Worl (n. d.) claims, “We didn’t want to abandon the language. We wanted to master the new language” (*Disappearing languages*). Tlingit elder Clarence Jackson (n. d.) clarifies, “They wanted the people to get educated. The white people are going to come up like a tidal wave. And we are going to sit on the sidelines unless we educate our people” (*Disappearing languages*). In addition, the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB), founded in 1912, advocated a Western education and adopted the English language in their meetings (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer 1994).



A mastery of the English language and adaptation to Euro-American culture were a defense mechanism against colonization. As a result, the Tlingits fought back through struggles over citizenship rights, discrimination, integrated schools for both Native and non-natives, and battles over land claims due to loss of ancestral lands (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1998, 1994). Many of these struggles required a mastery of the colonizer's language. Research participant Vivian Mork explains:

Native peoples knew there was a lot of change coming. They needed to be ready and one way was to educate leaders within the Western system. But it didn't have to be done in such a traumatic way. If only the American government would have known how much better off they would have been if they allowed Native people to keep their culture. (Appendix B, lines 229-233, p. 494)

Shales (1998) explains this paradigm shift as "...significant and very difficult periods of history" (p. 8). However, the Tlingit did not completely understand the implications of their choices and the events that shaped their lives. Although Shales' (1998) research demonstrates "...the Tlingit were active participants in carrying forth their culture into modern times" (p. 8). Shales' grandfather, Rudolph Walton, experienced the same difficult choices. In the legal case, *Davis v. Sitka School Board* (1908), Rudolph Walton and his children's 'civilized' nature was on trial and Walton was questioned about whether or not he could read and write in English. The grandmother of Lizzie Allard, another mixed-blood child, was also cross-examined. Lizzie was deemed 'uncivilized' and prohibited from attending Sitka's public school. Her father, Mr. George Allard, was also questioned as to whether or not Lizzie spoke English or if she could hold a

conversation in English (Shales, 1998). For Tlingit parents, the question of whether or not their child acquired an education was dependent upon acquiring a new language. In addition, the moral codes established by the Presbyterian Church in Southeast Alaska dictated that admission to church membership precluded speaking Lingít.

There is also evidence that early educators continued to express prejudices and advocated against speaking Lingít. O.M. Salisbury (1962), a teacher who taught in the village of Klawock on Prince of Wales Island, stated, "It is already very clear to us that their language is wholly inadequate to express much in abstract thought..." (p. 62). Salisbury, like other early teacher/missionaries perceived the Lingit language as inferior to English and believed that instruction in Lingit inhibited cultural progress among the Tlingits. Sheldon Jackson's policies also supported eradicating the Lingít language. In the *Northstar Journal*, Kelly and Jackson (1888) emphasized, "The Commissioner of Indian Affairs urges, and very forcibly too, that instruction in their vernacular is not only of no use to them but is detrimental to their speedy education and civilization" (as cited in R. Dauenhauer, 1997).

In addition to boarding schools, missionaries, teachers, and colonizing attitudes, disease was another factor that contributed to the loss of the Lingít language. As the move towards missions in Alaska expanded, epidemics became rampant. Shales (1998) points out that, "It led many concerned people to conclude that if the Indians were to survive, they had to become educated, civilized, and Christianized" (p. 64). Influenza, smallpox, and tuberculosis killed thousands of Tlingit people. In 1835, there were an estimated 10, 000 Tlingit, reduced from a first contact population estimate of nearly

15,000. Moreover, by 1890, the Tlingit population was diminished to 4,500 people (Fortune, 1987; Shales, 1998). The diseases and the deaths experienced by the Tlingit weakened their social structure because many tradition bearers and elders died during the epidemics. In some communities, one-third to one-half of the population were either dead or dying. During 1835-36, about one-half of Sitka's population was decimated (Shales, 1998; Fortune, 1987; Napoleon, 1991). In 1893, a major segment of the population in the village of Hoonah died or was affected by a smallpox epidemic, accordingly casting the community into confusion and shock (Alaska Coastal Management Plan, 2006). A confounding tragedy was that the children who had experienced disease in their communities and families were sent the boarding schools as orphans. Research participant Vivian Mork (Appendix B) explains:

It wasn't just the boarding-school experiences that created the loss; it began with epidemics such as small pox and tuberculosis. These diseases wiped out entire villages including their traditional knowledge and language. In no time at all, whole dialects disappeared with no possible way of getting them back. Each Elder, being a life-long library, was gone in an instant. (Lines 219-224, p. 494)

As a result, many children were sent to boarding schools as orphans. Jim LaBelle (LaBelle & Smith, 2005) writes:

[These children] were now burdened with the erosion and loss of cultural identity and language for having attended boarding school. The result was the compounding and acceleration of indigenous trauma over which they had no control. (p. 8)

Whether or not the resultant loss of the Lingít language was intentional, or whether language loss was forced upon the Tlingits through boarding schools, disease, and Christianization, the loss is still being felt today. In Tlingit poet Robert Davis' poem, *Saginaw Bay I Keep going Back* (1991), he explains how his worldview and those of his elders 'fit better' when the Lingít language is used:

When I was young everyone used Tlingit  
and english at once.  
Tlingit fit better.

The old ones tell a better story in Tlingit.  
But I forget so much  
and a notepad would be obtrusive and  
suspicious. I might write a book.  
In it I would tell how we all are pulled  
so many directions,  
how our lives are fragmented  
with so many gaps.

In Davis' (2007) artist's statement and poem, he claims that his creative drive is an attempt to connect his past to the present. He explains, "I keep going back, and I keep trying to see myself against all this history." Like many Tlingits today, Davis' frustration over losing his language is portrayed through his writing. In order to connect to his past, he must revisit history and address the painful issue of language loss. Revisiting language loss means revisiting the boarding school generation, the missionary influence, and revisiting those great-grandparents who chose not to pass the language on to the next generation.

*Language, identity and well-being*

Identity is affected when a culture is conquered and language and culture are suppressed, leading to a myriad of social ills. Ellen Lutz (2007), executive director of *Cultural Survival*, points out that those Native American languages were not lost, but stolen by immigrants set on implementing the myth of the American dream through the concept of the 'melting pot'. Socio-linguist Roy Mitchell clarifies, "Language is a part of a persons' individual identity and group identity. For anybody to function as a healthy, happy member of society, they need to be comfortable with who they are and where they are from (Fry, 2001).

According to Battiste and Henderson (2000), "In human consciousness, language is a manifestation of the finite contained in an infinite mystery. Everywhere we are born to a language, everywhere it binds our consciousness" (p.73). Also, Jesse Little Doe Fermino (2001) stresses that language is layered, claiming that "The first layer of language is creation. Creation is an ongoing process" (para. 4). Fermino's belief is that language was given to each group of people as a process of creation; therefore, language should be viewed as a privilege and a responsibility. It is within these concepts that the Lingít language identifies one as Tlingit and forms his or her unique worldviews. A difference in worldviews is evident in the manner in which the English and Lingít languages are constructed, e.g., the English language is noun-based and the Lingít language is verb-based. Battiste and Henderson suggest, "A noun based system that is not based on the sensory natural world but on artificially created ideas proceeds from mastery to enslavement" (2000, p. 73).

The consequences of language loss are multi-layered and complex. Shaw (2001) calls this experience a ‘duality of loss.’ The multilayered experiential loss as defined by Shaw (2001) includes:

- Loss of oral traditions and the knowledge it contains
- Loss of the wisdom of spiritual and physical well-being
- Loss of the right and subsequent ability to speak your language
- Loss of pride in speaking the traditional language
- Loss of the ability to speak the language
- Loss of the ability to understand the language
- And eventual loss of identity

These points suggest what many Tlingit elders today feel: that learning the Lingit language promotes well-being. Language is linked to individual identity; therefore, the loss can be traumatic for indigenous peoples. In an article on the Lingit revitalization effort, Hans Chester, the youngest fluent Lingit speaker, describes his emotional loss as, “Part of owning up to those deep emotions is to do something about it. And so not really knowing where I belonged in a society was part of it. I didn't feel I belonged anywhere... Learning who my relatives are made me feel more complete...” (Fry, 2001).

In the Tlingit culture, as with all indigenous cultures, a sense of well-being is inherently linked to the internal worldview and language of a people. Kawagley (2002a) explains:

As a Native person, you need your Native language to commune with nature and to describe it in its own terms....I have to draw on my language to fully

experience the mountains, the moon, the sun, the river, the spruce tree, the taste of Hudson's Bay tea, the wolf, the eagle and the paramecium—it is a living language! All these experiences with the language, along with the five senses and intuition are necessary for my growth and my spirituality. (p. 4)

Language loss has far-reaching consequences because as a language dies so does a culture's traditional knowledge. In addition, language loss is often connected to political and religious oppression (R. Dauenhauer, 1997, Cantoni, 1996). Fillmore (1991) suggests that the social cost of language loss includes alcoholism, drug abuse, dysfunctional families, and child abuse, among other social ills. In addition research participant Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) states, "When we have a sense of well-being, 'we lift out ourselves and lift up our communities'..." (Lines 631-632, p. 575). Therefore, the solution to the crises, both political and social, may lie within the Lingít language revitalization movement.

### *Lingít language revitalization*

The Lingit language revitalization effort reflects current global attitudes. On the global level, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the United Nations in 2007 reflects the importance of maintaining indigenous languages. Article 13 of the declaration states:

Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems, and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for

communities, places and persons. (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2007, p.5)

In addition, article 15 states:

Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational system and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning....States shall in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language. (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2007, Article 14, Article 15, p.5-6)

Thus, the United Nations recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples to revitalize or maintain their languages.

Language revitalization is often associated with a resurgence of ethnic identity. According to Ferdman (1990), "At the individual level, cultural identity has to do with the person's sense of what constitutes membership in an ethnic group to which he or she belong"(p. 192). The resurgence of ethnic identity results in Tlingits seeking identity through language acquisition. According to research participant Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) explains how many multicultural Tlingit families have lost a sense of tribal identity through the loss of language:

I was raised in a tri-cultural family. My mother, a Tlingit from Hoonah, and my



father, a Filipino from Manila, spoke English in our home, as their second language, and that was the only language I learned as a child. I recognize my immediate cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces, yet we are not united as a clan entity. We no longer live together in clan house, nor even in the same town. (Lines 598-602, p. 574)

Maintaining indigenous languages is a challenging effort that often involves dealing with the extent of the loss of language, barriers to learning the language, differences in worldviews influencing the state and federal political systems, and self-determination.

The Lingít language is the ancestral language of the Tlingit people of Southeastern Alaska, northern British Columbia, and communities of Teslin, Carcross, and Atlin in the Southern Yukon. In total, there is estimated to be between 200 to 400 fluent Lingít speakers in the United States and around 100 fluent speakers in Canada. N. and R. Dauenhauer (1998) formulate a more liberal estimate at somewhere between 500 and 900 speakers in both Canada and the United States. The Lingít language contains several dialects: Northern, Southern, and Tongass, with fluent speakers able to communicate with little difficulties. There are about thirty sounds not found in the English language, in addition to fourteen glottalized consonants, glottalized stops, fricatives, and non-labialized letters, including a voiceless 'L', creating a wonderfully complex language, but making Lingít one of the most difficult languages to learn. In addition to being difficult to learn, Lingít is considered an endangered language. The language could be extinct as early as the year 2030 (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1998). According to Fishman (1991), the Lingít language is in stage seven or eight in

regards to language loss. In stage eight, few elders speak Lingít and in stage seven, only adults beyond child-bearing age are speaking the language. The suggested interventions by Reyhner (2001) and Fishman (1991) are:

- Developing language nests,
- Providing domains to encourage language use,
- One-on-one mentoring with a fluent speaker,
- Intergenerational transmission in the home.

(See Appendix B for research associate Vivian Mork's experience in the Lingít language revitalization effort and see Chapter 5 for a description of venues for transmitting the Tlingit language/culture).

Despite ominous predictions and the challenges with learning the Lingít language, and even without being written down, the language has survived for generations. In 1912, the Tlingit still spoke their language fluently, a remarkable occurrence considering the pressures by missionaries to eradicate the language (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1994). Unfortunately, since then, fluent speakers have been drastically reduced by means of forcing the English language and worldview upon past and present generations. Due to this decline in the use of the language, the Tlingit recognized that they would have to rely on a written language in order to sustain and transmit their traditional worldviews to subsequent generations. In the 1960s, two Wycliffe Bible translators, Constance Naish and Gillian Story (1973, 1996), developed the current orthography. Their original intent was to translate the Bible into Lingít. In 1972, a consensus adopted the structure of the language; and again in 1976, the Tlingit Language Workshop conducted subsequent

revisions (Fair & Worl, 2000; N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1998). These elders and leaders recognized the necessity regarding instructing younger speakers how to read and write Lingít; this has developed into an important aspect of continuing instruction in language and culture.

The questions that Tlingits often have in regards to language learning are: Why one should learn the Lingít language if it is so difficult? Why learn if someday it will be extinct? However, there are ample reasons for encouraging indigenous language learning. In Arizona at the Diné immersion school, students whose first language is Diné perform two grade levels above the English-speaking first language students. And, in Hawaii, the students in the Hawaiian language immersion schools exhibit a zero-percent dropout rate, with a majority of those students continuing on to enroll in college (Lutz, 2007). Moreover, there is a realization that the language contains elements of the Tlingit worldviews that English cannot express. Research participant Vivian Mork, a Lingit language specialist, explains, “When you lose the language, you lose an entire way of looking at the world” (Fry, 2005). There are several hundred learners, under the age of 60, who are currently working within the language revitalization effort, either by directly learning the language or by supporting the effort through various projects including curriculum development. Most of these language ‘learners’ are not fluent Lingít speakers and English is their first language. The grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the boarding schools generation are the ones who are seeking to rediscover their heritage through language acquisition.

*Cultural barriers to learning Lingít*

Despite the spiritual and emotional benefits to learning Lingít, there are several obstacles to learning the language. Some Tlingits are reluctant to discuss their inhibitions, but Linda Belarde, a curriculum specialist at Sealaska Heritage Institute who attended the Glacier Bay immersion retreat in 2003, expressed her frustration about learning Lingít:

It was a real challenge, and really frustrating. I am a beginning learner, so it was good to get to hear everyone speaking the language. But when I tried to communicate, I was so awful, it was frustrating. I listened and practiced, though, and it made me decide that I wanted to keep learning. (Orr, 2004)

Obstacles to learning Lingít are varied, but common reactions are: shyness, unfamiliar sounds, frustration, and preconceived notions about language learning, such as, “I can learn because I am Tlingit,” or “I can’t learn because I’m not Tlingit enough” and “there is no one to speak with so what is the use.” In another example of how frustrating it can be, Jon Rowan, a 33-year-old Tlingit teacher working in Klawock, expresses his doubts, “We’re babies. All we speak is baby gibberish” (Geary, 1999). Rowan’s experience is common since many new learners have expressed frustration about being able to advance only so far without constant language interaction with elders and other language learners.

Another barrier to learning Lingít concerns the elders. Encouraging elders’ participation can be problematic because some elders suffered under the boarding school experience or were humiliated in public schools for speaking Lingit. Research participant Sam Wright (Appendix A) describes his frustration concerning a man who knew the language but refused to teach others:

Now I spend my time learning the language. There are different dialects. Kake has a different dialect too...I knew a man from there but what a waste because that guy was full of knowledge and just because he was mad at his family, he never went to parties. But when he'd sit there and talk to people, he was just full of knowledge. But he just drifted...but he wouldn't share it. (Lines 99-105, p. 452)

As well, not everyone is a natural teacher and some well-intentioned programs assume that elders can teach the language simply because they can speak it. In addition, the public school system inhibits some elders who are asked to become involved. In a personal conversation during a Lingít language lesson in the public schools, an elder expressed her dilemma over the idea that the school wanted her to come into the classroom and teach Lingít. She told me that at first she was reluctant because she was once punished for speaking her language in the very same school, "Now they want me to come and teach it," she said (anonymous communication, September 2001). According to Vivian Mork (Appendix B):

Many Tlingít elders were punished for speaking their language in the classroom, but now we encourage them to participate. You can see how this causes some difficulty for elders who used to be punished for speaking Lingít. So for many of us it is hard to learn and to teach our own language. (Lines 309-312, p. 498)

Other concerns for elders are related to time and economics, as some elders do not have the transportation to get to the schools setting and yet other elders are repeatedly asked for their expertise and become exhausted and over-extended. For other elders,

whose budgets are stretched, a stipend for assisting is often expected though not always asked for. Many language learners are apprehensive about asking an elder for translations, in addition to feeling uncomfortable about talking in Lingít in front of a fluent elder, especially when the learner is a beginning speaker. Most elders, however, when invited to participate in the language revitalization effort, are more than willing to share their knowledge. A number find a spiritual and emotional healing when they can see the next generation eager to participate in their culture.

Another example of a barrier related to learning the Lingít language derives from my own personal experience and concerns being embarrassed about speaking Lingít. Two years ago, I was showing ‘the sights’ to a group of three women visitors to Hoonah, where I live. The women were interested in the language and culture of the Tlingit people so I asked if they would like to hear me recite my Lingít introduction. I began to speak in Lingít when the youngest woman, who was about 19-yrs-old, burst out laughing. I paused, looked at her and then continued with my introduction. Afterwards she apologized and told me that to her the language sounded ‘funny’ when I used my name, in English, spoken in conjunction with the Lingít sentences. After that experience I became acutely aware of the ‘shyness’ factor in regards to learning Lingít. Through this experience, I can relate to those Lingít language students and learners who have expressed their thoughts about feeling odd when they are using unfamiliar sounds, and their inhibitions about making a mistake in front of other speakers. Especially, I became very aware of how a non-native person might perceive the Lingít language.

Other obstacles, as identified by N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1998) in their article, *Technical, emotional, and ideological issues in reversing language shift: examples from Southeast Alaska*, are considered community based, individual based or both. Among these are anxieties, insecurities, and hesitations about the ‘value’ of maintaining indigenous languages. Although the Dauenhauers (1998) point out that it is politically correct to want to save the Lingít language, the effectiveness of the methods used, or lack thereof, are open to theirs and others’ scrutiny. As well, the emotional factors involved in learning the Lingít language are varied but can be substantial:

- A Christian perspective on Tlingít culture and language, e.g., whether certain aspects of the culture are perceived as ‘evil’
- Suppression of painful memories
- Shame and embarrassment
- Guilt
- Conflicting messages about the value of saving the language
- Pride in singing and dancing taking precedence over language acquisition
- Avoidance attitudes

The Dauenhauers (1998) describe the ‘avoidance’ factor as people, tribal agencies, schools, or institutions who are waiting for someone else to revitalize the language; and the Dauenhauers confer avoidance tendencies upon those who create learning tools and curriculum without the means to implement them. Avoidance can also include depending upon others who have more experience with the language to teach the next generation,

rather than taking on the challenge themselves. Research participant Breanne Mork (Appendix A) explains:

I want my kids to learn the Lingít language. It would be nice if they would learn to speak Lingít. I haven't really. But that's just because I've been away from school for a long time. But I'd like them to learn Lingít. But that's what probably Vivian [my sister] is going to do, teach them Lingít. (Lines 203-206, p.438)

Regardless of these barriers to learning the Lingít language, many people have overcome them with patience, enthusiastic teachers, perseverance, and affording opportunities to speak Lingít. In addition, there must be an open dialogue concerning defining what the specific goals and needs of the community or tribe are. Most importantly, sharing knowledge, curricula, tools, and people in a cooperative and encouraging manner can move towards reducing language shift.

*Perpetuating the monocultural worldview: Alaska's English-only law*

An important aspect of examining the effects of the Lingít language loss and the revitalization effort is to investigate current political barriers. In the United States, the "English-only" movement reflects an attitude of indifference to the cultural importance and identity that indigenous languages afford. Research participant Vivian Mork (Appendix B) experiences the influence of political barriers:

But there is resistance. Politics resists us. Schools resist us. Parents resist us...

Language and power and language instruction is very political. We have always



been political. We know the power of our language. This is why we are preserving our language. (Lines 226-336, pp. 498-499)

In November 1998, 69 % of Alaskan voters approved Ballot Measure Six: Requiring Government to Use English (1998). In the ballot's wording, the 'state' means the legislature, all state agencies, local governments, school districts, public corporations, and the university system. According to statements in support of the measure, "Our diversity can be a strength, but only if we have one common language so everyone can talk to everyone else" (1998, Section 4). But as Jennifer Rudinger Executive Director of the Alaska Civil Liberties Union points out, "The bond that unites our nation and our state is not linguistic or ethnic homogeneity..." (1998, Ballot Measure 6, Section 5).

Many other indigenous communities in the United States have battled the English-only laws. As of 2007, there are twenty-six states with English-only laws on their books. Cherokee activist Fannie Bates (as cited in Pierpoint, 2001) states, "Their sole purpose is to force the English language down the throats of Americans and to take away people's other languages..."(p. 2). Alaska's English-only bill was introduced by "U.S. English", a national organization with 3,000 Alaskan members that operates under the name "Alaskans for a Common Language." The group holds to the American melting pot notion that our identities must be blended together to be Americans, and accordingly the English language is a tool towards achieving those results. Peirpoint (2001) credits U.S. English's involvement in helping Alaska, Georgia, Montana, New Hampshire, and other states pass English-only laws. Bates, "sees a ghostly image of racism behind the effort (as cited in Pierpoint, p. 2). In Alaska, over half (58 %) of urban residents supported the

bill, whereas 39 % of rural residents polled supported the bill. The English-only issue is a reflection of the disparities between rural and urban ideologies and Native and non-native worldviews.

Although the bill claimed that Alaska Native languages would be exempt through the protection of the 1990 Native American Languages Act, opponents stressed that the Act has no such provision because it is “not enforceable against state and local governments” (Ballot Measure 6, 1998). Opponents to the law also claimed that, if the law passed, Alaskan Native peoples would be prohibited from speaking their indigenous languages at public meetings; and in the case of public schools, the already established bilingual and language immersion programs that are funded by the state would be affected. This law prohibits state employees from speaking another language other than English to conduct official business. As a result of the passage of the law, two lawsuits were brought to the court: *Kritz v. State of Alaska*, and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) in cooperation with the North Slope Borough, brought suit challenging the law. The law was not enforced while the lawsuit was pending and ultimately, the court struck it down in 2002. Superior Court Judge Fred Torrisi, speaking for the state court said, “...it prevents government officials from communicating with the public in violation of basic free speech rights” (American Civil Liberties Union, 2002). The State of Alaska declined to appeal. However, Alaskans for a Common Language did appeal to the Alaska Supreme Court and on Nov. 3, 2007, the Alaska Supreme Court struck down the provision that would require English to be used exclusively for government business. Despite the opponents’ victory, on the primary

contention, a section of the law remains standing allowing for government document preparation in English only if allowing documents to be printed in other languages too. Therefore, both sides claim victory in the ruling. The supporters of the English-only law claim that most of the wording stands, most importantly the section that says that English is the common language of Alaska. Opponents of the law claim victory because the law says that a person who is speaking in a government meeting has a right to speak in their own language (Pierpoint, 2001; Hunter, 2007).

Dalee Sambo Dorough, Inupiat, and Executive Director of the Indian Law Resource Center in Anchorage, brings up the point of the immigrant perspective, meaning that the English-only laws are designed to protect American English from the immigrant population. Dorough states, “But it’s deeper than just language, rural Natives see everyone else as immigrants” (as quoted in Deike-Sims, 1999, p. 4). Thus, for many Alaska Natives, there are lingering colonizing attitudes reflected in the growing trend towards encouraging a monoculture worldview.

According to Vivian Mork (Appendix B) the public school setting should be open to teaching the Tlingit worldview and language because it builds self-esteem:

But in a public school I have the opportunity to encourage young people to become interested in learning the Lingít language. When kids and other Tlingit people are given the opportunity to learn the Lingít language, it opens up a new way to understand the world. The whole world opens up to them. Their natural environment becomes alive with stories, traditions, songs, and dances. (Lines 351-356, p. 500)

However, with both sides of the English-only law claiming victory, the law remains as a shadow upon Alaska's bilingual and language immersion programs. As a result, those who view the indigenous languages as inferior affect the Lingít language revitalization effort. The concept of the melting pot and the homogenous American detracts from the cultural richness of Alaska's Native peoples. The English-only law, which advocates that only English be spoken in the public schools, is perceived by some as a modern tool of cultural oppression and continued assimilation reflecting the early missionary's policies. Vivian Mork (Appendix B) claims "...resistance to teaching from the Tlingit point of view reveals prejudices against Tlingit language and culture" (Lines 327-329, p. 499). Among the Tlingit, this ideology perpetuates the continuing struggle over maintaining identity through language, worldviews, and traditional values.

The English-only law has its roots in history. Historical evidence suggests that colonizing peoples looked down upon those who spoke another language and held to a different worldview, thus inciting the missionary notion of the 'savage' (Ross, 1998; Smith, 1999). Indigenous peoples were instructed in English and Western European ways. Today, language loss continues as a direct result of the view that promotes the mono-linguistic mindset of English-only laws. Currently, two groups in the United States, English First and U.S. English are struggling to convince every state to enact English-only laws. The groups who are promoting the English only mindset view the English language as a bond, "...that holds our country together and a panacea to the problems of poverty faced by many ethnic minorities in the United States" (Reyhner, 2001, para. 22). In reality, when people are not allowed to use their languages, democracy is thwarted,

because without access to information in their own languages, an elite dominant linguistic minority group can control others (Nettle & Romaine, 1999). Battiste and Henderson (2000) claim “the illusion affirms the idea of a universal language and worldview, while it conceals the inequalities encoded in the dominant language and worldview. The illusion is a tool of power” (p. 81). In addition, having a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward certain languages is usually dependent upon the person’s perception of the language speakers:

If that group is held in high esteem, their language too may be regarded favorably. If for some reason the group is disliked or accorded low social status, their language too may be looked on with disfavor. Such attitudes are often expressed in statements that a given language is not as good as one's own, or that it sounds unpleasant. (Travis, 2002, para. 6).

A person may experience conflict and confusion if the dominant societies’ views concerning their language, perpetuates the image that speakers of a particular language are considered to be of a ‘lower class’ (Travis, 2002). These attitudes can be termed ‘ethnocentrism.’ Rheyner (2001) reminds us that “The ethnocentrism that breeds assimilationism is a worldwide phenomenon, and legal efforts to suppress minority languages and cultures are not new, especially as regards American Indian languages” (2001, para. 11).

*Globalization: a guise for a monocultural worldview*

Today, monoculturalism in a worldwide context is termed “globalization.” The term globalization continues to be a popular catch-phrase with lawmakers and political figures who promote the idea of a monocultural worldview. Science, technology, international commerce, and tourism are all facets of modern life, which at times can be detrimental to indigenous peoples who are striving to retain the sacredness and the uniqueness of their communities and languages. Technological advances have led to globalization and in turn, globalization feeds the colonistic ideals in the Eurocentric worldview. Technology has created this type of society: one that places emphasis on the written word rather than the oral traditions, enabling many languages to die off. English is promoted in books, on radio, television, and in newspapers etc... However, Nettle and Romaine (1999) claim in their article *The Last Survivors*, “Globalization on an unprecedented scale does not change the fact that most people everywhere still live their lives in local settings and feel the need to develop and express local identities to pass on to their children” (Nettle & Romaine, 1999, para. 13). In Southeastern Alaska’s Tlingit communities, the transmission of knowledge includes a mixture of contemporary Western ways of knowing and the Tlingit worldview. V. Mork (Appendix B) suggests, “If our revitalization is going to be successful, teachers need to be flexible. That’s why I use new techniques with traditional ways of teaching” (Lines 374-375, p. 501). The boarding school generation, who are now elders, were deterred in their duty to pass on their language and culture. Today, there is a renewed interest in language and cultural preservation. Tlingit ways of knowing are being promoted among the scientific research

community, tribal entities, in university settings, and the public schools, in addition to the continuation of language and culture within Tlingit society.

Many Tlingit have lost the ability to speak their language, some have no means to learn, and others have no desire to learn or re-learn their language. Does this mean that they cannot gain power over their circumstances, political power, or social standing? Does it mean that they are not Tlingit? N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1998) claim that 90 percent of Tlingit do not speak Lingít, yet those people assert they are ‘ethnically Tlingit.’ This suggests, “...that somehow ‘the culture’ is surviving without the ‘language’” (p. 73). The Dauenhauers also contend that the culture functions as such without using the ancestral language. Through this interpretation, it can be argued that the Lingít language as being alive in the human spirit. The language is often conveyed through participation in cultural activities as well as expressing oneself in a positive way. In *Reinventing the Enemies Language*, Harjo and Bird (1997) challenge Native peoples who have lost the language in one form or another to speak out:

But to speak, at whatever the cost, is to become empowered rather than victimized by destruction. In our tribal cultures the power of language to heal, to regenerate, and to create is understood. These colonizers’ languages, which often usurped our own tribal languages or diminished them, now hand back emblems of our cultures, our own designs: beadwork, quills if you will. We’ve transformed these enemy languages” (pp. 21-22).

Tlingit voices can still be heard in drumming, carving, dancing, storytelling, and other cultural activities. Consequently, those Tlingit communities that have no other avenues

for reclaiming their lost languages can perhaps adopt this attitude. In adopting the ‘enemies’ language, one can use that language to influence the political atmosphere, including concepts like self-determination, which is exactly what the ANB accomplished.

In conclusion, for those involved in the Tlingit language revitalization effort, today’s globalized worldviews have replaced colonialism in regards to indigenous languages, thus detrimental to the well-being of the Tlingit and ultimately influencing contemporary Tlingit identity: Research participant Vivian Mork (Appendix B) explains:

Leaving cultural identity out of the public school system allows the monocultural attitude to thrive. If we encourage Lingít language children will view their ways of knowing, as something they can use outside of the classroom, validating their culture and identity. (Lines 385-388, p. 501)

For some Tlingit, these worldviews threaten the existence of the Tlingit culture. The loss and struggle with maintaining the Lingít language can be overcome by using self-determination as a means to the Lingít language revitalization. V. Mork (Appendix B) states, “It is my belief that Indigenous languages taught in the public school system have the power to free Indigenous minds from the Western worldview” (Lines 325-326, p. 498). Self-determination includes tribally-controlled schools, curriculum, and language acquisition settings such as culture camps, language nests, and media (see Chapter 5 for an examination of these settings). Through the assistance of elders and other members of the community within and outside the public school system, and by using language curriculum, immersion programs, and parental instruction programs, the Lingít language can be preserved.



*Section two: Conflicting worldviews: Alaska Native subsistence and western laws*

The second set of factors that I have identified as affecting the Tlingit ancestral relationship to the landscape are historical conflicts between the worldviews of the Tlingit and the dominant Western culture in Alaska. For many Tlingit, during 100-plus years of change, the central concern has not been the loss of language, but the loss of a subsistence lifestyle, i.e., *atxaayí kusteeyíx sitee*. The encroachment of non-native civilization, through the loss of clan-owned fishing areas, implementation of subsistence regulations and resultant conflicts, has contributed to the loss of identity among the Tlingit.

In order to understand the history behind Alaska's subsistence laws, I will examine the conflicts in early statehood outlining the differences in worldviews. These conflicts emerge within the passage of Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). Then, I will explain how the failure to understand Tlingit worldviews regarding *atxaayí kusteeyíx sitee* contributes to the loss of identity among the Tlingit. Finally, I will clarify how dual management, interpretation of the terms 'urban' or 'rural', and the resulting legal conflicts are matters of conflicting worldviews.

*Defining subsistence*

According to the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), the term "subsistence" is used to describe the fishing, hunting, and gathering activities of Alaska Natives. For Alaska

Natives “subsistence is more than the right to hunt and gather wild and traditional foods, it is about human beings” (AFN, 2002). In a conversation with a Tlingit elder concerning the term subsistence, she replied, “We do not subsist.” She claimed that the word is often equated to eking out a meager existence or an alternative to welfare (anonymous personal communication, 2005). In the Tlingit worldview, subsistence is described as: *atxaayi kusteeyix sitee*, our food is our way of life, or food/lifestyle. For research participant Carol Williams (Appendix A) the term ‘subsistence’ is best understood through the Tlingit value-system explaining how, “subsistence areas and all nature should be cared for... You need that food to take care of you. Eating your traditional foods is like perpetuating the culture...(Lines 144, 190-193, p. 420, 422). This worldview is not dependent upon whether a Tlingit lives in a rural community or an urban one. Subsistence living is a way of life in rural Alaska, as well as process of providing traditional foods for many Tlingits who choose to live in urban Alaska. Tlingit traditional food and food practices, i.e., *atxaayi*, is an integral concept within the Tlingit worldview, linking the Tlingit to their ancestral landscape and ensuring that their culture will continue into the next generation.

### *Conflicting worldviews*

Because of misunderstandings about the Tlingit ancestral relationships to place, conflicts have developed between Tlingit people and government agencies that enact subsistence laws resulting in historical confusion. From the first contact with non-natives, the argument over the right to a subsistence way of life was inevitable due to conflicting

worldviews. This was not always the case however; in 1884, the United States government recognized Alaska Native dependence upon subsistence activities for their well-being. In Section 8, the Organic Act (2004) clarifies that Alaska Natives were not to be disturbed in their occupancy or use of land; the federal government recognized their occupancy as a lengthy and traditional relationship with the landscape.

In addition, the Organic Act states that Congress had the right to settle any Native claim to ownership of the land (Naske & Slotnick, 1994), thus negating the concept of tribal sovereignty. The interpretation of the word “ownership” held a different meaning to the authors of the act than to the Alaska Natives who were subject to the laws. For example, in the Tlingit worldview, the placement of a smokehouse in the food gathering area was a clear sign of ownership (Goldschmidt & Haas, 1998). Tlingit communities practiced tribal ownership: fishing and hunting areas were “owned” by particular groups of people, i.e., clans, through Tlingit traditional use laws. There are tribal and natural laws regulating fishing, hunting, and gathering activities, therefore the Tlingit did not need Western-style laws. Their traditional use cycles were dependent upon many factors such as population, availability, taboos, and interrelationships with the landscape. The encroachment of non-natives along with their Western laws conflicted with Tlingit clans’ traditional use of streams and fishing habitats. These outside interests, in the form of large canneries, packers, and non-native fishing enterprises, were fishing in clan use areas without permission and sometimes these areas were considered sacred to the Tlingit.

The inability to step out of one’s worldview and examine another’s is the foundation for the prejudices that continue to plague Alaska’s fish and game laws.

Eventually, when Alaska became a state, the Alaska Constitution allotted subsistence resources, both fish and game, for all Alaskans with no preference given to Alaska Natives. Although historical writings on Alaska seem to be mute on this point, the evidence shows this oversight speaks of the racial underpinnings in early statehood. Recently, in 2002, the Alaska Advisory Committee to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission claimed their research confirmed that Alaska's state government lacked in providing rural areas with services; and more importantly, overlooked the importance of Native culture, which is reflected in how subsistence issues are treated (Wallace, 2002). The report is significant because it documents Alaska Natives' civil rights issues and clearly mentions that past and current subsistence laws violate those rights.

#### *Conflicts in early statehood*

Early in Alaska's statehood history, the central issue was the enactment of fish and game laws. The Alaska Statehood Act provided for state management of fish and game. However, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) supports the idea that Congress, which would be "breaking the terms of the compact", cannot overrule the statehood act, being a legal agreement between the federal government and the State of Alaska. Although there is a compact between the State of Alaska and the federal government, there is no treaty (Wallace, 2002). As well, Evon Peter, Neetsaii Gwitch'in, Chairman of the Native Movement, stresses that the lack of a treaty created a relationship with the federal government different from tribes in the continental U.S. This, he claims, has led to lack of sovereign recognition over subsistence rights (Peter, 2003). Thus, omitting a

clear definition of subsistence, with no preference given to Alaska Natives specifically, also illustrates a political fear of tribal sovereignty in early statehood. Empowering Alaska Natives to lead the way in creating their own subsistence laws based upon tribal knowledge would have been consistent with the Native worldview; but the Federal and State governmental control over subsistence, through creating new laws continues to reflect a Western paternalistic worldview.

Historically, the lack of tribal recognition, as well as a conflict between worldviews on the part of Western political powers, was evident in the drafting of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971. Because land and resources were being staked and claimed by non-natives, Alaska Natives eventually filed land claims with the United States government. These land claims led to ANCSA, which to some, is another attempt at assimilation (Thompson, 1999, p. 43). Unfortunately, this instrument of Western culture did not take into consideration the worldview of Alaska Natives and the resultant settlement has led to conflicts for Alaska Native peoples. The destructive practices of enacting laws regarding land use and subsistence that are not culturally appropriate have eroded Alaska Native cultures, including that of the Tlingit.

An early report on the relationship between the traditional use of the land and the Tlingit people is evident in Goldschmidt & Haas' study *Possessory Rights of the Natives of Southeastern Alaska* (1946), and subsequently re-published as *Haa Aani, Our Land: Lingít and Haida Land Rights and Use* (Goldschmidt & Haas, 1998). The narratives clearly establish the relationship between the Tlingit and the subsistence lifestyle, although the study could not convince the enactors of Alaska's subsistence laws to

include preference for Alaska Natives regardless of where they were residing. One of the problems with this perspective is the misconception that if a Tlingit lives in an urban community, drives a car, has an affluent job, then they are not living in a 'traditional manner' and should not be afforded the same rights as those living in the village. This perspective does not take into consideration that the Tlingit worldview connects the spiritual life of the person to their food, *atxaayi kusteeyix sitee*, which bonds the Tlingit to their ancestral landscape. For example, research participant Breanne Mork (Appendix A) explains her clan's subsistence lifestyle in Glacier Bay region:

And then later in the 70s they outlawed seal hunting. It seems strange. If we got our traditional seal we would be considered outlaws. We were doing things we've been doing for thousands of years. We didn't slaughter seal. We ate them and they were part of our diet and ceremonies. But scientist say the seals aren't around. It's because no one lets the Tlingit people hunt them anymore. The natives can't hunt there anymore. (Lines 113-117, p. 434)

Though Congress may have been aware of this relationship to the ancestral landscape through tribal identity, it sought to restructure the tribal worldview, replacing it with a corporate one. In section 1601(b) of the ANCSA document, Congress made it clear that the settlement of Native Lands in Alaska was "without establishing any permanent racially defined institutions, rights, privileges, or obligations..."(Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, 1971). By not recognizing tribal identity as a "racially defined institution with all its privileges and obligations," this act essentially repudiated the Tlingit clan structure. Congress intended to dissolve ancestral tribal structures and assimilate the

Tlingit into the Western corporate model, in addition to extinguishing all claims to the land, including subsistence and traditional use, that were inherently tribal (Walsh, 1985; Berger, 1985).

Whether knowingly or not, the assimilation aspect was revealed in hearings sponsored by the Alaska Native Review Commission (ANRC). At a roundtable discussion, Douglas Jones, a man who originally worked as a member of the Federal Field committee, a group that conducted groundwork for the land claims, revealed that Congress was aware that ANCSA "...was an attempt at social engineering based upon the values and programs...economic development, equality, and upward mobility" (Alaska Native Review Commission, 1984). The 'social engineering' concept was implemented by Congress through ANCSA in attempt to Westernize Alaska Native tribes bestowing upon them the 'proper' Western values of corporate economics and upward mobility. The term 'social engineering' then translates to 'assimilation.'

Early writings on the subject of ANCSA touted its success, mainly focusing upon the corporate structure, money, and land. However, ANCSA extinguished all further land claims, indigenous hunting, and fishing rights. The oil companies backing the bill did not recognize the importance of a subsistence lifestyle to Alaska Natives. Although many Alaska Native leaders were opposed to ANCSA, they felt that the land claims settlement was better than having access to no land whatsoever, so many compromised. Consequently, for both non-native and Native residents, land became equated with resources and money. Yet, Alaska Natives still battle the conflicting interpretations of ownership and subsistence reflecting a difference in worldviews.

To illustrate this point further, in ANCSA section 17 (d)(2), the Secretary of the Interior was authorized to withdraw up to 80-million acres of public land for possible conversion to national park, national forest, wildlife refuge, or scenic river system (Naske & Slotnick, 1994). The problem with this land selection was that everyone, from conservation groups to developers and federal land management agencies seeking support for their own interests, desired control over the d-2 lands. Many Native communities wanted to conserve the land and others, represented by the corporations, wanted the land for multiple use and development. Thus, began the debate over the amount of federal public lands to reserve, which agency to assign the management of lands, and to what extent would the State of Alaska be involved in the management. Nowhere does the act allow for Native management of resources and yet the conservation of land, according to many indigenous worldviews, includes traditional land use. Furthermore, an elder informed me that the government is mistaken in thinking that humans can ‘manage’ nature, as that concept is not in the Tlingit worldview (anonymous conversation). The contrasts between worldviews are also evident in the fact that, in the Tlingit worldview it can be taboo *not* to hunt the animal, which conflicts with limits imposed by Western subsistence laws (Nelson, 1983). One cannot remove “man” from the landscape: humans are a part of the overall wellbeing of the land. Bosworth (1989) stresses that “In spite of all the subsistence research that has been done, researchers continue to feel that the human elements of subsistence are poorly represented” (pp. 31-33). The human element is evident in traditional land use since time immemorial, yet oddly it is absent in past habitat and environmental studies, ultimately affecting Alaska’s subsistence laws.



The distribution of the d-2 land was decided under a law called the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). On December 2, 1980, after years of battle, ANILCA was passed by the U.S. Congress and signed by President Carter. Research participant Breanne Mork (Appendix A) explains how “they made the park bigger. They took more land. Land from us T’akdeintaan. It was expanded for the monument, so it more than doubled its size, and it is still bigger than any park (Lines 108-110, pp.433-434). Under ANILCA, 104.3 million acres were added to the federal conservation system: 43.6 million to the national parks and preserves; 53.8 million to wildlife refuges; 3.4 million for national monuments in the Tongass National Forest; 2.2 million for national conservation and recreation areas; and 1.2 million for wild and scenic rivers (Naske & Slotnick, 1994). Although ANILCA attempted to recognize the importance of “rural” preference, which some have interpreted as meaning “Native” preference, fell short of its intentions. The Alaska Advisory Committee on Civil Rights (Gutierrez, 2002) claims that under ANSCA, the Secretary of the Interior was directed by Congress to protect Alaska Native subsistence lifestyle. However, ANCSA, and subsequently ANILCA, clearly do not provide such protection. *In Racism’s Frontier: The Untold Story of Discrimination and Division in Alaska* (Gutierrez, 2002), the Commission calls the use of the term “rural” as opposed to “Native Alaskans” as “race neutral,” confirmation that subsistence laws could ignore the Native worldview.

*A matter of words*

While investigating the main reasons underlying the battle over Alaska's subsistence laws, it became apparent that one of the problems is a choice of words and the other is a failure to fully comprehend the spiritual significance of subsistence foods and lifestyle. First, the haphazard attempt of Alaska's subsistence laws to understand, let alone define, the difference between "rural" and "urban" peoples fails to recognize the importance of community to Alaska Natives; and within that sense of community is the subsistence lifestyle. For the Tlingit, community identity is an essential aspect of their worldview, whether or not one lives in a designated rural or urban setting.

The terms of ANILCA authorized a subsistence priority to rural Alaskans. The term "rural" would inevitably cause problems with the interpretation of the law, because politicians assumed that most Natives lived in rural communities. Lawmakers disregarded the fact that communities deemed urban, such as Juneau, Aak'w Kwáan, contain large populations of Tlingit. For example, the Auke Bay Small Lake Tribe contains several large Tlingit clans: The L'eeneidí, Gaanax.ádi, Wooshkeetaan, and the L'uknax.ádi, all of whom rely heavily upon subsistence foods despite living in an "urban" community. A sense of community is the foundation for the Tlingit culture, i.e., a 'sense' of belonging, which is essential for survival. For Tlingit urban dwellers, traditional foods play an important part in maintaining Tlingit identity, continually linking the Tlingit to their ancestral landscape: a landscape that is not defined by 'urban' or 'rural'. Within the Tlingit worldview, the community is bonded through language, customs and traditions, food and place. V. Mork (Appendix B) stresses, "The well-being

of Tlingit youth depends upon many things like the ability to learn how to pick and harvest traditional foods...”(Lines 305-307, p. 498). The Alaska Advisory Committee (Gutierrez, 2002) claims that minimizing the importance of subsistence to Alaska Natives is a “refusal to validate the cultural, spiritual, and religious significance of subsistence...” (p. 12). Hence, if basic subsistence laws are based upon the values of American society, then those laws will be counterproductive to the tribal subsistence lifestyle of Alaska Natives. Therefore, subsistence laws contained within the passage of ANCSA and ANILCA are, in themselves, a cultural minimizer, and some say, another form of genocide.

For the Tlingit, a relationship to the landscape also contains a spiritual aspect to subsistence food. For example, research participant Carol Williams (Appendix A) suggests a worldview that believes in consequences due to disrespecting one’s food:

Our people say that the spirits gather at night and they say I’m taken care of here and put in a good place I think I stay...Or the spirits will say I’m not respected here and I think I will find a place where I can be respected.” (Lines 151-155, pp. 420-421)

Respecting subsistence foods and practices means that the Tlingit conducts him or herself within a myriad of taboos, among these are:

- Talking in a disrespectful manner about one’s food
- Not wanting to eat a specific food
- Wasting food
- Not paying respect through ritual

- Not taking an animal or fish that has given itself
- Future successful predictions for hunting/gathering success (boasting)

This spiritual connection through taboos is relevant in both the urban and rural Tlingit practices.

In the Tlingit worldview, communal and spiritual relationships also extend to animals, which are considered relatives of humans. For example, in the Tlingit culture, a person can be a member of the “Killer Whale clan” or the “Brown Bear clan.” Animals are sometimes addressed with terms such as uncle, grandfather, brother, or cousin.

According to research participant Owen James (Appendix D) there are protocols involved when interacting with a crest animal:

My father’s side of the family are killer whales. My father always told me that when I see them out in the water through a piece of herring or toss them out in the water. He always told me either throw a piece of your herring over to them or if you have cigarettes and toss it over to them. (Lines 662-666, p. 607)

Owen was instructed by his father to address the animals as you would a human, “He always told me to say, “How are you doing today?” (Line 667, p. 607).

Moreover, research participant Breanne Mork (Appendix A) suggests a similar relationship:

I feel a little bit of connection when I see Ravens and Eagles...And I know that that’s a part of my history, my family history. It’s a connection to a part of the land, the environment. When I think about Ravens, I think I have a big family, a

lot of history, [and] a lot of stories. My children will be Ravens too. (Lines 285-289, p. 442)

Another example can be seen in the two moieties (half division): the Eagle and Raven. Teri Rofkar (Appendix C) explains further: “And with the Native culture everything has a spirit, there were relationships, just like we have relationships with people” (Appendix C, lines 352-353, p. 537). When introducing oneself in proper Tlingit protocol, a person first informs the listener which moiety he/she belongs to, as in “I am a Raven or I am an Eagle.” Today, in contemporary Tlingit culture, this relationship is well understood. Teri Rofkar (Appendix C) explains this relationship:

Lituya Bay is as far back as I can trace my lineage. The T'akdeintaan, and the Coho family, were the same: it was the same clan group... when you encounter Cohos or the L'uknaxádi those are your folks, they are your family, they are related. (Lines 412-419, pp.539-540 )

Everyone within that moiety is considered to be related, resulting in an interdependent animal/human kinship contain, and within the relationship lays the cultural responsibility to care for one another.

### *Dual management and legal conflicts*

Included in ANILCA was the requirement that the federal government would assume the management of subsistence resources on federal lands if the State of Alaska failed to implement the rural subsistence priority. Many Alaska Natives, however, favor this take-over, because they feel cheated out of their subsistence rights by the state

government. Consequently, in the 1980s, several cases argued that Alaska's subsistence laws must comply with ANILCA in regards to a rural preference: In 1985, *Madison v. Alaska Department of Fish and Game*; in 1988 *Kenaitze tribe v. State of Alaska*; and again in 1988, *McDowell v. the State of Alaska* (Alaska Federation of Natives, 2002). The Kenaitze tribal suit illustrates the problem of differing worldviews underlying Alaska's subsistence laws. The Kenaitze's sued the State of Alaska because the Boards of Fish and Game determined that the Kenai Peninsula was non-rural, thus eliminating the subsistence eligibility for the Kenaitze people. This case served as evidence that rural preference in ANILCA was not working and denied traditional uses to many Alaska Native groups who fell into the Western interpretation of what constitutes "rural." In the McDowell case, the court agreed that a subsistence priority based on residence was unconstitutional under the Alaska State Constitution.

As a result, in 1999, dual-management structure was established in which the State of Alaska retained management responsibility on state and private lands, and the federal government controlled management of fish and game on federal lands. "Because the state and federal governments have different laws and regulations pertaining to land management, the future of subsistence has been in peril since the takeover..." (Alaska Federation of Natives, 2002). The back-and-forth lawsuits that attempted to redefine "rural" preference changed nothing: There remains a gap in understanding Alaska Native worldviews on subsistence. Oddly, the first territorial game law enacted in 1925, allowed for "any Indian or Eskimo, prospector or traveler" to hunt fish and game during a closed season or when food was needed (United Fishermen of Alaska, 2005). Traditional Tlingit

use laws coincided with the seasons, and traditional knowledge based upon an intimate relationship with the landscape. Hoonah resident, and research participant Owen James, explains *atxaayí kusteeyix sitee* traditional use laws according to the Tlingit worldview:

My father said he used to be able to hunt year round. The Tlingit people could get the deer whenever they needed it. When he had enough for one or two meals left he'd go out and get another deer and bring it in, hang it and let it season for a few days, cut it up and put it away. (Appendix D, lines 178-182, p. 585)

It appears that earlier laws made an attempt to understand the importance of traditional foods for Alaska Natives.

The battle over the rights to continue a subsistence lifestyle in contemporary times continues. In 1990, Athabaskan Elder Katie John sued the United States in federal court claiming that the government had unlawfully excluded navigable waters and subsistence fishing from ANILCA's protection. This wasn't the first time that Katie John encountered conflicting worldviews. In 1964, shortly after Alaska became a state, Mrs. John was removed from her ancestral fish camp on the Copper River because the state fish and game managers wanted to protect spawning sockeye. It had only taken forty years, from the first documented territorial subsistence use law in 1925, for state government to enforce laws without consideration of an ancient lifestyle. The 1990 case sought to bring justice to the problem of forcibly removing Native peoples from their fishing grounds. Compounding the problem, the State of Alaska made poor management decisions subsequently removing the traditional Native personhood from the act of conservation, which is in direct conflict with Alaska Native worldviews. In 1994, the court ruled that

“the federal government could protect rural Alaskans' subsistence needs by taking over fisheries management in all navigable waters running through and adjacent to federal lands” (Alaska Federation of Natives, 2002). This ruling was appealed by the State of Alaska who claimed sovereignty to manage fish in navigable rivers located on federal lands. Thus, the claim of sovereignty, beyond Katie John's traditional uses, illustrates that the State of Alaska did not deem Alaska Native subsistence rights as something of value and necessary to cultural survival.

Eventually, on behalf of the State of Alaska, Governor Tony Knowles dropped the final appeal, although the current laws still cause confusion for Native people regarding where and when they can fish and hunt. Owen James (Appendix D) elaborates:

When I was a kid, all my parents had to get was a hunting license. They didn't have to get tags. Back in the 50s and 60s, you had to start getting deer tags. The government would switch it to six deer per person, or sometimes the regulations would say that you were allotted three deer in this place, or three in that place. You have to know where the federal land is and where the state land is. Like in Hoonah, they changed it to where you can get four deer from here and two from the mainland. And now they are talking about changing it yet again. You have to keep up with it. It is the same with the salmon fisheries. (Lines 171-177, pp. 584-585)

The confusion causes some Alaska Natives to disregard hunting and fishing laws in order to provide for their families and maintain their cultural survival. Often the result is that



Alaska Native hunters and fishermen are fined and their boats, rifles, or nets are confiscated (Peter, 2003).

*Conclusion: Haa atxaayí haa kusteeyíx sitee*

For the Tlingit, the consequences of losing their subsistence lifestyle is great. Cultural changes in traditional subsistence practices resulting from current subsistence laws influence contemporary Tlingit identity. Research participant Breanne Mork (Appendix A) provides an example:

I know it hurts the elders the most. I know one man who went hunting with my step dad. When he was on the beach, he looked out across Icy Strait towards Glacier Bay. He was almost crying. He said that that was his homeland and he couldn't go there anymore. I think that elder has a problem with alcohol too. I think this is part of it. The man was sad. My dad said he was so sad. (Lines 175-179, p. 437)

Fortunately, non-natives are beginning to understand the importance of subsistence to Alaska Natives, but current laws do not reflect that change in perception. Recent literature, such as the U.S. Forest Service's publication, *Haa Atxaayí Haa Kusteeyíx Sitee, Our Food is Our Tlingit Way of Life* (Newton & Moss, 2005) provides a multidimensional report on food harvesting and the intimate connection that the Tlingit have with their subsistence lifestyle. A subsistence lifestyle depends upon knowledge passed down through the oral traditions, knowledge about wildlife, weather, and the environment. The report includes oral traditions, life stories, and a Tlingit language CD.

The report confirms that Tlingit traditional knowledge regarding customary uses, including ‘management’ is successful as well as providing insights into the importance of a subsistence life to the identity of the Tlingit.

Conflicting views on the Tlingit ancestral relationship to the landscape of Southeast Alaska persist into modern times. Alaska’s subsistence laws continue to battle over the words ‘rural’, ‘urban’ and ‘subsistence’ resulting in difficulties for people from a Western worldview to understand those from an indigenous worldview. Kawagley (1995) describes the differences as, “The Native person realizes that he/she is a microcosm of the whole universe, and therein lies the ultimate difference between the two systems of thought” (p.3). Therefore, at the core of each attempt at regulating subsistence, one must deal with divergent worldviews.

*Section three: Aan haa wdudliyéx, this is the one we were created with*

For the Tlingit, cultural activities are essential to maintaining ancestral relationships. I have identified the third factor affecting the ancestral relationship to the landscape as the diminishment of the ceremony called a *kóo.eex*’ (a memorial party). First, I will present a historical perspective illustrating the importance of the *koo.éex*’ to maintaining a sense of clan, community, and individual identity as a Tlingit. Then, I will provide an overview of the ceremony including comments from the research participants in this study, as well as other examples, in order to demonstrate changes in the ceremony and the struggles with maintaining traditions. I will also present an analysis of the *koo.éex*’ and it’s role in the perpetuation of Tlingit culture and identity in contemporary

times. Lastly, I will examine a *koo.eex*' at Hoonah City Schools and how that ceremony contributes to Tlingit identity in the village.

A common Tlingit saying regarding the *koo.éex*' is *aan haa wdudliyéx*, "this is the one we were created with" (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990). Thus, the ceremony is a part of Tlingit creation, and therefore Tlingit identity. At a *koo.éex*', the connection between the past and present is blended, ancestors are honored, and the oral traditions are passed down from generation to generation. According to Paula Gunn Allen (1992), "Ceremonies serve to hold the society together, create harmony, restore balance...and establish right relations within the social and natural world" (p. 73). Allen elaborates further by explaining that in Native American cultures "every tribe has a responsibility to the workings of the universe; today as yesterday, human beings play an intrinsic role in the ongoing creation", thus ongoing relationships and culture (1992, p. 73). When participating in such ceremonies as the *koo.éex*', the children and grandchildren reinforce their ancestral relationships in an ongoing creation.

The *koo.éex*', or memorial/pay-off party is conducted around one to two years after the death of a clan member. In the Lingít language, *koo.éex*' means to invite (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990). Most frequently, this ceremony is called a 'party', although there are other common terms: memorial party, payoff party, but seldom, if ever, a 'potlatch'. Most Tlingits find the term 'potlatch' to be inappropriate as it is a term that doesn't relate to their worldview and beliefs about the *koo.éex*'.

According to oral traditions, Raven was the one who instructed humans on how to carry out a memorial feast:

This is why people burn the bodies of the dead and put food into the fire for them to eat. Burning their bodies makes the dead comfortable. If they were not burned, their spirits would be cold. This is why they invite all those of the opposite clan as well as the nearest relations of the dead man's wife, seating them together in one place, and burn food in front of them. It is because they think that the dead person gets all of the property destroyed at the feast and all of the food then burned up. It is because of what Raven showed them that they do so. (Swanton, 1904, p. 81)

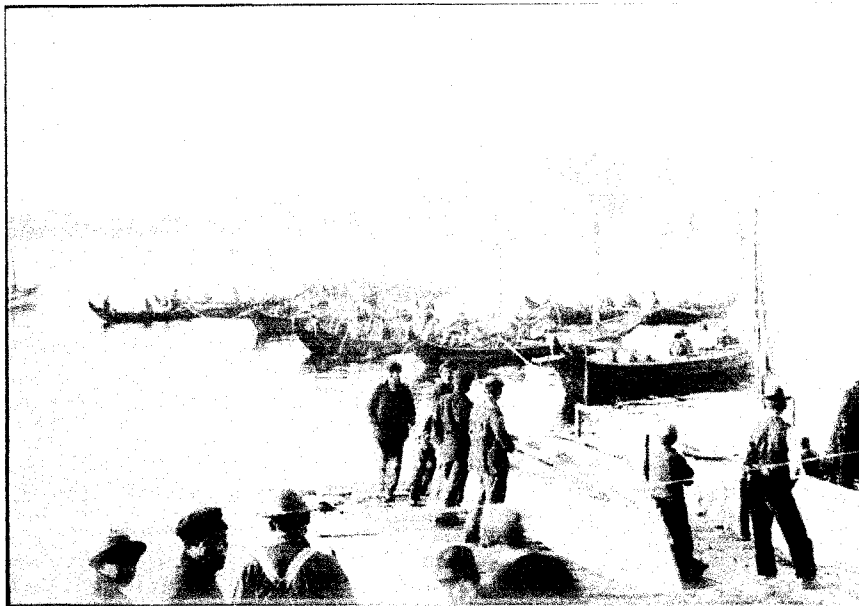
In the Tlingit worldview, the oral traditions, a form of cultural documentation, explicitly directs the Tlingit to perform the ceremony, thus the saying *aan haa wdudliyéx*, this is the one we were created with.

*The koo.éex, a historical perspective*

The suppression of traditional ceremonies was most notable in Canada outlawing the Northwest coast tribal 'potlatches' in 1884. Authorities seized ceremonial regalia, including masks and robes. Although facing arrest and jail time, Canada's First Nations went underground with their ceremonies, which did not become legal again until 1951. Moreover, although the United States did not formerly outlaw the *koo.éex* there were many attempts to thwart the practice, thus perpetuating the belief that the practice was outlawed. Some communities, such as Kake, initiated local fines to discourage the practice. Although Southeast Alaska did not have laws on the books against the ceremonial practice, they forced the suppression in other ways, such as not allowing families who participated in the *koo.eex* to attend the public schools, deeming them

‘uncivilized’ (see Shales, 1998). Churches and other Western-style social organizations coerced their Tlingit members to cease the practice. In 1902, the community of Kake held their ‘last’ potlatch. According to Stella Martin (Christianson, 1992) “...they decided that there would be no more potlatches. Anyone caught participating would be fined forty dollars, which in those days would have been a huge amount of money” (p.18).

In 1904, Alaska’s Governor Brady persuaded a group of Tlingit leaders to give up their language and ceremonial practices, convincing them to stage one last elaborate ceremony. Many clan leaders were also influenced by the local Presbyterian Church to discontinue the practice. As a result, a celebratory ‘Last Potlatch’ was given in Sitka, with the Kaagwaantaan, Wolf/Eagles, acting as the hosts. Clans from as far away as Yakutat traveled to attend the Sitka ceremony. Sitka’s Last Potlatch, intended to thwart any further practice, had the opposite affect. After the Last Potlatch, the Tlingit were more determined than ever to maintain this important cultural practice. The reason was that Alaska’s government officials underestimated the spiritual influence and connection of the Tlingit to their ancestors during the practice of the ceremony: unknowingly the dominant Western culture was encouraging continuation of the *koo.éex*. Figure 3: *The last potlatch, Sitka Alaska* depicts the guests from around Southeast Alaska arriving in Sitka for the “Last Potlatch.”



Alaska State Library - Historical Collections

Figure 3: *The last potlatch, Sitka Alaska*. Resourced from the William A. Kelly collection, Alaska Digital, Alaska State Library.

Experiencing a profound spiritual ceremony, such as the *koo.eex*, ' encouraged rather than discouraged the practice. The spirits of the dead, the ancestors encouraged participation:

However, these [spirit] songs were more than just accounts of the past tragedies and an adventure of the performers' ancestors....it was expected that one could "hear the voices of the dead."...the impact of these performances upon the participants...was quite dramatic. As one middle-aged man confessed...he could "almost hear" his mother's voice encouraging him to carry on the traditions of his ancestors."(Kan, 1982, p. 286)

In the Tlingit worldview, it would not make sense to encourage participation in a ceremony, to thwart the practice whose very role is to connect the people to their ancestors. Simply carrying out the traditions through the Last Potlatch was in itself

reinforcing the continuance of the *koo.éex*'. The ceremony kept the ancestors alive literally through the oral traditions, *at.óow*, dances, songs, and the sharing of food. Ceasing to practice the *koo.éex*' was viewed as disrespecting the ancestors, which is an unthinkable offense, even today. But in 1904, the non-natives perceived the *koo.éex*' as only a ceremony, something tangible rather than spiritual. As a result, the participation in the Last Potlatch united the Tlingit communities at large.

Uniting a community through ceremony is not unheard of. One example heralds from a traumatic event that occurred in the United States in 1963. Philosopher Joseph Campbell explained to reporter Bill Moyer about the significance that President John F. Kennedy's funeral had in restoring balance to a country that was torn asunder by his assassination. Campbell (Flowers, 1998) explains that the President is a symbolic representation of the whole society, therefore the ritualized occasion of the funerary process, which lasted four days united a nation, "all of us participating in the same way, simultaneously, in a symbolic event" (p. xii). The funerary process is suggesting the mythological themes ingrained in human society. Without the process, the country would not have been restored to a sense of balance. The reenactment of the Last Potlatch had the same purpose: to restore balance in an era of conflict and change. The enactment of Sitka's Last Potlatch encouraged participation in such ceremonies because the Tlingit, who were on the verge of assimilation, realized the importance of continuing the practice.

Communities continued to practice this memorial party, though on a smaller and less 'advertised' scale. Although the *koo.éex*' was discouraged, it did not die. However, some communities, such as Wrangell and Kake, did suffer the diminishment of the

ceremonial practice due to assimilation tactics. Nearly forty years after Sitka's 'Last Potlatch', the community of Wrangell attempted to rekindle the ceremony. On June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 1940, Wrangell held their own version; this time calling it the "Last *Great* Potlatch." In actuality, the ceremony was a house dedication, *hit wooshdei yadukicht*, for the newly renovated Chief Shakes tribal house on an island inside of Wrangell's harbor, as well as the appointment of a new *hit saati*. Chief Shakes VI died in 1916, and until 1940, no one was officially dedicated as the Naanyaa.aayí clan leader. At the 1940 potlatch, 76-yr-old Charlie Jones was elevated to *hit saati* status as Chief Shakes VII. Charlie Jones' predecessor, Chief Shakes VI, also known as George Shakes, was encouraged by missionary S. Hall Young to give up his traditional practices, including religion, and embrace Christianity (Ostrowitz, 1999, p. 32). The influence of the dominant Western culture at Wrangell is evident in the term 'Chief' which is a term that does not relate to how the Tlingit view their clan structure. The term 'Chief' was given to the *hit saati* by non-natives.

The Last Great Potlatch was heavily advertised throughout Alaska and the United States, and the Wrangell Sentinel, Wrangell's local newspaper, reported that Wrangell was the "only genuine Indian town on the Inside Passage..." The Sentinel also reported, "Wrangell has its original Wrangell people who know how to put on a genuine potlatch" (Wrangell Sentinel, 1940, March 29, as cited in Ostrowitz, 1999, p. 39). The Wrangell Sentinel touted the ceremony as being authentic despite a heavily assimilated Tlingit population (Ostrowitz, 1999). Ostrowitz (1999) claims, "Early assimilation to non-native ways of life, conversion to Christianity...and the increased immigration of outsiders to



this town since the first half of the nineteenth century has compromised its complete native identity” (p. 39). In the early 1940s, WWII construction brought an influx of non-native immigrants to Alaska, so the potlatch ceremony attracted visitors from all over the territory. The attendees doubled Wrangell’s population, with nearly 1,500 visitors attending from around the United States and Alaska. One of the prominent visitors included Alaska’s territorial Governor Ernest Gruening (Ostrowitz, 1999). Figure 4: *The last great potlatch, Wrangell, Alaska* depicts the Shakes Island tribal house and attendants at the “Last Great Potlatch.”



Figure 4: *The last great potlatch, Wrangell, Alaska*. Resourced from the William Paul Jr. collection, Sealaska Heritage, photo no. 118.

Although the ceremony was well-planned and well attended, Hoagland (1997) points out ironies related to the ceremony. The federal government, which was involved with the

abolition of the potlatch, helped plan the Wrangell affair. In this case, the federal government was acting through the U.S. Forest Service and the Office of Indian Affairs. The non-native dominant culture, in the role of city administrators, was hosting and advocating a ceremony that their predecessors had worked hard to eradicate (Hoagland, 1997). To add further confusion among the Tlingits, the sponsoring committee, comprised of non-natives, set a dress code, based upon Russian-style clothing that they assumed was 'authentic'. Participants could get into the event for a discounted rate if they wore a traditional potlatch 'peasant blouse' (Wrangell Sentinel, 1940, May 3, as cited in Orowitz, 1999, p. 38). It is likely that, for the Wrangell Tlingit, the rekindling of an event and customs they were once forced to suppress caused conflict among themselves.

As a part of the ceremony, a canoe carrying Tlingit dignitaries arrived at Shakes Island. Figure 5: *Chief Shakes arrives* depicts the new Chief Shakes VII, Charley Jones, standing in the bow.



Figure 5: *Chief Shakes arrives*. Resourced from Wrangell Museum, Wrangell, Alaska.

The Potlatch Central Committee, the official organizers, originally intended to make the ceremony a regular event, hoping to attract tourists and generate future revenue for the community (Ostrowitz, 1999).

Today, the resurgence of the *koo.éex* ' is a vital part of Tlingit ceremonial life in some communities but not others. It is the same with Tlingit families: some do not participate in the *koo.éex* ' as an aspect of their mourning ceremonies, preferring to use Western expressions of ceremonial grief. In my case, my Tlingit family did not participate in the *koo.éex* ' because we lived in Wrangell, a community that had long ago discouraged such practices. We were aware of the term 'potlatch' but did not associate it with the Tlingit culture. It was not until I moved my children and myself to their ancestral homeland, Hoonah *Káawu*, that we became acquainted with the village's ceremonial

practices. In Hoonah, the *koo.éex'* is a central part of the tribal community, and the ceremonies are still held every fall. My children and I were able to learn and participate in a cultural activity that we had assumed was lost.

*Planning for a koo.éex'*

There are a few resources available for the Tlingit to become reacquainted with the *koo.éex'* and its cultural protocols. Elders continue to provide the best resource however in some communities, the elders have lost that knowledge. *Haa Tuwundáagu Yis, For Healing Our Spirit* (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990), and *Celebration 2000* (Fair & Worl, 2000), publications by Sealaska Heritage Institute, are two books offering a detailed description of the ceremony. Information can also be found on the websites of Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI) and the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA).

The *koo.éex'* takes extensive planning, including preparing and storing food, setting aside money, and making gifts, sometimes taking up to a year or two. Prior to the actual ceremony, a planning stage occurs behind the scenes. Preparations for this event take precedence over many of life's daily activities because planning and preparing traditional foods, which are dependent upon the seasonal cycles, can take the entire year to gather enough for the party. During the planning stage, the clan elders and the family of the deceased meet to discuss setting a date when the *koo.éex'* will take place. According to a research associate in this study, Sam Wright, the planning stage is an important aspect of the *koo.éex'*. There are protocols that must be followed:

That is a part of leaning all the decisions to make about the parties. Who's going to be the speakers. So you don't step on any feet, that's the whole thing. You have to watch what you say, if you offend somebody it throws off the party. (Appendix A, lines 611-614, p. 475)

At this time, the *naa káani* is selected from the opposite moiety. The *naa káani* may be a man or a woman, and in some communities there can be more than one *naa káani* appointed. This person is the in-law from the opposite moiety who does the initial inviting, and during the ceremony, his or her role will be as moderator as well as being in charge of social order and manners. In addition, the *naa káani* must become acquainted with the host clan's history to help facilitate the appropriate responses during the ceremony. Next, the family and clan members identify the *at.óow* that will serve a vital role at the party. The role of the *at.óow* in the Tlingit culture, including the *koo.éex'*, is explained in Chapter 5, although it is difficult to separate the role of *at.óow* and the *koo.éex'* in two distinct discussions.

Also, the importance of food during these ceremonies cannot be underestimated, which is why meal planning is vital to the future ceremony. Planning consists of a discussion as to deciding the deceased's favorite food and how that food will be served during the first meal. The role of traditional foods as an actual 'participant' is a significant aspect of the ceremony; thus, the foods that are being acquired throughout the year to be served at the ceremony take on a sacred nature. There are often places where people specifically hunt or fish for food for the *koo.éex'*. In recent history, a man shot a seal in his traditional homeland, which happened to be *Sít Eeti Geey*, Glacier Bay

National Park. Two of the elders involved in the ceremonial planning asked him to get the seal meat, an important addition to the *koo.éex'*. The National Park Service recorded this event as a part of their Glacier Bay administrative history:

Word of Brown's arrest sparked strong feelings in Hoonah. Brown claimed that he wanted the seal for a "payback party," a kind of potlatch, that his uncle (the captain of the fishing vessel) was having in honor of his recently deceased son. With that in mind, Brown and another crewmember had taken the skiff to Garforth Island where they shot the seal. The Huna Traditional Tribal Council quickly came to Brown's defense, sending a letter and resolution to Senators Stevens and Murkowski and Representative Young. "We are made criminals for our food," the letter charged, protesting that the government was ignoring Hoonah's culture and its historical ties to Glacier Bay. (Catton, 1995)

Brown did as was instructed by the elders and was subsequently arrested by the Park Service law enforcement. Although this story has many political layers, which will not be discussed here, it illustrates that there remains a traditional view that the landscape, animals, the ancestors, are considered sacred, thus the food from those areas are especially important to ceremonial practices such as the *koo.éex'* (Case, 1984; N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1994).

After deciding on which foods to serve, clan members consider those who are to receive names and adoptions into the host clan. Some clan members keep lists of clan names that are available for passing on to the next generation. Party planning also includes compiling a list of the opposites who assisted with the funeral process and others

who offered their services in a variety of ways, including those who donated food or helped with subsistence activities. Sometimes the list begins as soon as the person dies, noting who is helping with the funerary events, e.g., those who watched over the body, or took care of cremation or burial details. These people will be recognized and honored during the *koo.éex'* (L. White & P. White, 2000).

In addition, clan members identify which of the guests will receive the fire bowls, blankets, and other special gifts. Oratory protocol and preparation is also undertaken: the welcome, the thank-you, and the end-of-party. Four people from the grieving family are asked to participate in the End of Sorrow dance and four songs are selected to be sung. At this time, spirit songs and love songs also have to be selected. These songs are to be sung over the money that is gathered during the ceremony. After all the preparations are finished, the family and clan members schedule the songs and dance practices.

These planning sessions are an important aspect of traditional Tlingit education. Throughout the planning, Tlingit youth are learning about the complexities behind the ceremony. In addition, those who are new to planning protocols are instructed by their elders about the intricacies concerning planning a *koo.éex'*. They learn how and why certain songs are used and the importance of food gathering, because many in the families will participate in harvesting traditional foods, in addition to preparing beadwork, carving, or other items to give away. However, on occasion, the ceremonial protocols and preparations are difficult for adults to understand. Research participant Sam Wright (Appendix A) gives an account of pre-*koo.éex'* planning:

That's what we did with my dad. When the elders sat there and tried to say that we were trying to take control over his funeral, when my dad passed away, the Chookaneidís took care of it. This lady came up and said that we were taking over and our leader came up and said that they were really disappointed in us. The Chookaneidí they sat there and they announced a meeting and to be there at nine o'clock and they had chairs set up for us. And all we did was sit there and we listened. We can't sit there and put our two cents in with what they are going to do with our father because that's just the Tlingit way. We have to let them do it. We have to sit there and listen to what they recommend, we have no say in it, if it's right or wrong. (Lines 116-125, p. 453)

*Koo.eex'* planning is the right of the opposite moiety of the deceased. In Sam Wright's case, Sam's father's family was in charge of the *koo.éex'*. Sam is a Raven, L'uknax.ádi and a Chookaneidí Yadí, a child of the Chookaneidí. This means that his father was from that particular clan (Eagle) and, because the Tlingit culture is matrilineal, Sam follows his mother's lineage, i.e., Raven. In the less formal planning stage, younger people are more likely to participate, taking the opportunity to listen to the protocols outlined by the older clan members. Although the planning sessions are less formal, they are important, as many youth participate behind the scenes in preparation for the *koo.éex'*.

#### *Outlining the koo.éex'*

As I outline the formal *koo.éex'*, keep in mind that the ceremonial protocols vary from community to community and sometimes from clan to clan (L. White & P. White,



2000; N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990; Jacobs, 2007c). Through this general format, I will illustrate important Tlingit traditional teachings occurring during each phase, including what research participants and others have learned through participating in the *koo.eex'*. For the sake of this discussion, it will be an Eagle male who has passed away and a Raven wife who survives him. To begin, in one or two years after the death of the Eagle husband, the Eagle husband's clan prepares for the *koo.éex'*: the Eagles invite the Ravens to their party. Table 7: *Basic outline of a koo.éex'* exhibits one particular format of the ceremony.

Table 7: *Basic outline of a koo.éex'*

1) Taking up the Drum, <i>Gaaw Wutaan</i> (The Cry Ceremony)
a) Host's Cry:
i. Welcome and thank-you speeches
ii. Recognition of grandchild
iii. Donning <i>At.óow</i> : <i>L s'aati át tóodei nagúitch</i> and face painting
iv. Big cry, <i>gaax tlein</i> : dances, songs (typically four)
b) Widow's Cry, <i>L S'aati Sháa Gaaxí</i> : Guests
i. Conducted (Raven clans, same moiety as the spouse).
ii. Songs, speeches, ritual display of <i>at.óow</i> .
2) The End of Sorrow
3) Host sings love songs, special dances
4) Fire Bowl Distribution, <i>Gankasix'i</i>
5) First Meal: favorite meal
a) <i>Naa káani</i> is announced
6) Distribution of Food and Dry Goods (to guests)
a) Fruit bowls
b) Berry distribution
7) Guests Sing Love Songs
8) Money Collection
a) Members of guest clan
b) Members of same moiety
c) Members of host clans
d) Immediate family of the deceased
9) Standing Upright Songs
10) Giving Names/Adoptions
11) Money Distribution
a) Hosts pay the guests
12) Special Gift Distribution
13) Return Dance
a) Guests perform dances and songs
b) Guests conduct money collection
c) Money distribution to hosts
d) Exit song: host performs

Note. Resourced from White, L. & White, P., 2000; Dauenhauer, N. & Dauenhauer, R., 1990; Jacobs, 2007c.

Now, I will provide a discussion on the *koo.éex*’ interposed with perspectives from the research participants, as well as other sources, to illustrate the importance of certain aspects of the ceremony. First, there is a formal welcome and thank-you. For the sake of this discussion, the host clan (Eagles) welcomes the guests (Ravens) who are from the opposite moiety. The ‘host’ clan is the clan who lost a family member. For example, if an Eagle man died, then all his relatives (Eagles) help give a party for the Ravens in order to thank the Raven clans for their participation in the death ceremonies, i.e., the funeral preparations, a memorial, and the 40-day party. As well, the ceremony is designed to restore physical and spiritual balance to the clan community, an imbalance that was created through the death of a clan member (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990; Kan, 1989).

The first part of the *koo.éex*’ is called the Cry Ceremony, and also called the *Gaaw wutaan* (muffled drums). This section is named so because the drummer quietly beats a drum. There are two parts to the Cry Ceremony: the host cry, called *Káa eeti gaaxí* and the Widow’s Cry (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990). The Cry Ceremony begins with the host welcoming the guests and explaining for whom they are hosting the party. The host also introduces the grandchild who was pre-selected from the deceased paternal grandfather’s clan. The importance of oratory is linked to the phrase used to call the grandchild, “We are going to stick a spear through our grandchild’s throat, *Haa dachxán sagál teen áwé káasagaxtooleex*,” meaning that the appointed grandchild will be speaking for the clan (Jacobs, 2007c, p. 3).

Next, local clan leaders from various houses (from the Eagle moiety) give welcoming addresses. As in the planning stage, young people are surrounded with a discussion on protocols and ancestral relationships. They learn who the ‘grandchildren’ are, who is to be considered a ‘grandchild’ and why, in addition to the other clan relationships that are vital to the ceremonial practice. Families and communities who do not participate in the *koo.éex*’ do not fully understand their ancestral and cultural relationships. As the Dauenhauers (1990) explain:

This interaction in the Widow’s Cry can be confusing at first to people outside of Tlingit tradition, because the removal of grief is directed not toward the surviving spouse, who is also of the guests’ moiety, [in my example the guests are the Ravens] but by the survivor’s clan toward the clan of the departed! [In my example, the Eagles] (p. 47-48)

Thus, the removal of grief is directed towards the clan who has lost their member. The description of the *koo.éex*’ illustrates the importance of participating in cultural activities geared to perpetuate and provide balance to the Tlingit culture. In addition to the perpetuation of cultural activities, the *koo.eex*’ also perpetuates the Tlingit worldview in the form of metaphors, oral traditions, kinship terms, and ancestral relationships. The following, Table 8: *Important Tlingit ceremonial terms*, explains the meanings behind some Lingít terms, although it is not conclusive.

Table 8: *Important Lingít ceremonial terms*

<i>Lingít ceremonial terms</i>	<i>Definitions in English</i>
<i>Aan ax shawáat</i>	My tribal or clan sister
<i>Aan ax yakáawu</i>	My respected and worthy brother
<i>Aan haa wuduliyéix</i>	The one we were created with: <i>koo.eex'</i> .
<i>Aan yátx'i</i>	Children of the land/town
<i>At.óow</i>	Sacred owned/purchased thing, e.g., songs, landmarks, ancestors, regalia, carvings
<i>Ax daaxanooku</i>	My outer shell.
<i>Chushgadachaxán</i>	Grandchild of each other
<i>Dána wuduwayák</i>	Killing the money.
<i>Daxchán</i>	Grandchild
<i>Du ya dóok</i>	Daughter in-law, married to sons of host clan
<i>Gan ka s'ix'i</i>	Dishes over the fire (fire dish)
<i>Guneit kanaayi</i>	Opposite moiety/clan
<i>Haa shuká áwé</i>	They are our past, present, and future
<i>Igu. aay yax xwán</i>	Be Strong-Be Brave
<i>Kaa daséigu t'éix yaa kdugáxch</i>	The cry behind the breath
<i>Koo.eex'</i>	Literally "to feast" or "to invite" but a memorial party given one/ two yrs. after a person has died
<i>Kusteeyi</i>	Culture or way of life
<i>Léelk'w</i>	Grandparent
<i>Léelk'w háas</i>	Grandparents of the clan, e.g., cultural heroes in oral traditions
<i>L s'aati át</i>	Masterless thing/an object not yet <i>at.ooow</i>
<i>L s'aati 'at tóodei nagútxh</i>	Stepping into the masterless thing
<i>Naa káni</i>	In-law of the clan/ male or female

Table 8: *Important Lingít ceremonial terms continued...*

<i>Lingít ceremonial terms</i>	<i>Definitions in English</i>
<i>Shagóon</i>	Ancestors
<i>Shuká</i>	Literally “ahead”. Ancestors who have lived in the past and those who belong to future generations. Within this term are both the concepts of <i>at.óow</i> and <i>shagóon</i> .
<i>Tlingít Aani</i>	The Tlingit landscape
<i>Toowú kei altseench</i>	It gives strength to the spirit
<i>Wé shukaadei káa áx' ax wusiteeyi yé</i>	Their ancestor became a thing of value; referring to <i>at.óow</i>
<i>X'éidi</i>	To the mouth of....
<i>Y'adi (Yátx't)</i>	Child of (the opposite moiety)/his or her father is from that clan
<i>Yéik utee</i>	Imitating the Spirit (songs)

Note. Resourced from: *Haa Tuwunaágu Yis* (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990); *Beginning Tlingit* (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2000); *Because We Cherish You* (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1980); *The Koo.eex: The Tlingit Memorial Party* (L. White & P. White, 2000); *Symbolic Immortality* (Kan, 1989); *Tlingit Protocols: Forming a Tlingit World View* (Soboleff, 2000a).

Ritual terminology is central to understanding Tlingit selfhood as being a member of a tribal community. In the Tlingit culture, the *koo.eex'* provides the main venue for understanding this important concept. The outer-shell, or the opposites, is in essence a part of the Tlingit sense of self, their identity. This outer-shell, *ax daaxanooxu*, is based upon the concept of balance (Kan, 1982, p. 259), a topic that is further discussed in Chapter 5. Another aspect to learning ritual terminology is the use of clan names, which are changing to suit contemporary Tlingit identity. As explained by N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1998), Tlingit concepts of kinship and the clan system, protocol, and reciprocity are being misunderstood, especially among those who do not regularly

participate in the *koo.éex'*. For example, I might call myself a Seagull or Sea Tern woman and not know that that specific crest belongs to the T'akdeintaan. In an example they give, "*L'uknax.ádi* is called 'Coho', *Lukaax.ádi* 'Sockeye', *Teikweidi* 'Brown Bear' ... (p. 74). Without the knowledge about clans and kinships, some people will refer to themselves as Brown Bear, as in a case within my own family, who do not know which clan they are from. This misinformation can be problematic because then several clans can claim the same crest.

Despite changes, one of the most important aspects of a *koo.éex'* is the ritual display of *at.óow*. During the first part of the Cry Ceremony, the opposites (Raven's) selected to assist the host (Eagle) clan don their regalia and singing staffs and then assist the host clan in donning black headbands and painting their faces with black marks as a sign of mourning. At this time, the hosts may be dressed in their *at.óow*. It is through the ceremonial use of *at.óow*, in singing, speaking, and dancing that sorrow and grief are removed. N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1990) explain the cultural metaphor of "putting your spirit against mine":

First in word and then in ritual action, the guests are saying, "Put your spirit against mine. I have lost your paternal aunt." This is another example of "balance" or reciprocity through the "bracing" or mutual supporting of each other and of spiritual forces." (p. 49)

The ritual display of *at.óow* is an extremely important cultural teaching lesson since it is through the use of *at.óow* that a connection to the ancestors is made. During the Cry Ceremony, the role of *at.óow* takes on a deep spiritual meaning. In the Tlingit worldview,

extended grief can be physically and spiritually unhealthy. Therefore, if that person is grieving too much, it can actually cause the death of another clan member (in the matrilineal clan). The prolonged cries of the family members can take the life breath from another member, believing that the breath flows from the tears. Through oratory, ceremony, and the display of *at.óow*, the spirits of the ancestors are called to help with the removal the grief, healing the clans from the death of a clan member (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1994). According to research participant Carol Williams (Appendix A):

It is very significant because you are being given permission to put your grief away. You're through, your done, no more grieving, you followed all the rituals and once you followed all of them and it gets completed you never go back again. (Lines 292-294, p. 427)

Hence, the memorial is not only for the dead, it is also used to assist the living through a time of grieving. The ancestors are present, in order to maintain the clan/moiety relationships, because the death has caused a gap in the community. In essence, the dead are called to restore balance to the people.

Members of the host clan will sing the grieving songs (usually 4) along with other members of the clan. These songs include the hat songs, yarn or motion dance, and sacred clan songs. The dancing during these songs is a symbol for crying called Standing in for the Cry, *Gáax kát nák*. Also during this time, the drum is pounded softly, thus, the term *Gaaw wutaan*, muffled drums.



The next section of the Cry Ceremony is called the Widow's Cry, *L S'aati Sháa Gaaxí*, which occurs after the hosts (Eagles) conduct their cry. In this section, the opposites (Raven guests) respond with words of support and encouragement, as well as singing songs. These songs are a very important aspect of the ceremony because they bring healing to the host clan. The importance of Tlingit oratory: storytelling and speeches are emphasized during the *koo.éex'* and therein lies important cultural knowledge concerning protocols. Tlingit elders are always reminding the listeners about the importance of Tlingit protocol.

Walter Soboleff (2006) expresses the importance of protocol regarding oratory and the value of listening to the oral traditions. Soboleff claims that ancestral protocol include the 'right' to speak, which was accomplished through exhibiting respect towards others. Soboleff believes that the "Tlingit culture has maintained its integrity despite the influence of Russian and Western cultures..."(2006, p. 22). In addition, Soboleff pointed out the Tlingit protocols of 'expressing approval' and 'thanking the speaker' for their words (2006, p. 22). He also discussed the means by which the Tlingit could remember a story by hearing it once and "remembering it for the rest of his or her lifetime" (2006, p. 2). Remembering for a lifetime comes with it the responsibility to be a good orator as well as a good listener. However, change in how Tlingit knowledge is being transmitted is evident in the amount of Tlingit language being spoken at a *koo.éex'*. N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1998) claims that 90 percent of Tlingit people do not speak Tlingit yet they assert that they are 'ethnically Tlingit'. The Dauenhauer's suggest, "That somehow 'the culture' is surviving without the 'language' " (p. 73). The culture functions

as such without using the ancestral language. However, maintaining the knowledge of ritual terminology including clan and personal names, metaphors appropriate to Tlingit oratory, and the basic kinship system is essential. N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1998) address this issue:

The potlatch tradition is currently undergoing changes in structure, practice, and significance; oratory is being delivered increasingly in English, although some of the youngest speakers and learners are cultivating the tradition of speech-making in Tlingit. (1998, p. 74)

Despite the language barrier, or lack of Tlingit being spoken, the participants in a *koo.éex'* must pay attention to the details surrounding the cultural practices during the ceremony. Also, in the context of a *koo.éex'*, it is equally important to be a guest as it is to be a host: everyone then has a role and with that role comes responsibility and cultural accountability.

After singing the grieving songs, four members of the grieving family (Eagle hosts) conduct the End of Sorrow, called *Chush tóodáx kei duhúkch*. In the End of Sorrow, the grieving family stands in the directions: north, south, east, and west facing each other. At this time, they hold their singing staffs and pound the staffs onto the floor four times and then sing *Yaasx'aashú*, and then point their staffs towards the center. They do this gesture four times moving clockwise so that each grieving family member has stood in each directional position. Thus, the Cry ceremony is used to counteract the negative forces of mourning eventually transitioning into the celebratory aspect of the *koo.éex'*. After the End of Sorrow, members from the grieving clan cry, "*shtootx kwiw du*

*wa hook.*” At this time, the end of sorrow is complete. The *koo.éex*’ then takes a happy tone as the host (Eagle) clan asks the guest (Raven) clan members to remove the black headbands and face paint. This symbolically wipes away the sorrow of the host clan. Sometimes a stick is raised in the air to rid the family/clan, and community from the remaining grief.

The Cry Ceremony provides a means for traditional instruction on Tlingit oratory, familial, clan, and ancestral relationships. Dave Galanin (1999) explains that the memorial party is essential to understanding Tlingit protocol:

Its amazing, all that’s involved, and I think understanding a memorial potlatch pretty much sums up a lot of everything, what protocol is, because it deals with respect, it deals with our values, the cultural end of it...some things that some people think is superstitious, but are still practiced, everything from protecting our elders when we go in. To me it gives me a chance to practice our culture.

(Galanin, 1999)

Ultimately, the *koo.éex*’ provides the setting and the opportunity to participate in the Tlingit culture: to be Tlingit. Within the *koo.eex*’ setting, Tlingit identity is reinforced when one is able to speak the Lingít language, to display one’s crest, to dress in regalia, exhibit clan *at.óow*, and to participate in cultural protocols.

Following the formal removal of grief (the Cry Ceremony) and prior to the meal being served, the *Naa káani* is announced. Next, the fire bowls are distributed and the first meal is served. In some communities, this section varies and the meal is served after the fire bowls. The first meal typically consists of foods that the deceased especially

loved. The first meal of the *koo.éex'* begins with hosts (Eagle) calling out their deceased clan members' names while a plate of food is taken outside and burned in a small fire, in a wood stove, or on the beach. The symbolic or actual burning of food means that the spirits of the departed are being fed as well as the guests. Next, the members of the host clan serve the food to their opposites/guests.

Soon after, or during, the first meal, the fire bowls are distributed. The fire bowls, *Gankasix'i*, are distributed by the hosts (Eagles) to their guests (Ravens). The distribution of the Fire Bowls reinforces the ancestral relationships. The Tlingit saying is "To the mouth of the ancestors, *X'éidi*." In the oral traditions, a man who returned from the dead told of how the ancestors gathered to participate in the ceremonies of the living because they were hungry and wanted to hear their names cried in remembrance. Thus, the ancestors are participating along with the host and guests: They are invited guests too. Pictures of the deceased clan member(s) is placed on a table along with the clan's *at.óow*. Someone from the opposite moiety (a Raven) takes the photograph around the room showing it to each of the guests (Ravens) in attendance.

The distribution of food and other dry goods, as well as fruit bowls, occurs after the first meal. Gifts, but not blankets, are distributed to the guests (in this example, the Ravens) at this time. In contemporary times, fruit, soda, and candy are given away. Towels, socks, pillows, canned goods, jewelry, and small hand crafted items are also distributed to the guests. The fruit bowls are a popular distributed item because it involves sharing with your friends and those seated around you. First, the name of the guest who had helped in the past year is called out. The guest answers, "Here, *Haa déi*."

Then, the host clan brings the bowl to the guest, and the other guests who are sitting beside him or her rush to the bowl and empty it, then respond with, “*Hoow!*” More signing and dancing occurs at this time as well as joking with clan relations. The concept of giving to the mouth of the ancestors allows the Tlingit to connect directly to the ancestors who have passed on, and yet through this act, they are able to become a part of the *koo.éex*, thus participating in the grieving and subsequently the healing. This relationship enables the Tlingit youth to view their ancestral relationships as vital to their culture. These are relationships that must be maintained through respect. Respect is shown through ceremonial participation as traditional worldviews are maintained.

The distribution of berries occurs next. For the Tlingit, berries are linked to both the social and the individual identity. Berry picking is a subsistence activity that involves many family members and on occasion provided for the opportunity to be alone in nature. Research participant Sam Wright recalls:

I remember we used to get cases and cases of blueberries, tons of them, truckloads, strawberries, nagoon berries. We used to go out on the boat to get ready for the parties, to go berry picking. My dad used to take three families and we used to go to Mud Bay, Dundas Bay and pick nagoon and strawberries. We used to have gallons of it. The whole back deck [of the boat] used to be filled with berries. But then you had close to thirty, forty people. (Appendix A, lines 468-473, p. 469)

The importance of being able to share berries is evident within the Tlingit worldview that depicts a spirit-of-the-berries, the *tleikw yakwaheiyagu* (Thornton, 2007a). Harvesting,

eating, and sharing berries is culturally significant because the spirit must be acknowledged and shared in order to ensure a good harvest the following year. Many Tlingit youth participate in the harvesting of berries for the future ceremonies; and many families donate a portion of their berry crop to other families who are planning a *koo.éex*. The distribution of the 'gift of berries', i.e., the spirit-of-the-berries at a *koo.éex*, is essential to share in the grief. The host clan enters carrying a large tote of berries and passes out bowls or jars of berries to the guests. After the berry distribution, more goods are distributed. Sometimes, another meal is served and singing and dancing accompany the meal by the guests in attendance (Ravens).

The money collection and distribution is the next important part of the *koo.éex*. In contemporary times, cash replaces many of the goods formerly used as payment. The members of the guest clan donate money, sums from one dollar to twenty dollars, to individual members of the host clan. This usually happens prior to the starting of the ceremony. It is done discreetly and consists of small sums of money. The opposite (Raven) clan, sometimes the spouses of the host (Eagle) clan, is responsible for collecting the money into large bowls and counting it. Then, the members of the same moiety (Eagles), but yet from different clans, give the host their own money and say the names of the opposite side (Ravens) who donated money to them. The *naa káani* receives the money and announces how much each person has given. Next, members of the host clan and immediate family of the deceased donate their own money and any money given to them by their opposites. After the money collection, a ceremony is conducted to separate the money from the host clan and the donators. This aspect of the ceremony is called

“Killing the Money.” The house names of the dead are called out and the names of the *at.óow* are named off as well. The host (Eagle) clan brings out a clan *at.óow*, usually a hat, and a clan song is performed. This act makes the *at.óow* worth more. Typically around this time, new *at.óow* is brought out and money is given in its name. According to Tlingit protocol, a piece of *at.óow*, such as a blanket or headdress, cannot be used in the *koo.éex*’ for healing purposes until it has been formally witnessed and paid for.

Dances called Standing Upright, *Kindach’ooch aawanaak*, are performed next, although sometimes the order may vary according to community and clan. Sometimes these are called Money dances. The grandchildren of the host clan are called to dance wearing their *at.óow*, thus bringing up the value of the *at.óow*. A *shakee.át*, an ermine headdress/hat, is placed upon a grandchild of the same moiety of the host clan (Eagle). The grandchild then dances behind a blanket to a *Yéik* (spirit) song. Other songs and dances are performed, such as the hat dances and other spirit dances. After the spirit imitation dance, the dancers wipe their foreheads with a corner of the blanket and then the blanket used in this particular dance is given to a guest at the party.

Towards the end of the *koo.éex*’ is the time for giving names and adopting people into the clan, though sometimes this is done prior to the Standing Upright. The clan leader formally brings out babies or other guests to be given a name. Sometimes those who are receiving names are children, and sometimes they include adults and non-natives. Money again plays an important role in name giving. Money is held on the forehead of the person who is going to be adopted. The *Naa káani* holds the money and calls out the new Lingít name four times. The money is then given to a guest who was

pre-selected by the host clan as witness to the naming ceremony. Giving names is significant, and the Tlingits take this section very seriously as the giving of names both literally and symbolically continue the ancestral relationships.

Clarence Jackson (2006) illustrates an elder's perspective on the importance of his Tlingit name and that "names are important and draw people together (p. 22). As a young child Jackson was sent to a *koo.eex*' and instructed by his grandmother that his presence would represent her face and the face of their entire clan. By wearing his clan's mask, Mr. Jackson would be identified from the Killer Whale family and that "being the mask means to represent yesterday's people, taking yesterday's culture to tomorrow's people" (p. 22).

The Lingít name becomes a face of an ancestor who also possesses that name. In the case of my daughter, *Chaas' Kaawu Tlaa*, Mother of Humpy Tail, her name holds a special place in our family and T'akdeintaan clan, and is shared by several family members. The name is associated with a strong independent woman, our aunt, whose death took place in clan territory; therefore, this name is becoming *at.óow*. My daughter received her name in her traditional homeland, *Sít Eeti Geey*, Glacier Bay, during a Lingít language immersion camp. Names, such as my daughter's, connect the person to their ancestral landscape, a landscape that includes an oral history. It is not simply a name but a link to the ancestral landscape: a link to identity. In my daughter's example, the name translates to describe the instinct that brings the fish to the stream, and yet another translation is the 'woman' who calls the fish into the stream. In reinforcing her ancestral connections to the landscape, my daughter had to formally receive her name in a



traditional context at a *koo.éex*’ in Hoonah. One of the aspects of making the name ‘official, thus making the name more valuable, was to bring money and gifts to distribute to guests and witnesses, which she did.

Research participant Owen James (Appendix D) describes the intricate link between his name and the landscape:

One of my names is from the Frog, and the other name...is dog salmon after it comes up the river... It started getting white spots on it; it’s getting old. [And] a small frog when it is first starts crawling out of the ground, when it first starts coming out of the mud and it’s crawling out to sit on a rock: that’s my name. My name is connected to the mud and water. (Lines 669-674, p. 607)

The Money distribution is the next segment of the *koo.éex*’. In this section, the hosts (Eagles) pay their opposites (Ravens). The *Naa káani* calls out the names of the deceased family members acknowledging their traditional Lingít names, then the host clan distributes the money to the guests as payment to those who supported them during their time of mourning: night watchers, pallbearers, gravediggers, cooks, *Naa káani*, drummer(s), clan children, and others who are assisting with the ceremony.

Next, another distribution of gifts occurs as the host clan distributes special gifts to the pre-selected persons from the opposite side. The host (Eagle) clan calls out the name of the deceased clan members and then gives important or special items to pre-selected guests/opposites. These items can be blankets, special carved items such as spoons, jewelry, and paddles, and special beaded or sewn items, which are distributed in addition to jewelry or other items of value.

Finally, after all the money and goods are distributed, it is time for the *Kaax'a eeti al' eixi*, the Return Dance. The Return dance is performed by the guests (Ravens). The order of the Return dance includes an entrance dance followed by Inside Songs, *Gangoosh*, Love Songs, Hat Songs, a money collection, *Yeikootee* (Spirit song), and then a money distribution. The money goes back to the hosts (Eagles) who are now acting as guests during the response. Then, a final thank you and an exit song. At the end of the ceremony, the *koo.éex'* ends with the host (Eagle) clan raising both of their hands and the Eagles who hosted the entire party perform an exit song.

Today, the *koo.éex'* can last for as long as several days or as few as one day. Usually, the party begins in the afternoon or evening on one day and then continues until late at night, sometimes breaking until the next day when it will continue. Others finish up in the early morning hours of the following day. An important note to make is that, if the *koo.éex'* is going to continue on into the dawn, a special spirit song must be sung by the guest clans in order for bad luck not to occur because the party hasn't ended before Raven cries.

#### *Cultural significance and identity*

Ultimately, the *koo.éex'* embodies the social Tlingit. Fundamental cultural values and traditional knowledge are conveyed at the parties: balance, respect, oral traditions, and taboos, among others. Some of the ways with which the *koo.éex'* perpetuates the Tlingit culture are as follows:

- A cultural setting where naming takes place

- Lingít language is spoken and reinforced
- Oral traditions including songs and stories are performed and perpetuated
- Laws and meanings of ancestral relationships are reinforced through the display and use of *at.óow*
- Moiety interrelationships are maintained and learned through practice
- Traditional food preparations and the importance of *atxaayí kusteeyix sitee*, our food is our way of life
- Cultural economics and the status of clans is reinforced
- Spiritual traditions and practices are learned and reinforced

These are just some of the ways that Tlingit traditions are carried on, but the point is that changes in the *koo.éex'* impacts identity for future generations.

Despite the cultural significance given to the *koo.éex'*, not all communities practice the ceremony. In the communities where the parties are no longer practiced, the Tlingit living in those communities struggle to place themselves within their own traditional worldviews. Elder Clarence Jackson from Kake, a community that banned the potlatch in 1902, explains the importance of learning in a cultural setting, “By attending Tlingit parties and pay-off parties in Angoon, Yakutat and Hoonah, I learned a whole new ceremonial part of our culture that I didn’t fully understand before. Learning that has been a very enriching experience” (Christianson, 1992, p. 12). To attend and learn more about his culture, Jackson was able to go into other Tlingit communities that still practiced the *koo.éex'*. Without a context to place their worldviews, or for that matter, to reinforce their worldviews, contemporary Tlingits without access to the *koo.éex'* face the

loss of many of their important ideologies. The meaning behind the *koo.éex'* becomes blurred and unimportant for those who do not participate in the ceremony.

There have been several studies conducted on the potlatch ceremonies on the Northwest coast, including the Tlingit memorial party. Some of these studies emphasize the battles of status, and the economics of the *koo.éex'* over its spiritual significance. However, I agree with Nora and Richard Dauenhauer, Sergei Kan, and Frederica de Laguna that, for the Tlingit people, this is simply not true. The spiritual aspect, which Swanton observed as well, depicts the real meaning behind the ceremony: It is a ceremony to heal the grief of the family, clan, and community. An example of healing oratory connecting my children's clan to their ancestral homeland is conveyed in a speech by Jesse Dalton (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990):

...yes, these terns. Your fathers' sisters would fly out over the person who is feeling the grief. Then they would let their down fall like snow over the person who is feeling grief. That's when I fell it's as if your fathers' sisters are flying back to their nests with your grief.

*...aaa yá k'eik'w. eeshandéin tuwateeyi káa káx' áwé daak koolyeechch yee aat hás. Aax áwé has du x'wáal'i a kaadéi has a kooldáanch weéeshandéin tuwateeyi káa. Aagaa áwé tléil áwé too kwdunook nuch has du x'wáal'i. Aagaa áwé yee tula.eesháani tín áwé has du kúdi kaadéi has ayakawdliyi yáx áwé has du daa ax tuwatee yee aat hás. (p. 251)*

For my family, as well as others, the ancestral relationships are maintained by practicing the *koo.éex'*. By participating in the *koo.éex'*, my children and I were able to learn more

about the Tlingit culture than we were able to learn in any other social setting. In this case, the metaphor in Tlingit oratory, e.g., “my father’s sisters” in Jessie Dalton’s speech connects my family to their ancestral clan, including their *at.óow* and the social relationship to the landscape. The *koo.éex*’ is a time to remember all the ancestors who have gone on before you (Kan, 1982).

For the Tlingit who haven’t had the opportunity to learn or practice the *koo.éex*’, a cultural ‘reawakening’ occurs when they are afforded the opportunity or the duty to put on a *koo.éex*’. Marlene Johnson (Christianson, 1992) explains that, “When my mother passed we had not had a potlatch for her and it really bothered me... but we didn’t know exactly what to do” (p. 26). Johnson collaborated with Tlingit tradition bearers learn how to conduct a *koo.éex*’ for her mother. Johnson claims that the experience changed her: “They helped us and we had a pay-off party for my mother. That breakthrough had a tremendous effect on my life. It was an amazing experience...” (Christianson, 1992, p. 26).

The *koo.éex*’ serves as a traditional learning method in contemporary times. Young people serve behind the scenes in food preparation, dancing, singing, and food distribution. I observed children assigned to the task of carrying the photo of the deceased around the room. Although at some *koo.éex*’s, the youngest children, those unable to participate in a respectful manner, are discouraged. Those Tlingit youth who come from communities that do not practice this ceremony benefit from attending as either guests or hosts. Kan (1982) stresses the importance of the *koo.eex*’ as a means of perpetuating traditional protocols and values, “Ideas and beliefs became a reality and a guide for

action. The major principles and values underlying the social and the cosmic order were reiterated in front of the actors...” (p. 265). At age 13, my youngest daughter began attending the *koo.éex*'. Because we came from a community that did not practice the ceremony, we had no idea what to expect: She learned to serve her elders. According to research participant Vivian Mork, encouraging children to participate in the *koo.éex*' strengthens their knowledge of self:

In my classrooms children are supposed to participate in cultural activities like dancing and singing at ceremonial gatherings like the *Koo.éex*'. This Tlingit learning style incorporates the whole person, including their mind and their spirit, never separating the Tlingit child from their identity. (Appendix B, lines 381-385, p. 501)

Therefore, the *koo.éex*', as practiced today and though diminished in some communities, still maintains a role in perpetuating Tlingit identity among both the youth and the adults. The ceremony strengthens social bonds: community, tribal, and individual.

*A contemporary perspective*

The practice of the *koo.éex*' is also being reinforced in a unique way in the small village of Hoonah. Hoonah residents have been participating in a 'potlatch,' which has recently renamed a *koo.éex*', at the public school for nearly twenty years. The reenactment of a *koo.éex*' is a method conceived by teachers, parents, and community members in order to teach children traditional tribal ceremonies before they have to attend an actual party. The children's ceremony is a community-wide event that is held in

the spring, usually April. In 2007, the theme was *Aa kadéi xat sagas doo. axcha*, You will hear our voices on the land. Traditional food is served and each year alternating ‘sides’ participate as hosts: Eagles one year host the event, with Ravens acting as guests, and the following year it is reversed. This ceremony is especially important for Lingít language retention and acquisition, because it is often the only ceremonial setting that the students themselves get to practice their Lingít oratory. Daphne Wright, the Lingít language instructor at Hoonah City Schools is in charge of teaching the students their introductions, plus enacting volunteers to help with skits, songs, and other activities. Other volunteers (me included) and staff assist in teaching beading, songs, and dancing throughout the school year. Each student crafts their ‘regalia’ depicting their crests, and many of the regalia pieces are available for re-use year after year. In the case of students who are not Tlingit, those students choose, or sometimes are assigned, to be an Eagle or a Raven. Most students in grades pre-school through Middle School take part and, by high school, students are already participating in the actual memorial parties in the community.

For some, the Hoonah children’s *koo.éex*’ is more of a “variety show” (anonymous personal communication, 2007). Established within the secular public school system, the spiritual aspect of respecting the dead is not highlighted, yet the school’s ceremony prepares children to take over the actual *koo.éex*’. This could become problematic because the children, who are at an impressionable age, have the likelihood of learning the secular way first, and then trying to incorporate that example into the spiritual *koo.éex*’ when they reach adulthood. However, in Hoonah, a number of *koo.éex*’

allow children to attend; therefore it is likely that the same children who are participating in the schools *koo.éex* are the same children who are helping at the traditional ceremony. The importance of children participating in the traditional *koo.éex* is reflected in the narrative provided by research associate Sam Wright:

As far as starting to be involved when I first danced, I kind of just had the spirit in me. I was excited about parties and when I was a kid I was just there to play...I grew up without going to parties most of my teen years because... my parents never made me go or I never had anybody to tell me to do anything. Most of all my generation they went because their parents made them go. (Appendix A, lines 400-404, pp. 466)

The Hoonah City Schools *koo.éex* has grown over the years and recently Sealaska Heritage Institute has sent dignitaries to the community, in a show of supporting the continuance of culture. SHI's authors much of the curriculum materials for the school's language program (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2000, 2002, 2006). In 2007, influenced by the Hoonah *koo.eex*, Hans Chester, a teacher at Glacier Valley Elementary School in Juneau, Alaska, organized a similar celebration marking the end of the school year.

Hoonah's children's ceremony has the potential to perpetuate the memorial party as it teaches the students about basic concepts, such as the importance of honoring your opposite moiety during a clan *koo.éex*. The school's ceremony also reinforces Tlingit identity. In preparation for the school event, large sections of time are set aside to teach traditional values through beadwork, song, dance, and oratory practices. For Sam Wright,



it was this enactment of a traditional *koo.éex'* in the public school setting that sparked his interest in learning the Lingít language:

I got interested in learning the language when I saw those kids. I came back six years ago, watching little kids speak Lingít...I was impressed when I saw those little kids talking back to the people in Lingít. The only time I ever heard Lingít being spoken, was when elders were speaking it. And here there were little kids up there talking Lingít and I was thinking, “man!” That was seeing the school program, that’s what really got me going. (Appendix A, line 134-140, p.456)

The role of the children’s enactment of the *koo.éex'* is vital to the perpetuation of ceremonies in the village of Hoonah. Although Hoonah is one of the communities that has maintained much of its cultural identity, it has experienced loss of traditions and assimilation due to the generational affects of boarding schools, loss of traditional land use, including *at.óow*, i.e., Glacier Bay, and the loss of the fluent speakers—all of these factors have adversely affected the community. The children’s *koo.éex'* of Hoonah City schools teaches traditional values, preparing Tlingit children for their traditional roles in the memorial party when they reach adulthood.

Preserving traditional ceremonies within the culture plays an important role in perpetuating ancestral Tlingit identity. Barbara Fleek’s (2000) study regarding Tlingit women’s roles in contemporary Tlingit society provides an important look at the role of culture in Tlingit identity:

Preserving our culture and heritage so we don’t lose our identity as native people and so our kids will learn their history and know who their family is... As we

learn more about our culture, we'll learn more about who we are, we'll learn about keeping in touch with our relatives and going back to find out who we are and respecting and being proud of our lineage – identification that leads to self-esteem. (Fleek, 2000)

As Fleek's research points out, "identification leads to self-esteem." Thus, identifying the self within the social construct of the *koo.éex'* is important to maintaining identity as a Tlingit person. Fleek's study states that it is important for the Tlingit to "keep in touch with our relatives and going back to find out who we are," which many Tlingit accomplish each fall by traveling to their ancestral homelands to participate in the *koo.eex'*.

### *Conclusion*

Cultures are not static, but fluid; and it is rapid change that causes the most damage. I have identified these changes as the loss and struggle with maintaining the Tlingit language, implementation of subsistence regulations and resultant conflicts, and diminishment of the ceremony called a *kóo.eex'* (a memorial party). I have also pointed out where these experiences influence Tlingit identity and how one views their ancestral relationships to the landscape. Although I have separated these factors into categories, they do not affect the culture separately, but interact with one another. For example, a person who experienced a boarding school education might not be fluent in the Tlingit language; therefore, that person would be unable to explain concepts relating to the *koo.éex'*. Moreover, someone who does not practice the *koo.éex'* may not have occasions

to hear the Lingít language. Also, the changes in subsistence directly influence the foods served in the communities such as Hoonah. As well, many students of the boarding school generation saw that a subsistence lifestyle did not fit into the Western worldview. Therefore, in this study, one of the main findings that emerges by means of examining these changes is the differences between the Western and the Tlingit worldviews.

I have identified the changes within the cultural contexts of language loss and acquisition, subsistence lifestyle, and the *koo.eex'* and have described in what manner these factors influence contemporary identity, including the perception of the ancestral relationship to the landscape. According to Vivian Mork (Appendix B):

I think that there was something lost in assimilation. A lot of people say the culture is dying but really it isn't. It's changing and we can keep the good and get rid of the bad of any of the cultures we come in contact with today...I know that we the Tlingit people live in an ever-changing society. (Lines 422-425, p. 503)

As de Laguna's (1960) recommendations for further research suggested, I sought to discover what remains in the Tlingit worldview and how the worldview is transmitted to the next generation. In the following chapter, I continue the discussion of Tlingit identity in contemporary society through inquiring how a Tlingit knows who he or she is. To accomplish this, I examine the worldview of the Tlingit including traditional values, protocols, and the concepts of respect, balance, and *at.óow*. Finally, I provide examples of contemporary modes of transmitting traditional knowledge and worldviews, e.g., culture and language camps, language nests and master/apprentice programs, literature and curricula, clan conferences, and Celebration

## Chapter 5

### The Tlingit Worldview and the Ancestral Relationship to the Landscape

#### *Introduction*

In this chapter, I focus upon specific ideologies within the Tlingit worldview to understand the ancestral relationships to landscape in the Tlingit culture, including the role these beliefs play in shaping contemporary Tlingit identity. Barry Lopez (1986) describes 'worldview' as containing a metaphysical epistemological, ethical, aesthetical, and logical component. As evident in the research participants' narratives, the physical landscape, cosmology, traditional knowledge, and the Tlingit language define their ancestral landscape. Therefore, the ancestral landscape does not simply mean the physical/geographical sense-of-place, but can be described through understanding the landscape-physical, the landscape-spiritual, and the landscape-familial.

The Tlingit landscape includes the values that sustain their worldviews; therefore, I define identity within those social paradigms. How the Tlingit perceive their ancestral landscape is based upon their worldviews. These values provide a basis for understanding the Tlingit in relationship to their ancestral landscape, in addition to how the Tlingit perceive their own identity. In the first section, I will outline the Tlingit values as defined by elders, including Dr. Walter Soboleff, at a forum designed specifically to address tribal philosophies. Next, through her narrative, research participant Carol Williams describes these values and how they are transmitted to subsequent generations. N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer's (1987) research for *Haa Shuka, Our Ancestors: Tlingit*

*Oral Narratives* utilized a similar approach, which is in accordance with Tlingit methodologies: to listen (in this case, to read) and then allow the lessons to become clear in one's own time and through one's own experiences. Moreover, Carol Williams' narrative on Tlingit values fulfills the intended purpose of providing the opportunity for the Tlingit to speak for themselves.

In this chapter, I also provide a basic outline illustrating Tlingit cultural competency. I answer the questions: What does it mean to be a Tlingit? What am I supposed to know about my culture and where do I go in order to learn what I need to know? By following these guiding questions, I describe how the Tlingit sense of identity is transmitted to the next generation. I propose that to learn who one is as a Tlingit person, he or she must have a competent understanding of the Tlingit worldview. I identify the values that the Tlingit deem as important to display culturally competence as a Tlingit. Kawagley (1995) points out, "Once a worldview has been formed, the people are then able to identify themselves as a unique people" (p. 8). Thus, the worldview provides the Tlingit person with a concept of self and their relationship to their ancestral landscape.

In the course of examining Tlingit values, I bring out three important aspects of the Tlingit culture: balance, respect, and *at.óow*. These concepts are difficult to define in the Western worldview, as well as in the English language; yet these concepts, especially *at.óow*, are viewed as the most important aspects within the Tlingit culture. In order to provide a contemporary perspective on the concept of *at.óow*, I draw upon the narrative from research participant Clarissa Hudson. Similar to Carol Williams' narrative on

Tlingit values, Clarissa Hudson's interpretation of *at.óow* accomplishes the intended method that I selected, which provides the opportunity for the Tlingit to speak with their own unique voices.

In the second section, I then identify five contemporary contexts where these values are enacted and intentionally transmitted. The first locale is at a culture and language camp setting. The second method of transmitting cultural knowledge is through language nests and master/apprentice programs. The third context is through literature and curricula. The fourth context is by means of a clan conference, uniting both Tlingit and Western scholars to enhance the transmission of knowledge to the following generation. The fifth venue is a recent phenomenon: "Celebration" a gathering of Southeast Alaska tribes. These innovative ways of transmitting cultural knowledge developed due to the changes in Tlingit society and reactions to assimilation.

*Section one: Identifying with Tlingit values in a contemporary world*

De Laguna (1960) is not alone in her assumption that a Tlingit who appears assimilated (from a Western worldview) does not maintain a traditional sense of identity. Her etic point of view describes the Tlingit as:

...for today there are not only the old fashioned person who understand no English and whose life is still largely guided by the old patterns of subsistence hunting and fishing, by reciprocal sib [clan] and lineage obligations, and by the old values, but there are other persons who have broken with all of these. Among the latter are college graduates, veterans, teachers, ministers, civil servants, local

town officials, leaders in the local trade unions, storekeepers, and commercial fishermen who own valuable boats. (p. 8)

De Laguna's observation is based upon the assumption that if a Tlingit drives a modern car, lives in a house, and has a college degree then he or she does not adhere to a traditional worldview. N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1998) point out that for many Tlingit people 'culture' is conceptualized differently, depending upon in which generation one grew up in. In addition, the perception of culture varies from actual models of behavior (p. 75).

#### *Tlingit values and perspectives*

By examining Tlingit values, I discovered that many aspects of the traditional Tlingit worldview remains and, at the very least, are reinforced through interacting with the landscape, cultural ceremonies, and through language. Research participant Breanne Mork (Appendix A) points out that the Tlingit values are not separate from her ancestral landscape:

I was raised with Tlingit values when I was little. It's hard to separate the values from what you live every day. I went out on the water a lot, out fishing, up the river. Up the river I went camping, the garnet ledge, the hot tubs, twin lakes. I went fishing with my family. I went fishing with my grandfather. I lived next door to my grandparents. (Lines 191-196, p. 437)

In 2004, an Elders forum on Traditional Values developed the *Southeast Traditional Tribal Values* (2004). These values are presented on a poster and widely distributed

among the Tlingit population. They provide a basis for the discussion in which values remain important to maintaining a Tlingit worldview, including how these values teach the youth about their identity as Tlingit people. According to V. Mork (Appendix B), “A lot of the children that are in the class don’t know much about who they are. They don’t know much about the Tlingit culture or even any other ethnicities that they might be” (Lines 393-395, p. 502).

The Southeast Traditional Tribal Values are:

- Discipline and obedience to the traditions of our ancestors
- Respect for self, elders and others
- Respect for nature and property
- Patience
- Pride in family, clan and traditions is found in love, loyalty and generosity
- Be strong in mind, body, and spirit
- Humor
- Hold each other up
- Listen well and with respect
- Speak with care
- We are stewards of the air, land, sea
- Reverence for our creator
- Live in peace and harmony
- Be strong and have courage



Publication of these values is a reaction and adaptation to cultural change. The Tlingit values were adopted as, “Part of the effort to heal dysfunctional persons, families, and communities” (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2004, p. 272). One hundred years ago, these values were transmitted through the clan structure, e.g., residing in traditional clan houses and the avuncular system. Research participant Clarissa Hudson’s narrative (Appendix C) explains how important it is to maintain the traditional values. She claims, “...there must be agreements among the people involved to identify the values and traditions and make the commitment to actively maintain these things...” (Lines 609-611, p. 574).

The current list of values were adapted from another version of the Tlingit values that was drawn up by Sealaska Heritage Institute and Dr. Walter Soboleff in 1992. They vary slightly from the current list compiled by the Southeast Elders Forum. The Tlingit values as outlined by Dr. Walter Soboleff (1992b) are as follows:

- Be obedient; the wise never test a rule.
- Respect elder, parents, property and the world of nature. Also, respect yourself so that others may respect you.
- Be considerate and patient.
- Be careful of how you speak, for words can be either pleasing or like a club. Traditionally, when you speak, those listening can imagine seeing your clan family line.
- Your food comes from the land and sea. To abuse either may diminish its generosity. Use what is needed.

- Pride in family, clan and traditions found in love, loyalty and generosity.
- Share burdens and support each other. This is caring.
- Trespass not onto other's rights, or offer royalty and/or restitution.
- Parents and relatives are responsible for the family education of children; men teaching boys and women teaching girls.
- Care and good health is important for success of the person or clan.
- Take not the property of others; an error reflects on the family and clan.
- In peace, living is better.
- Through famine, ice age, sickness, war and other obstacles, unity and self-determination is essential to survival.
- Good conduct is encouraged to please the spirit we believe is near.

Carol Williams (Appendix A), a Tradition Bearer for the Chookaneidí in Hoonah, Alaska and a research participant discusses the values in reference the next generation, which includes the children, as well as those who care for children:

Respect: When you are addressing respect and you want to teach a child, what you want to say is what my mother said to me, "I want you to be more respectful Carol." And, I looked at her and she said, "What is it that you want, you want, in your heart and in your mind so that you'll keep for the rest of your life." Having respect means that you have set in your mind already how you're going to behave and then you automatically will give people respect simply because they have

survived a lot. You give it to the elders because that is what they've learned and you will want to learn because you will want to live a long time.

Respect comes, and when you don't have it, it hurts really bad. You think it doesn't but it will affect you. But, when you do have respect, it will enlighten what you want to accomplish. And, this is something we need for you to be respectful; it is something you have to work for. [If] you don't work for it you will never have it. So...how you would address the youth regarding respect, some people say things like "We don't always have to respect the elders, they have to earn our respect." I have a hard time with that one. There are certainly going to be instances where you see some behavior that you question, that an elder might display, but it shouldn't take away the respect that you might have for that person at another time. So, having respect, being respectful, is something that you earn. [Respect is] not how others might view you, but [respect is] for yourself. I have always thought that was how it was taught to me. In our culture, we teach that there must be respect for all things. Everything is here for a reason and we do these things not because it's traditional or because it's expected of us, we do this because everything has a balance, everything has a reason for why it exists. It is here for our use; [if] we abuse it and we lose it, we won't have it anymore.

How I taught the traditions and values is: I would say, when you have a tragedy it's a natural instinct to go back to basics and what is basic to you is basic to everybody: go to your family. So, to have a family it takes a lot of work. It also takes a lot of planning and time, but the reward is you have family; you have a

support system. You have someone you can go to when you are in need of aid, someone you can celebrate with when you have reason to celebrate. And remembering your traditions are very important and all of it is based on family.

**Balance:** To be Tlingit is based on balance. Everything that we do we try to create a balance and you don't just be respectful to your parents and treat your sister in a terrible way. One day she will be a parent. One day you will be a parent. And, taking the time to communicate well, taking the time to spend time with each other has its rewarding payoff. What is traditional in your family is what you gain.

**Pride in Family:** But what is wonderful about the Tlingit culture is we have a deep sense of extended family. We go by the African saying—It takes a whole village to raise a child. We reprimand or comment whether or not a mother is present. We don't leave it up to the mother to be the only one to reprimand the child.

**Sharing:** Sharing is also important because that's instilled knowledge you have and that willingness to share what you have. Taking care of others, taking care of others means that it is never forgotten and there will be a time when you are in need of aid and you *will* be taken care of.

**Pride in being Tlingit:** Being proud of being Tlingit is good, but pride comes from fully knowing who you are and what you are set out to do, to be Tlingit. Being Tlingit doesn't automatically mean that you should be proud. And, it should never be replaced by arrogance. To be Tlingit means that you do have a

strong sense of pride because you have fully learned what it means to be Tlingit and to be a Tlingit person. You know the number one rule is that every person no matter who they are is important. And, it doesn't matter your age or your standing people learn by watching and by example.

Remember: Remember to always love children. This culture has an unwritten rule that whatever we do is going to be in preparation for the next generation. And, we know that the children, how we teach them, they are going to be our future. So, when we are educating a child you don't want to do it slapdash, and fix it later, you want to do it very well. It takes a lot of effort because you need to know what the children are not saying and what is the best way to get across to the child. And, those are the things it takes to educate children. They are not going to learn just because you said so, they are going to learn if they can see the example and if they can understand the fact what is being told to them.

Responsibility: It takes a lot of responsibility to be a Tlingit nowadays, what we say, what we tell our children. Our biggest tool that you have in your body is not your mind or heart, but your mouth. And, your mouth can either heal or harm. And, knowing the strength of your words means that you must always be careful of what you speak. Choose your words very carefully because once you hurt someone you cannot take it back and you learn that that harm that you caused will affect you. So, that is the responsibility you carry. What I try to teach children is you need to be compassionate with your words, stop speaking words that hurt. And, then learning and preserving the culture is important but one of the

things I learned is that how this culture has been able to survive for so long. A lot of its values that are taught and how we are able to accept change. And it has changed with the times and maybe we haven't adopted other ways of speaking or demonstrating our values, but we have adapted it to meet the needs of our people.

**Truth:** We talked about truth. It's wise to use your words carefully. In Tlingit we say two things. Words are like a stick, if you hit someone with your words, no matter what you say or do, you cannot take it back. When you walk into a room, you should pretend that you are holding a ten-foot pole that will be your words. You cannot hurt anyone, bump anyone, and harm anyone with that pole. When you are speaking, think of your ancestors listening.

**Be Careful with Words:** In our culture, we say you should never [have to] apologize. If you apologize it means you have committed wrong. Actually what they are saying is use your head so that you don't have to apologize.

**Caring for Nature:** Subsistence areas and all nature should be cared for; that goes with [the belief that] everything is here for a reason. One analogy I try to use is to think of bread that you have at the dinner table and if you did not put that bread away. Think of money that you shoved into your pocket instead of carefully putting it away in your wallet. A loaf of bread and money, both of them take care of you; they are designed for your care. You need that food to take care of you. You need that money to take care of you. And, in the morning when you find that your money is lost, and that your bread is all dried and curled, and you are not able to eat it. Our people say that the spirits gather at night and they say "I'm

taken care of here and put in a good place I think I'll stay." And, you don't have, as much struggle because you've taken care of what there is to take care of. Or, the spirits will say, "I'm not respected here and I think I will find a place where I can be respected." And then, you quickly lose your money, you have to continually have to buy new food because you didn't take the time to take care of it. And, things like food and money, all those things are designed for your care. If you abuse it, you quickly lose it and you continue to struggle. It can be something as small as littering or it can be something as bad as endangering the land so that it is not livable. So once you learn that there is a balance, you can see that you are not alone, you are here for a reason.

Reverence: *Haa Shageinyaa*. We believe that there was always a reason for us to be here. We always knew that there was a spirit greater than ourselves. And we do think to please the Spirit-that-is-near and when our people learned that *Haa Shageinyaa* was actually our heavenly father, it started making sense. Having a sense of reverence, knowing that you are part of that balance, you start to see what are the possibilities of this earth.

Humility: Having a sense of humility, arrogance and being boastful and prideful is the power of your words and if you abuse these powers that you have, that every person has, if you don't have compassion or love in your heart you will be shown a lesson: and you won't want to learn this lesson. But, it will come and you will be enlighten by it; and if you don't learn by this enlightenment then you

will be taught again. Until you learn that compassion and love for each other and care for each other is the right thing to do.

Caring for the Body: Care for the human body is also for balance, for respecting yourself. When our people first saw a person drunk from alcohol, there was a phrase the people have said, “This will be too much for us to overcome.” There was always a fear that alcoholism and drugs would eat away and the person would not be as whole as they could be. And, when our people first learned of this, they knew that there was power that was greater that wanted to take away what is good; and it is up to us to decide if we want to succumb to that or if we are strong enough to avoid it. And, those that are strong enough to avoid drugs and alcohol it is great, the joy is really great. Because you never have to worry about what you did or even be ashamed of the truth of who you are is very apparent. It comes with a long lasting feeling.

Be strong and have courage: We try to teach that drugs and alcohol are the evils that you are strong enough to overcome. There is a phrase— *I gu.aa yáx xwán*, which means be of good courage. It also means ‘know what its like to stand on your own two feet without someone giving you directions.’

Traditional Foods: And eating your traditional foods is like perpetuating the culture; you know how to gather it, you know how to preserve it, and you know how to enjoy it. The food is there not for show, it is there for your enjoyment and when you use it in a good way it gives back.



Dignity: Dignity is when you are treating a woman with respect, knowing that a woman is the only person who can produce life. It is treating a man as a man should be treated. Having that kind of dignity and portraying that kind of dignity, and giving others your respect, strengthens the essence of who you are. It is not something that can be given. It is something that you work for. It is something you want, and once you gain it no one can take it away. There may be times in your life when someone has decided to mock how you fix your hair, or mock the stain on your shirt. If your dignity or self-esteem is intact, you can overcome those little remarks that hurt your soul. And, both comments are going to happen, but it doesn't always have to destroy. That's one of the good reasons it's wonderful to have dignity in your soul.

Peace: When I was growing up it was instilled in me...look for peace. Once you have that peace, keep it facing your heart. Enjoy that peaceful time: this is my peace. When you are surrounded by something that disrupts your peace, you know what you need to do to go back to that peaceful place. When I'm really troubled, what I like to do is to sing my Tlingit songs. It makes me... puts me back into my mind of finding peace so that I am not always troubled. You don't know what life has in store for you. But, you do know that you will need to find your own way in which to survive. That's the key to life: how to survive. We are always going to have someone that is harmed in some way or there was something that hurt you in some way, but you survived it, you survived it once you can survive it again. That's the key of living, is finding those ways. And, the

wonderful thing is that we revere those people, and we still talk about those people who survived in a good way and still held their head high.

And all of these things, its not a possession that can be given you it is something that is worked for. If you want it in your heart you can have it. When you get angry, when you are hurt, when you are upset, or when you are troubled by someone else's pain, you know what you need to do to overcome that. What you need to do is remember what its like to have a peaceful existence and go back to that and remember to have courage to stand on your own two feet and go back again without giving up. Giving up is a hard thing for our people to do, to face, because we persevere knowing that there is a future meant for out children. All of those come before us when we realize that someone wants to give up. It doesn't mean arrogance; it doesn't mean fighting back in another way, it means this happened, and I know how to overcome it. I know what I need to do for myself and once I accomplish this I will be stronger for this.

It's a shame that we have people that like to bully. It is a shame that people create ways to harm other people. You can be troubled by that or you overcome it in a really good way: That's our hope. That is our hope for our children, that always each and every time, you will find a good way. One of the things that I was taught as a child is that in everything never lose your hope, never lose your will, life will get better. Whatever life carries to you it does get better, life always has improvement.

When people work with youth, they have this barrier maybe for lack of a better word. They have this barrier that they shouldn't impose someone else's values on the children. But if you were to ask the child, "what do you want, what do you want from your parents? I guarantee the answer will be guidance—I want to believe in something. That needs to be given to a child. If a child goes without a value system, it will be very hard for that child to make good decisions. The Tlingit values system shouldn't be confused with religious values systems. It's our guide in how we live, how we attack a problem, how we make decisions, how we take care of each other. All of these things come into being. And, someone might misinterpret our Tlingit values as a religious belief. But, what we are talking about is a guide for living. It's too bad that people have this fear, but that's life sometimes.

Never test a rule: When I talk about these things, I'll hear people say, "I'm glad that you told me I didn't know." I really credit my parents for telling me these things. But, I give myself a little credit too because I listened: I paid attention. I didn't just let it pass me by. That's a problem we face; there are all these wonderful ways, the native knowledge we have, people are letting it pass aside because they don't see how it will fit into teaching children, when actually *it is* how you reach a child. They [the children] can sit and watch you and pretend their listening but maybe they are not. Getting to the heart of a child is a good way to teach children. But, the first things says "Be obedient, be wise and never test a rule." We never test a rule. I wanted to put it under respect. Here is a good one:

When you are in mourning, when you have lost a family member here are certain things that you do not do. It has absolutely nothing to do with taboo or superstition. But, it has everything to do with being respectful. Being respectful of the state that you are in, and that you know the appropriate way to behave that you've been taught very well. Testing a rule, if your uncle told you that when you go hunting you should never walk in a certain direction or move in a certain direction, and you test what he said, you could find out the hard way that he was right all along. We teach our children, don't test these rules. [If] the rule is don't hurt your fellow man by your bad words and you went ahead and did it anyway, you need to find a way to fix it; you need to find a way to fix the wrong you created. That's why we say that.

**Responsibility for educating children:** In our culture, let's say that there are two girls and they are very disrespectful to a crowd of people. The elders would say, "Who are their parents?" They wouldn't say, "Who is that girl?" They say, "Who are her parents?" So, whatever you do reflects your parents; your parents are going to hear how your daughter behaves. So, everything reflects on your parents. And, that's why we say never infringe upon the rights of others.

**Take not the property of others:** Never take property that belongs to someone else. If something is lying there and you didn't know whom it belongs to, it belongs to someone, leave it there, they left it there, you leave it there. It isn't any of your business unless someone wants to make it your business.

Pride in family: When we talked about family, it takes a lot of work to be in a family. You have to know what to do in situations; you have to take on the responsibility of being in a family. It means you just can't do as you please, you can't ignore things that are very important; you take time to care of those things. If someone is having a birthday, you take time to do that. It all reflects back to you, the importance of family, and the importance of taking care of those things. The payback is what you get is the love of a family.

Humor: ...Laughter is healing and it is important to always have happiness. We know that in times of grief and times of pain that you are not going to want to laugh, but there is a time that you will heal. We try to teach that life is not all sadness. Because life is not all sadness, remember to have humor in you life every day.

It is very significant because you are being given permission to put your grief away. Your through, your done, no more grieving, you followed all the rituals and once you followed all of them and it gets completed you never go back again. Because life is not all sadness. Life is sharing, life is loving, and life is laughter. You do these things to please the spirit that is near. (Lines 59-296, pp. 416-427)

Carol's perspective on the Tlingit values illustrates that various aspects of the traditional Tlingit worldview remains. For example, the value of respect and how it relates to contemporary lives, is reflected in the research participants' narratives. In addition, Carol's interpretation of the Tlingit values makes it clear that by participating in

subsistence activities one is perpetuating their culture. Carol's narrative also indicates that as a reaction and adaptation to cultural change, these values are intentionally taught to subsequent generations. The narratives suggest that these values are disseminated through interacting with the landscape by means of subsistence, ceremonies, and through language, factors, which I argued through loss and change, have influenced the Tlingit ancestral relationship to the landscape thus affecting Tlingit identity.

#### *Tlingit cultural competency*

Nora Dauenhauer (1992) writes, "If a child knows who he or she is, he is o.k. that's roots. He or she is then anchored into a space that they can always go back to" (p. 52). The Traditional Elders Educational Checklist is another effort at bringing Tlingit values to the younger generation. The checklist was originally published in *Beginning Tlingit* in 1984 (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2000), and in 2001 was formally adopted by the Southeast Alaska Tribal College Elders Council. For the elders, the landscape is the basis for developing a sense of Tlingit identity in relationship to others. For example, in the section, *How one lives*, there is a connection to the landscape that includes food gathering and preparation, and subsequently sharing the harvest: sharing the landscape results in an intimate knowledge base. For those Tlingit who are seeking to learn more about their culture, the *Traditional Elders Educational Checklist* addresses the most important knowledge and skills in the Tlingit culture in order to be well educated in the traditions. The checklist can be found in *Beginning Tlingit* (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2000) and at the Alaska Native Knowledge Network's website.

Traditional Elders Educational Checklist consists of the following:

- Self: Who am I?
- Relationship to others: Who are you?
- Language: How do we talk?
- Literature and history: What do we talk about?
- Dancing
- Traditional art forms
- Survival: Use of the environment
- Survival skills
- Fishing
- Hunting
- Traditional technology
- Geography
- Traditional taboos
- Traditional spirituality

The first part of the Elders' Checklist, *Who am I*, concerns the cultural self.

Identity through the cultural self is commonly taught through proper oratory, e.g., the Tlingit introduction. Typically, the basic introduction is taught to young children in order that they may identify themselves according to their landscape: where they are living, and where their ancestors came from. The children identify themselves with the places and people they belong. Table 9 provides an *Outline of a basic Tlingit introduction*.

Table 9: Outline of a basic Tlingit introduction

<i>Basic Tlingit introduction</i>	
<i>Lingit x'ein'áx</i>	<i>yóo xát duwasáakw.</i>
My Lingít my name is _____.	
<i>Dleit kaa x'eináx</i>	<i>yóo xát duwasáakw.</i>
My white-man (English)name is _____.	
<i>naax xát sitee.</i>	
I belong to the _____ nation.	
<i>áyá xát.</i>	
I belong to the _____ clan.	
<i>hit áyá xat.</i>	
I am from the _____ house.	
<i>yadix xát sitee.</i>	
or _____ <i>yádi áyá xat.</i>	
I belong to my father's people _____.	
<i>dachxán áyá xát.</i>	
My grandparents clan is _____.	
<i>kwaan áyá xát.</i>	
I am from _____.	

Note. Resourced from Wright, D. (n.d.). *Basic Tlingit Introduction*, Tlingit curriculum unit, Hoonah, AK: Hoonah City Schools.

Learning a formal Tlingit introduction is one way to instill pride and a sense of self. The Tlingit are recognized by their maternal lineage as well as their paternal lineage, therefore, the Tlingit introduction provides an oral basis for understanding the concept of balance as an aspect of identity. Vivian Mork (Appendix B) explains, “We are teaching them who they are, who their ancestors are and how their names and clans connect them to this land and to each other” (Lines 260-262, pp. 495-496). The introduction may be elaborate, often taking a few minutes to recite and in certain settings may be brief, only touching upon one’s Tlingit and English name, including moiety, clan, and house and



*kwáan*. V. Mork (Appendix B) also points out “By speaking the language and by introducing themselves in Lingit, they are respecting their ancestors by respecting themselves.” (Lines 276-277, p. 496). It is common to hear the Tlingit introduction in public meetings, schools, and government settings. Therefore, it is important for the Tlingit to memorize his or her introduction as a necessity in identifying the self in relation to the ancestral landscape.

*Balance and respect: Fundamental to Tlingit identity*

Now that I have outlined the basic Tlingit values, I will discuss two important and related concepts: balance and respect. To be culturally competent, one must have a basic understanding how these elements are interwoven into Tlingit worldview. According to V. Mork (Appendix B):

One of the Tlingit values that is very important to the Tlingit worldview is to respect your family and ancestors. Part of this value means to know who you are because when we learn about our family and our own personal ancestral history, the more we learn about ourselves. (Lines 567-570, p.569)

In addition, Dr. Walter Soboleff (2000a) explains:

Respect is at the heart of Tlingit protocol. Well-defined codes of Tlingit ceremonial protocols and practices are dictated by ancient customs, traditions, and oral tradition. These protocols have historically been taught by Tlingit parents, elders, uncles, grandparents, and clan leaders. (para. 1)

The Tlingit concepts of respect, *at yaa awunéi*, and the concept of balance are difficult to analyze separately, because the cultural expressions blur. Respect in the Tlingit culture is akin to the term ‘protocol’, since displaying respect towards one another, especially one’s opposite (moiety), is the basis for understanding the self in relation to the Tlingit social person. Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) points out “if you want to really respect an elder and their traditional ways, you need to hear what the elders says, what they are adamant about (Lines 493-494 p. 569). Moreover, maintaining balance in the Tlingit culture has everything to do with respect. Table 10: *Tlingit concept of respect* describes the concept of respect within in the Tlingit worldview.

Table 10: *Tlingit concept of respect*

<p>Respect for your moiety:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respect by following matrilineal traditions: i.e. children are born into the mother’s clan.</li> <li>2. Recognizing kinship relationships within your clan as well as recognizing and acknowledging other kinship relationships and recognizing kinship solidarity.</li> <li>3. Knowing and maintaining matrilineal clan ties and inheritance.</li> </ol>
<p>Respect for marriage laws: raven and eagle marrying opposites</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Realizing that marriage laws maintain cultural balance both spiritually and physically.</li> <li>2. The marriage of opposites relationship is essential to the matrilineal social structure.</li> </ol>
<p>Respect for your opposites:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respect for your father’s clan, your <i>yadi</i>.</li> <li>2. Respect for kinship terms and relationships outside your clan.</li> <li>3. Knowing and respecting the role of your “outer shell”.</li> </ol>
<p>Respect of death and funerary rituals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opposite moiety serves as pall bears and caretakers of the deceased.</li> <li>2. If a male clan member dies, his own clan inherits his <i>at.óow</i> and if he is a house leader then his <i>at.óow</i> goes to his oldest nephew (his sister’s son).</li> <li>3. If a female member of a clan dies, her own children who are of the same moiety/clan inherit her <i>at.óow</i>.</li> <li>4. Proper adherence to cultural rules regarding <i>koo.éex’</i>.</li> </ol>

Table 10: *Tlingit concept of respect continued...*

<p>Respect of Tlingit property laws</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clan Crests are the property of a certain clan and cannot be used without permission.</li> <li>3. Reproduction of crests or commission of regalia undertaken by the opposite moiety.</li> </ol>
<p>Respect for clan houses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clan houses are communally owned and care of house is clan responsibility.</li> <li>2. Rebuilding houses is commissioned to the opposite moiety and a pay-back ceremony is held.</li> </ol>
<p>Respect of <i>at.óow</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>At.óow</i> is owned by a specific house (<i>hít</i>) or clan.</li> <li>2. <i>At.óow</i> is considered sacred and treated with respect.</li> <li>3. Protocols: proper storage, prohibiting sale, brought out and used at appropriate occasions.</li> </ol>
<p>Respect for traditional names</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Names are owned by a specific clan and use is restricted to clan members.</li> <li>2. Use of names are taken very seriously in ceremonial occasions.</li> </ol>
<p>Respect for oral traditions and clan songs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stories and songs are owned by specific clans.</li> <li>2. Expressed permission must be given to use stories and songs.</li> <li>3. Realizing the power of oratory to heal in ceremonial settings.</li> </ol>
<p>Respect for elders</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elders knowledge is considered valuable.</li> <li>2. Elders physical presence is required in decisions making regarding cultural activities and ceremonies.</li> </ol>
<p>Respect for ancestors</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respect ancestors through the expression of cultural attitudes, e.g., being stewards of the land, <i>at.óow</i>, oral traditions, traditional arts, language, each other and relationships and all other Tlingit traditions.</li> <li>2. Respect for all the ancestors have taught us.</li> </ol>

Note. Resourced and adapted from Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center (2000), *Sitka Tribes of Alaska Tlingit Protocol*. Sitka, Alaska.

The concept of respect is two-fold: it is balanced in with attitude and simultaneously with action. Tlingit elder Elizabeth Martin (Appendix D) was taught that ‘good people’ showed respect to one another. “The good ones that had respect for one

another... We are supposed to respect and be nice to them, but nowadays they don't They don't do that..."(Lines 511-514, p. 647).

As indicated in Table 10, respect in the Tlingit worldview is *knowing* about your culture. For example, respecting the ancestors means that he or she has learned traditional use areas, Lingít names for those areas, as well as the oral traditions surrounding that particular landscape. In an article on language revitalization, Lingít language specialist and research participant Vivian Mork emphasizes, "We had fairly life-changing experiences when we took it to heart to keep the language going, because of the Tlingit concept of respect" (Fry, 2005). Therefore, the idea of exhibiting respect towards the ancestors is the practice of continuing one's language and culture.

V. Mork (Appendix B) claims "when we speak, we are waking up the ancestors by using the language, giving them respect and calling on them" (Lines 158-160, p. 491). Proper adherence to cultural rules through acquiring knowledge regarding one's culture is essential. In the Tlingit culture, 'respect' is not simply a concept: It is an English word used to describe cultural behaviors and attitudes. According to Kan (1989), "English speaking Tlingit continue to use it [*at yaa awunéi* ] to describe proper, decorous treatment of others, which calls for respectful behavior in return" (p. 96). Research participant Owen James (Appendix D) suggests that respect is action and not following specific protocols means that one is disrespecting his or her culture.

Respect as proper treatment is expected to be returned in order to maintain balance. For example, in the *koo.eex'*, the foremost expectation is that the mourners must exhibit an expression of their grief through love and respect for the deceased knowing

that respect will be returned to them. Research participant Sam Wright (Appendix A) explains how he, “sat there and ...I got a lot of my respect for the elders... from the parties. Yeah, you respect your elders. Parties [are] where it really shows, when you listen to them” (Lines 432-433, p. 467). Therefore, respect in itself is an attitude of balance between the knowing and the action. If respect is the ‘knowing,’ then ‘love’ is the action because love is the main term used to describe inter-moiety relationships (Kan, 1989). And, in order to have a ‘relationship’ one must have action. Sam Wright (Appendix A) clarifies:

And, our belief is that when you are having a party, we have to see eye-to-eye, if we don’t see eye-to-eye, our belief is that we are going to go out to get them and we are going to bring them in from the ocean; but if the water is rough we can’t go get them and then somebody is going to be left behind, or somebody else is going to pass away real soon, if we don’t see eye-to-eye. But, we have to make it calm, we have to make the waters calm so that we can sit there and bring them in and let them be able to go to the spirit world. (Lines 455-463, pp. 468-469)

Sam Wright’s metaphor using the ocean indicates that participants must not make ‘waves’ because there may be dire consequences. Breaking a taboo by disrespecting others can cause an unexpected death.

Other examples of respect in action are the love songs that are sung at the *koo.eex*’ to the opposite moiety. In addition, the speeches given in public settings exhibit respect for one another as a social being as well as an individual, e.g., when an Eagle speaks, there is an opportunity for a Raven to speak. During public speaking and in

ceremonies, this respect provides cultural balance. According to Kan (1982), “In the course of this ceremony, relationships of reciprocity and exchange between clans of the opposite moieties were assessed and strengthened” (p. 257). It is important to mention that a clan is out of balance until they perform the *koo.eex*’ (see N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990; Kan, 1989; Fair & Worl, 2000). The *koo.eex*’ is how clans show ‘respect’ to the deceased and the opposite moiety, and thus regain balance.

The concept of respect is also found in the subsistence activities of the Tlingit. One can cause harm to natural objects such as glaciers, rocks, and trees. Teri Rofkar (Appendix C) points out that in the Tlingit worldview, one must “really be aware of where you walk and what you do before you even do it so that you have that sense of respect going in (Lines 371-372, p. 538). According to Carol Williams’ (Appendix A) narrative of the Glacier Bay story, respect is a key component:

Because the clan realizes that young women are going to be mothers and they will be the first teachers of their children, out of respect for the new door she will walk through, they will put the woman through this ritual. There was a lot of respect.  
(Lines 5-7, p. 414)

In turn, fish, berries, deer, bears and even glaciers can cause harm to humans if not respected. In this case, proper respect is exhibited through behaviors regarding the treatment of the animals during and after butchering. Traditional taboos adhere to the belief that one should never talk bad about an animal or natural object because they could become offended and possibly cause harm to humans (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990). The concept of respect provides a balance between the idea and the action of

killing an animal and the reality that one needs the animal to sustain life. Therefore, in respecting the animal or plant, one acknowledges an interdependence. Regarding maintaining the ancestral relationships to the landscape, research participant Mitch Mork (Appendix D) explains, “I realized how awesome [the landscape] is and I don’t want to disrupt it, so I try my best not to impact it too much. It makes me mad when people don’t respect it (Lines 108-110, p. 619).

As well, research participant Teri Rofkar discusses the concept of respect in accordance with her harvesting protocols:

...just acknowledge that you are going to be impacting their lives... With respect so that they continue to have healthy lives and you’re going to cover everything up after you’re going to dig roots... You would make the apology right away before you even start. (Appendix C, lines 365-368, p. 537)

In the Tlingit worldview, one must give an apology *before* an animal is killed, prior to picking berries, or prior to harvesting spruce roots for a basket. The act of respecting the life of the animal or plant creates a balance between nature and the Tlingit person. For example at the Glacier Bay language retreat, I was taught to say thank-you prior to prying a crustacean, *shaaw*, from a rock. In addition, Breanne Mork (Appendix A) describes the intimate connection to the landscape as a ‘relationship’ that must be an active one. “In my culture it is disrespectful not to live on the land that was given to them. Given to us” (Lines 69-70, p. 431).

The second important concept in the Tlingit worldview is balance. According to Carol Williams (Appendix A), “To be Tlingit is based on balance. Everything that we do

we try to create a balance...” (Lines 91-92, p. 418). Balance is achieved as a result of love and respect towards your clan and the opposite clan. If the Tlingit loves and respects their opposites, then one is truly balanced. In addition, speeches at the *koo.eex* are given in order to share grief and “balance of the deaths on both ‘sides’” (Kan, 1982, p. 259). Thus, the sharing of grief provides balance to the ceremony, the clans, and ultimately, the larger community. To explain the concept of balance in similar terms, the Diné (Navajo) worldview contains the concept of walking in beauty on the path of *Hozhóó* (harmony), i.e., walking in beauty can be perceived as a metaphor for walking in balance. Tlingit spirituality incorporates a similar concept of balance. Research participant Carol Williams (Appendix A) explains, “having a sense of reverence, knowing that you are part of that balance you start to see what are the possibilities of this earth” (Lines 164-167, p. 421). The concept of *Haa Shageinyaa*, the spirit in all things, helps provide that balance “and we do think to please the spirit that is near...” (C. Williams, Appendix A, line 164, p. 421). The Yupiat culture provides yet another example. In Yup’ik “Yuluni pitalkertugluni,” means, “Living a life that feels just right.” According to Kawagley (1998), “One has to be in constant communication with each of the processes to know that one is in balance” (p. 4). Therefore, in the Tlingit worldview, balance is achieved through daily actions: subsistence, sharing, and everyday speech. A Tlingit must walk in balance in order to maintain their cultural and ancestral relationships.

The concept of balance also ensures that proper marriage relationships take place, because a Tlingit person from the Raven moiety must marry a person from the opposite moiety and vice versa. In the past, it was considered taboo if you married someone from



your own moiety, *guneit kanaayí*, i.e., an Eagle marrying an Eagle would be akin to marrying one's own brother or sister. Although this practice is not strictly followed in modern society, it is still discussed and recently some of the younger generation are returning to these values. For the Tlingit, the duality of identity through moiety, e.g., one's matrilineal descent and patrilineal descent (*yadí*) is extremely important for a sense of balanced identity. Sealaska Heritage Institute president, Rosita Worl (2001), describes it as, "This duality plays a significant role in their social, ceremonial and everyday life. Balance and reciprocity between the Ravens and Eagles are required to ensure social and spiritual harmony" (para. 3). Thus, there is a dimension of Tlingit social identity that is linked to the two halves: balance.

Each Tlingit personhood is balanced between their moiety heritage, their mother's lineage and their father's lineage, which is called *yadí*. Your *yadí* is equally important to your social identity. This concept refers to the 'child of the father's clan', *yadí*. The importance of the father's clan is evident in the reciprocal and ancestral relationship in ceremonial activities. For example, members of a family will wear ceremonial clothing created by their opposites and commissioning *at.óow* must be through the opposite clan. As well, songs such as love songs are sung to the opposite clan. Thus, understanding the concepts of respect and love ensures that balance is maintained in ceremonial settings.

Without ceremonial settings, however, the concept of *yadí* is being confused. In *Evolving Concepts of Tlingit Identity and Clans*, N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (2004) express concerns over the misunderstanding of this concept. In traditional settings such as the *koo.eex*, these concepts are learned through ceremonial participation, but in

communities or families that do not attend the *koo.eex'*, these concepts blur (see Chapter 4 for a discussion on the *koo.eex'*). The Dauenhauer's find "...that in the last ten years an increasing confusion over the meaning of this concept, and that more and more people stand [during a song] when their own clan is called, not their father's clan" (2004, p. 275). Thus, one's *yadi* is important to contemporary Tlingit identity because it validates the whole person through the concept of balance. The *koo.eex'* is the ceremony that restores balance between the clans and moieties, thus the Tlingit are able to put away their grief and continue with their lives (Kan, 1982, p. 258). Consequently, for the Tlingit who are not raised with the *koo.eex'* practice, and without an explanation of these concepts, confusion occurs including a feeling of alienation from the ancestral relationships.

In a personal example, the community of Wrangell, where I was raised, does not typically practice the *koo.eex'*, therefore the concept of the *yadi* and the traditional knowledge surrounding tribal relationships were unknown to my family members. As a result, throughout my niece's childhood and early adulthood, she considered herself to be a Raven. Her father is Tlingit from the Raven moiety and her mother is non-native. She was even given a name from her father's Raven side by a well-meaning relative. However, Tlingit law dictates that she must follow her mother's lineage, which can be problematic for mixed families with similar lineage patterns; no one in our family practiced adoption protocols. Eventually, when my niece discovered that she was really an Eagle, because of the matrilineal system, she was disappointed and confused. Fortunately, a culturally competent family member, her cousin, explained to her the

concept of *yadí* and how important it was to her Tlingit identity. She could be an Eagle and the other half of her identity, as a *yadí*, was a Raven. Her *yadí* was equally important in order to provide balance in her life. In many communities and families, this confusion is a direct result of the loss of traditional ceremonial practices, resulting in the weakening of the clan system.

Today, despite the loss of knowledge regarding identity and relationships to the opposite clan, the concept of balance remains incorporated into every aspect of life including traditional Tlingit education. Kan (1989) explains this through the term *latseen*, which means strength in body and mind and spirit. Tlingit educational philosophy requires adherence to a sense of balance, that "...the goal of Tlingit education was to bring the child's physical and non-corporeal components into mutual harmony (p. 60). Therefore, educating children by means of Tlingit cultural protocols, i.e., respect and balance, as well as cultural competency, provides for a well-balanced social identity. Research participant Carol Williams (Appendix A) describes the connection of respect to strengthening the physical and spiritual individual, that for children "...giving others your respect strengthens the essence of who you are" (Line 197, p. 423). The concept of *latseen*, i.e., strength, provides a sense of balance to the Tlingit personhood, which in turn, balances the entire social structure.

Although for many Tlingit, the concepts of respect, balance, and even 'love' blur and, admittedly, it is difficult to explain them from outside of the cultural contexts in which they are practiced. However, the concepts of balance and respect continue to provide the guidelines to strengthen the ancestral relationship to the landscape, and are

essential to understanding the complexities within the Tlingit worldview. The narratives provided by the research participants in appendices A through D illuminate the fact that these concepts are still found in every aspect of contemporary life. One's *yadí* continues to be important to contemporary Tlingit identity, although it is subject to confusion. Balance is achieved through proper marriage, ceremonial protocols, and interactions with the natural world. Therefore, in the Tlingit worldview, balance is achieved through daily actions. As well, to be culturally competent, one must have a basic understanding of how respect, *at yaa awunéi*, and the concept balance are interwoven into Tlingit worldview.

*Haa at.óow: An expression of ancestral identity*

Now that I have illustrated the concepts of respect and balance, I will discuss another essential concept in the Tlingit culture: *at.óow* (út-ōōw). The Tlingit philosophies of 'balance' and 'respect' are intertwined with the concept of *at.óow*, because in order to respect one's ancestors he or she must acknowledge them through proper protocols regarding *at.óow*. Without understanding the concept of *at.óow*, one cannot appreciate the complexities of the Tlingit culture. N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1994) claim that the most important aspect of Tlingit culture is the concept of *at.óow*. The concept of *at.óow* underlies everything in the Tlingit worldview, from social and ceremonial activities to the oral traditions. Before I provide a detailed description of this concept, however, I must provide a definition of *at.óow*. To define *at.óow* from the Tlingit worldview I provide a perspective by renowned Tlingit weaver and research participant, Clarissa Hudson. Also, I explore what the Tlingit consider to be *at.óow*, including how

*at.óow* is acquired, and the social context surrounding the use of *at.óow*. Also, to further comprehend what *at.óow* is, I examine its significance to maintaining relationships to the landscape and history and provide a contrast to Tlingit everyday regalia, *koolyát kanaa.ádi*. I also point out concerns with *at.óow* stewardship and preservation and how the loss of *at.óow* affects the Tlingit culture, including identity.

### *Defining at.óow*

First, defining the term *at.óow* is somewhat complex when using the English language. *At.óow* literally translates to mean property or something that is owned or purchased, e.g., Tlingit cultural property. For example, during a *koo.eex*, *at.óow* is considered to be the carved hats, Chilkat blankets, dance staffs, or other items on display or used in the healing aspect of the ceremony. In actuality, *at.óow* are sacred items: songs, stories, places, and people that are ritualistically displayed in ceremony. In contrast, the Western world uses the term ‘art’ to describe Tlingit ceremonial objects. However, in the Tlingit culture, there is a distinction because land, clothing, carvings, and even people can be considered a part of a clan’s *at.óow*. In the article *Tlingit At.óow*, Nora Dauenhauer (2000b) claims, “Even a heavenly body such as the Milky Way, the big dipper and the sun can be part of a clan’s *at.óow*” (p. 80 ). The best definition is that *at.óow* is the connecting force that ritualistically ties Tlingit history and ancestors with the present culture.

Due to the difficulties with defining *at.óow*, I will provide the perspective of research participant Clarissa Hudson fulfilling one of the purposes of this study: to

provide a venue for the participant's narratives to define his or her own worldviews for a Western audience. According to Bishop (as cited in Smith, 1999) "Storytelling is a useful and culturally appropriate way of representing the 'diversities of truth' within which the story teller rather than the researcher retains control" (p. 145). Bishop explains that a community is the collective stories of the people who belong to that specific community.

For the contemporary Tlingit, the role of *at.óow* remains a spiritual one, especially for Tlingit artists who have been commissioned to create a piece that will eventually be used in rituals. The following narrative by Clarissa Hudson, T'akdeintaan weaver and artist, explains this relationship. The question I posed was: Is the weaver aware of the implications that someday her own work will be considered 'sacred', eventually becoming a clan's *at.óow*? I also inquired as to how the idea of creating something sacred for one's people impacts your life? Clarissa responded to my inquiry in traditional Tlingit manner with a story. In this narrative, Clarissa defines the cultural significance of *at.óow*:

Her four grandchildren stood beside their Grandmother as she spoke, "You see these button robes and headbands I made for my grandchildren? It took me a long time. I made a robe for each of my grandchildren because I wanted to make sure that each of them knew where they came from and who their relatives are." The Grandmother's voice faltered, "I have cancer. I can go any day, never know, could be any time. I wanted each of my grandchildren to have something I made for them so they can remember me. And when they have children they can tell their children what their Grandmother did for them..."

This story is one of thousands among our people along the Northwest Coast, where our regalia depicts our clan identity, documents historical events and transitions, and reflects our clan status. Yet it is also our “medicine.” Many of us feel that these objects are our relatives. When we acknowledge our relatives, we are providing a medicine, a spiritual nourishment that feeds the present-day clan members, all the while nourishing our ancestors. It is no wonder there has been a resurgence of our culture in recent years; we have been “starving” for a long time.

As a regalia designer and maker, I have been witness to the power of our regalia, and how these “relatives” hold up our people, and in turn, we hold them up. Our Northwest Coast Native art once belonged exclusively to us in this small part of the world. At some point, we began trading our beautiful regalia items with foreigners, for furs and trade items from other regions. Now our art is collected by museums and private individuals all over the world. This leads to an interesting position for Northwest Coast artists. Many of us create our works just for our family and clan members, for special ceremonies and clan celebrations, our *koo.éex*’. Others create just for the marketplace, for tourists and collectors. Many of us create works for both the collectors market and for our own clan members. With the resurgence of the songs and dances of the many Northwest Coast tribes has come the production of new ceremonial objects, including dance rattles, drums, jewelry, leggings, aprons, masks, button robes, Chilkat and Ravenstail robes. This new clan regalia joins our older ‘relatives,’ our *at.óow*.

Without even realizing it, perhaps, artists sometimes find themselves in a leadership position. They are a “voice” in the breath of any culture, breathing forth new life and new ways of looking at the world, while acknowledging where they come from. In our traditional culture, there were many laws we had to adhere to, and within the context of our present-day bi-cultural existence, we find many questions posed to us. Who has the right to design and create regalia? Masks? Robes? Weavings? Bead work? Drums? Rattles? How many among us know the traditions, the stories and songs that traditionally accompany a regalia item? I myself only recently realized that stories and songs were once an integral part of our regalia objects. Does the holding of these traditions still serve a purpose today? If so, how can these traditions be preserved, or revived?

Our ancestors had specific ways of transferring the clan regalia, cherished *at.óow* which belongs not to a single individual but to the whole clan. A few families and clans hold true to these traditions. In our present-day society, with its distractions of technology and entertainment, we have not kept up with the clan laws and procedures. In the recent past, some cherished clan regalia was sold or given away. Now we wonder how to re-establish rules for the transference of clan possessions and property that reflects the true value of these, our “relatives.”

Adaptation to change is the essential ingredient for the survival of any culture. Since time immemorial we have adapted to many changes: changes in the environment; changes when war broke out amongst neighboring tribes; changes when the Asians came across; changes when the Westerners arrived and stayed,



installing new laws and boundary lines. Change is constant. We are still here because we have been able to adapt and become part of a bi-cultural society.

When I look back on the clan relationships that my grandparents grew up with, I sense that I do not experience close kinship with my clan people. I was not raised with this value or tradition. I was raised in a tri-cultural family; my mother, a Tlingit from Hoonah, and my father, a Filipino from Manila, spoke English in our home, as their second language, and that was the only language I learned as a child. I recognize my immediate cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces, yet we are not united as a clan entity. We no longer live together in clan house, nor even in the same town.

Still, we call ourselves *T'akdeintaan*. I am told we have a large clan; that our people were known for their songs and many were respected artists. We no longer conduct ourselves in the manner of clans, however; we have begun to view ourselves instead as “shareholders” of tribal corporations. Many of us do not know the traditional ways of our people. Can we gather ourselves back together and be, once again, a clan, a society, a people?

In any tribal relationship, there must be agreements among the people involved to identify the values and traditions and make the commitment to actively maintain these things. A growing number of individuals, families and clans are making the effort to identify themselves and re-group, do the research of our traditions and find new ways to blend past and present, then re-establish, maintain and share many of the ways of Native being and doing.

When our culture was nearly “lost” during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some elders felt that, through song and dance, a revival could happen, possibly saving some of the cultural remnants they were holding on to. Back in the early 60s, a few dance troupes were formed; they revived the old songs and dances, and created a few new ones. Through the traditional songs and dances, the revival of our culture began to sprout. People began learning, and eventually teaching, the old arts: carving, basket weaving, beadwork, metal-smithing, button-robe making, Chilkat and Ravenstail weaving, subsistence hunting and fishing techniques. Now some are working to revive our language, which my generation never learned, growing up. As with any language in the world, our language is the sound and voice of our land in union with the human heart and mind.

A Biblical passage says: “In the beginning was the Word.” Some say this passage refers to how the universe was first created: with sound. All of creation came with sound, and continues to do so. Begin with song, and the ceremony follows. Do the ceremony and the dance follows. Do the dance and the regalia follows. Make the regalia, witness and experience creation. Create, and the sense of well-being follows. When we have a sense of well-being, we “lift up ourselves and lift up our communities” and the songs continue. (Appendix C, lines 541-632, p. 571-575)

Clarissa’s response is multilayered as she addresses the issues of *at.óow* being held or stolen by museum curators and art collectors. Clarissa uses contemporary art and traditional art to express her cultural identity. She refers to the regalia that she creates as

'relatives', substantiating the conclusion that the Tlingit view *at.óow* as physical and spiritual relatives. Thus through *at.óow* Clarissa, like other Tlingits, associates an object, person, or place as an aspect of her identity. Her response illustrates the dynamics of generational identity and the approach of re-creating new meanings with art. In addition, for contemporary artists such as Clarissa, there is a healing aspect to their art. Contemporary art is taking on the role of 'healer' similar to the traditional role of *at.óow* in ceremonies. The artist is creating a 'bridge' between old and newer beliefs thus providing the opportunity for artists to redefine themselves since traditional aspects of culture are viewed from a contemporary perspective.

*What can be considered at.óow*

Land or sacred places can be a part of a clan's *at.óow*. The Tlingit people are connected to their land in a historical and intimate way. Carol Williams says "*At.óow* is the most important word in the Tlingit language and our land is a part of our *at.óow*. We have a history of living in the sacred places" (C. Williams, personal communication, 2001). *At.óow* provides a historical, spiritual, and emotional link to the ancestral landscape. In his article, *Person and Place: Lessons from Tlingit Teachers*, Thomas F. Thornton describes the connection to *at.óow* as an "organic link" to a place that is owned by a clan (Thornton, 2000, p. 80). Land is also connected to the Tlingit through *at.óow* clothing articles such as Chilkat robes, button blankets, vests, and masks. For example, when research participant Teri Rofkar dons the Lituya Bay Robe, depicting a place owned by the T'akdeintaan clan, the landscape literally becomes a part of her social

being, her identity, and subsequently reinforces her relationship to her clan's ancestral home. The robe, in itself, is an introduction with images. Thornton (2000) points out that it is nearly impossible to introduce oneself in the Tlingit tradition without making a reference to landscape. Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) also verifies that Tlingit regalia depicts clan identity, historical events, and clan status. In this manner, the land and the people are spiritually and historically connected to one another.

The oral traditions, connected with *at.óow* are considered to be a specific clan's *at.óow*, and often are used in the *koo.eex*' or other ceremonial settings in order to provide healing and balance. As the ancestors are remembered, a healing takes place, as Tlingit oratory attempts to mediate, bind, or connect the world of humans and the spirit world (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990). Tom Jimmie (2007), Director of Artstream Cultural Resources recalls:

...my grandfather taking me on visits to the clan houses in Klukwan and listening as the house caretaker recited the stories of their clan *at.oow*. But it wasn't until I experienced a lot of life away from my family that these stories actually began to make sense, upon my return home. One of my grandfathers used to say, "Listen to the stories, grandson, there is something in them for you. (para 2)

A sacred story has the power to provide spiritual strength, which is why the oral traditions are considered to be medicine. They contain the power to heal those who are in pain (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990). For example, to the T'akdeintaan, the puffin and the story behind a woman being saved from drowning is a part of their *at.óow*:

One day some women went out from there at low tide to a neighboring island to dig shellfish. They brought their canoe to a place where there was a hole in the side of the island, but, when they endeavored to land, a breaker came in, upset the canoe, and drowned all of them except one. (Swanton, 1909, p. 57)

It is often through grief and the removing of this grief that the community members form a bond. Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) explains, “When we acknowledge our relatives [our *at.óow*] we are providing a medicine, a spiritual nourishment that feeds the present-day clan members, all the while nourishing our ancestors” (Lines 554-556, p. 572). In this case, the T’akdeintaan clan are bonded through experience, ancestors, and the landscape. And for Teri Rofkar (Appendix C), this relationship continues to express itself through her art, e.g., the creation of the Lituya Bay Robe. *At.óow*, creates a bond between community and spirit, which is drawn upon ceremonially. Research participant Teri Rofkar explains further about understanding the ancestral connection to the landscape through *at.óow* and oral traditions. Teri Rofkar (Appendix C) explains how the Lituya Bay Robe was created:

...with respect and it being a very historic and a very powerful place, the images that I put in the robe, like fault lines and breakers. We always called it the Monster-that-lived-deep-in-the-crevasses: the man of Lituya... So when you have robe on and you pull it around front and you see that imagery it’s absolutely to scale and it helps tell that story of the wave. (Lines 439-460, pp. 541-542)

*At.óow* is spiritual medicine dependent upon an inter-generational relationship that transcends time and space, linking contemporary Tlingits to their ancestral past.

Clan *at.óow* can also contain people. An example of a person becoming *at.óow* can be found in the case of a Chookaneidí ancestor, a woman called Kaasteen and a her granddaughter. Research participant Carol Williams, Tradition Bearer of the Glacier Bay story, narrates the story in Appendix A (P. 3-5). Kaasteen paid for the sacred place, Glacier Bay, with her life, which is why Glacier Bay National Park is part of the Chookaneidí *at.óow*. The Chookaneidí own songs and the glaciers, as well as the physical and spiritual ancestor herself (N. Dauenhauer, 2000b). In effect, Chookaneidí-women are identified as icebergs, part of the landscape in Glacier Bay; and the Tlingit name for iceberg, *Chookan Shaa*, means Chookaneidí woman. Therefore, in the Tlingit worldview, when one encounters an iceberg, one could be encountering an ancestor as well as a contemporary clan member. Carol (Appendix A) claims, “The story is an important part of our history. In our culture, we think of ourselves as an iceberg. When one part breaks off and melts it could be lost, but if we stay together as a whole, the iceberg will last longer” (Lines 55-58, p. 416). Hence, the name Kaasteen demonstrates that, through *at.óow*, the Tlingit are linked with their ancestral landscape.

#### *Sacrifice and at.óow*

The most important defining term in regards to understanding *at.óow* is ‘sacrifice.’ In Tlingit worldview, the term ‘sacrifice’ is similar to the English interpretation. *At.óow* can be acquired in many ways, but first it must be paid for through payment of a debt, by commissioning an object, by means of trade, collateral, or by the taking of human life through an accident or natural death. According to Carol Williams,

the concept of sacrifice is what makes Glacier Bay and the story regarding their ancestor sacred: “When they made preparations to leave, there was a woman named Kaasteen. She was the mother of the clan leader of the Chookaneidí. She had decided she wasn’t going to leave” (Appendix A, lines 20-21, p. 414). In the Tlingit worldview, there must be payment for a life that has been taken regardless of whether or not it was a person or an animal. Also, if an animal takes the life of a person, that animal must give its image as a payment to the relatives of the deceased (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990, 1994). Ceremonial items, carvings, clothing, drums etc, depict the image of the sacrifice.

A sense of sacredness is being re-contextualized in contemporary Tlingit culture.

Breanne Mork (Appendix D) explains:

[Aunt] Anna was out fishing and they never found her body, only her skiff. I still think about that. That is how places become sacred. When there is a loss of life.

When someone dies things can become sacred. So it makes the places even more sacred. (Lines 122-125, p. 434)

To the Tlingit, the concept of sacredness through sacrifice “is a powerful and centering force” due to the belief that everything has a spirit (N. Dauenhauer, 2000b, p. 80).

Therefore, by the means of purchasing the landscape, person, or item through a sacrifice of some manner, the item is then spiritually and physically owned by the descendents.

The concept of sacrifice makes the difference between art objects, play clothes, *koolyát kanaa.ádi*, and *at.óow*. When someone dies, the object is called *ls’aatí at* meaning that it is a “masterless thing.” This term is used when a specific clan doesn’t own an item because the ‘owner’ has died and it has yet to be brought out ceremonially;

Tlingit protocol dictates it must be brought out in a ceremony. When the item is brought out, it is the responsibility of the presenter to explain what sacrifice has been made, accompanied by a speech explaining its significance. If the item was commissioned by the clan's opposite moiety, every member of the clan contributes to the cost of the commission, although in modern times it is not uncommon for people from the same moiety to be carving their own crest designs. A commissioned item is treated with the same protocols as items that once belonged to the dead: a commissioned item must be presented with a speech explaining its significance to the clan and then given a name. In this manner, the Tlingits literally bring the ancestors to life each time *at.óow* is worn or used in a ceremonial context: their ancestors are there to provide healing. In the Tlingit culture, using the *at.óow* in this manner connects the living to the dead as well as assuring the survival of the culture (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990, 1994).

*The social life of at.óow*

Tlingit identity cannot be separated from the social life of *at.óow*. The role of *at.óow* reaffirms Tlingit social and kinship bonds (L. White & P. White, 2000, para. 2). To the Tlingit, ceremonial expression through the use of *at.óow* serves to strengthen the community structure. According to Paula Gunn Allen (1992), the expression of 'ceremony' in indigenous cultures bonds and 'restores balance':

Each serves to hold the society together, create harmony, restore balance, ensure prosperity and unity, and establish right relations within the social and natural world. At their base the ceremonials restore the psychic unity of the people,



reaffirm the terms of their existence in the universe, and validate their sense of reality, order and propriety. The most central of these perform this function at levels that are far more intense than others, and these great ceremonies, more than any single phenomenon, distinguish one tribe from another. (p. 73)

The integral function of ceremony continues to define the Tlingit, as well as encouraging the continuation of customs. According to V. Mork (Appendix B) “A lot of my students have experienced the ceremonial power of *at.óow*, yet they might not understand the multi-layered meanings. I can’t teach them that in the classroom” (Lines 402-403, p. 503). The social life of *at.óow* is most evident in the *koo.eex*’ where *at.óow* serves to heal, connects the living and the dead, provides social clan identification, and strengthens relationships with the opposite moiety. The ceremonial use is often explained through the metaphor of wrapping loved ones in *at.óow* to show how much they are cared for (L. White & P. White, 2000). Speeches often accompany the display of *at.óow*. Tlingit elder Jessie Dalton’s speech, as recorded in *Haa Tuwanagu Yis* (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990) explains the relationships between *at.óow*, ancestors, and healing. The *at.óow* she is referring to belongs to my family’s clan, the T’akdeintaan:

...your fathers have all come out. They are still present....Here someone stands wearing one, this Mountain Tribe’s Dog. It is just as if it’s barking for your pain....Yes at this moment all of them seem to me as if they’re revealing their faces. (p. 243-56)

The ancestors are brought to life by using *at.óow*: the action of putting it on and displaying it on clan members, in addition to telling the story behind the piece. In her

speech, Jesse refers to the act of wearing a Beaver Blanket, the Tern Robe, and Raven's Nest House robe, describing how the *at.óow* are actively participating in the ceremony through the ancestors (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990). Actually, the *at.óow* transforms into 'personhood' during the *koo.eex'*: They are considered to contain the spirit or an essence of the ancestors.

A spiritual phenomenon takes place, through the usage of *at.óow*, and through the presence of the ancestors at the ceremony. In Western culture, the rite of communion provides a similar comparison. For some Christian believers, this rite is not simply eating bread and wine, but during the ceremony, participants are literally partaking of Christ's blood and flesh. It is a similar concept regarding the use of *at.óow* during the *koo.éex*; the ancestors are called to participate in the ceremony. Having the ancestors present at the ceremony through the use of *at.óow* assures the grieving relatives that the deceased loved one will always be remembered and ensures that traditions will be carried on.

Now I will provide a brief explanation illustrating the differences between everyday regalia and *at.óow*. When examining the Tlingit culture, one notes the use of regalia in the form of headbands, beaded vests, hair ornaments, and other objects of clothing. In the Tlingit worldview, these items are known by the term *koolyát kanaa.ádi*, which means "play clothes" (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1994). This name is commonly used for items that have not yet attained the status of *at.óow*, as well as everyday items where no sacrifice has been made. Often, one can observe the use of *koolyát kanaa.ádi* in places such as 40-day parties, at school functions, or in churches, such as the Episcopal or the Salvation Army, consisting of a predominantly Tlingit

congregation. The priest or minister may wear vestments or tunics with clan crests or symbols upon them. At the Salvation Army yearly Congress, a gathering of Salvationists in Southeastern Alaska, the congregation and participants typically wear their *koolyát kanaa.ádi*. Recently, at a clan conference in Sitka Alaska called Sharing our Knowledge, play clothes were the normal attire. These *koolyát kanaa.ádi* serve a necessary and symbolic cultural function. In settings like clan and church meetings, *koolyát kanaa.ádi* provides a tangible connection with the spiritual world. Thus, in regards to Tlingit identity, *koolyát kanaa.ádi* performs a social role; and in the secular setting, the clothing serves as an identity marker. Contemporary Tlingit identity is asserted within secular settings among predominantly non-native people, where beaded vests, hair barrettes, and necklaces are worn to identify one's heritage. However, there is a distinction between these everyday use items and *at.óow* because not everything is considered to be *at.óow*. For example, a vest that depicts an eagle belonging to a member of the Eagle moiety may not be *at.óow*.

The contemporary lives of the Tlingit often necessitate blending traditional ceremonies within Western venues. More and more *koolyát kanaa.ádi* and traditional crafts are used in sacred or spiritual rituals outside of the *koo.eex'*. For example, at a meeting, church, or conference, a piece of artwork might be presented as a gift of appreciation. Though not presented in a *koo.eex'*, there is a spiritual aspect linked to the art piece, in addition to ceremonial similarities that carry over into the secular setting. For example, an artist or purchaser will explain the spiritual significance of the piece. The presenter then explains why he or she is presenting it to a particular person, clan leader,

or organization. There is often a story of struggle and triumph that accompanies the piece: bestowing a spiritual significance. For the person receiving the gift, the story and the presentation ceremony adds to the ‘sacredness’ of the piece; possibly years later the work may become part of a clan’s *at.óow*.

*At.óow protocols and stewardship*

Rules for the use of *at.óow* can be very confusing. First, *at.óow* is only to be used by the members of the clan to which the *at.óow* belongs. Only under specific situations can *at.óow* be used by someone from an opposite clan, such as in the case of land. Clan relatives from the opposite moiety sometimes use their relatives’ land and may use a relative’s songs and other *at.óow* if proper permission is sought (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990, 1994). An exception to the use of *at.óow* is during a *koo.eex*’ by ‘grandchildren.’ There is a special relationship between the grandchild and the paternal grandfather’s clan portrayed within ceremonies by the use of *at.óow* from the father’s clan.

Despite the ancestral connections that go back hundreds or even thousands of years, there is an opinion that to facilitate an appreciation for *at.óow* protocols within the social context, there needs to be more *at.óow* created that reflect contemporary Tlingit identity. Research participant Teri Rofkar points out that contemporary Tlingits have ‘legendary’ stories that need to be recognized through the creation of new *at.óow*. Rofkar (Appendix C) explains how contemporary experiences “... are things of legendary proportion. We need to recognize them and we need to create those pieces of traditional

regalia that really perpetuate those stories. (Lines 479-480, p. 543). Contemporary artists desire to create *at.óow* that reflects their own identity in order to be used ceremonially.

Tom Jimmie (2007) elaborates:

I believe new *at.óow* needs to be made that represents the new generations struggles and their successes in overcoming their struggles and what they learned along their journey. Once new *at.óow* was made, it will be important to include the public dedications and oral presentations of the new *at.óow*. (para 3)

Jimmie adheres to Tlingit tradition of public dedications of *at.óow*, yet recognizes that by creating new *at.óow*, the cultural meaning for younger generations will deepen because it reflects their experiences. Also Teri Rofkar (Appendix C) claims:

...and if I didn't have a story when I started, by the time I got to the end of the year, it would have a story...I'm not sure if it worked that way in the old days, but for me yes. And my relationship to place and the artform: they have stories.

(Lines 334-137, p. 527)

Therefore, the cultural meaning of *at.óow* is being transformed by the younger generation and removed from the *koo.eex'* in order to be used within the dominant culture, reflecting a desire to create sacredness from contemporary experiences.

Traditionally, the *at.óow* is given to a specific family, clan, or person for safekeeping; however, these sacred objects have succumbed to a lack of responsible stewardship. Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) points out how changes have affected stewardship:

Our ancestors had specific ways of transferring the clan regalia, cherished *at.óow*, which belongs not to a single individual but to the whole clan. A few families and clans hold true to these traditions. In our present-day society, with its distractions of technology and entertainment, we have not kept up with the clan laws and procedures. (Lines 583-587, p. 573)

With stewardship comes the expectations from all of the clan members that the steward is accountable to everyone for the care of the clan's *at.óow*. To be considered for the role of steward, one must demonstrate knowledge of the role, the culture, and be a leader in the community. Preferably, the person who is inheriting the objects as the caretaker undertakes an apprentice relationship educating him or herself with the clan's responsibilities that come with caring for the *at.óow* (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990). As well, the steward is to ensure the *at.óow* is brought out at the appropriate time and worn according to tradition. An example of stewardship knowledge occurred at the centennial anniversary of the "Last Potlatch." In 2004, the Centennial Potlatch was held in Sitka, Alaska and provided an occasion to bring out *at.óow*. Joe Bennett, *Was'néidí*, carried the Shark Helmet, *Toos' Shadaa k'wat s'aaxw* during an aspect of the ceremony dedicated to veterans of war. Because the shark helmet was used in battle, and thus held the ancestors blood, the caretakers felt that it should not be worn (Preucel & Williams, 2005). This example illustrates the importance of knowing the origin and history behind the specific *at.óow* entrusted in the steward's care.

Throughout her lifetime research participant Elizabeth Martin (Appendix D) has seen the changes in stewardship within families and clans:

The olden day things, it's worth quite a lot, but I don't know what happened [to them]. I asked...what happened to them...but they are lying... Yeah, they had a lot of things that were worth money from the olden days. Nowadays people just get rid of things. (Lines 465-470, p. 645)

Today, being a steward has changed due to pressures from religious leaders who feel that anything related to the “Native” culture is not from God and have, in the past, convinced Tlingit stewards to destroy their valuable clan's *at.óow*. However, today there remains a few churches who still believe all *at.óow* are evil (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1994). According to an account in *Haa Tuwanagu Yis* (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990) at a shareholder meeting in the 1980s, a Native woman informed the audience “Tlingit culture is an abomination in the sight of God” (p. 57). Unfortunately, conflicts between Western religion, i.e., Christianity, and traditional Tlingit worldviews are common. Citing a personal experience, in 2007, when I visited a local museum in Sitka, Alaska with a Tlingit friend, I heard a woman declare loudly that the masks she was looking at in a case next to where we were standing were ‘evil’. Her exact words were, “I don't care what anyone says, these things are evil!” Conflicts such as this also occur within multi-cultural families similar to my own. Another example from my own experience occurred when family members were told by non-native family members that totem poles and masks were evil. Even our Tlingit names and the ceremony surrounding acquiring a name were deemed as ‘evil.’ Contemporary attitudes concerning *at.óow* range from adhering to traditional respect and protocols to being shaped by negative religious influences, all affecting how one perceives oneself as a Tlingit.

Within the Tlingit worldview there includes an complex notion of traditional property that includes land, streams and fishing banks, houses, as well as songs, regalia, crests, and names. Defining the concept of *at.óow* according to the Tlingit worldview illustrates the social obligations and the implications to the perpetuation of Tlingit culture, and provides for an appreciation for the complexities within the Tlingit culture. Ultimately, for the Tlingit, understanding *at.óow* means acquiring an awareness of his or her self in relationship to the ancestral landscape.

*The loss of at.óow: Contemporary effects*

In proceeding further, I explain how the loss of *at.óow* affects contemporary Tlingit culture and Tlingit identity. The loss of cultural protocols, along with the desecration of *at.óow*, began with first contact. For instance, missionaries ordered totem poles and ceremonial masks, which were hundreds of years old, destroyed because some missionaries assumed that the Tlingits worshiped these objects. In addition, the missionaries and the U.S. government systematically began an attempt to change the Tlingit into a 'civilized' people, which meant ridding the Tlingits of their ancestral connections to the past. This method proved detrimental to the Tlingit's connection to their ancestral landscape because through the protocols surrounding *at.óow*, the ancestors lived. Thus, the defined agenda involving creating an American citizen from a Tlingit tribal member resulted in conflicts within the Tlingit social structure at large. Terrance M. Cole (1996) in his essay, "Jim Crow in Alaska," writes that in 1908, the courts defined a "civilized person as one who stopped speaking Native languages, eating Native



foods, practicing Native religions, associating with other Natives” (p. 317). The Tlingits were forced to give up the fishing and subsistence areas, the *koo.eex*’, dance, customs, and dress, much of which was considered *at.óow*. Therefore, the social context for *at.óow* was depleted.

*The colonizers’ worldview and the role of museums*

Everything that was previously considered sacred was decreed by the colonizers to be primitive and savage. Consequently, this disregard for the Tlingit culture helped cause the breakdown of the Tlingit family and negatively impacted village life. The Western culture did not understand the concept of *at.óow*, which meant they had no idea of the sacred connection between the landscape, ancestors, language, and customs. The U.S. government attempted to remake the Tlingit people to fit into their Western worldview by destroying the *at.óow*, a vital part of the Tlingit culture.

A new ‘gold-rush’ ensued, when missionaries, museum collectors, and scientists arrived in Alaska and discovered beautiful clan objects. Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) explains how “...some people when thinking about the Western culture, they think they can take anything and everything from anywhere and make it their own” (Lines 523-526, p. 571). Large quantities of Tlingit *at.óow* were purchased, stolen and given to museums across the world. Carlton (1992) identifies several categories of these “gatherers and grabbers,” those who sought Tlingit sacred and secular artworks as follows: traders, travelers, managers, military personnel, scientific idealists, naturalists, ethnologists, spiritual or intellectual interests, including missionaries, educators, and business people

intent on assimilation. According to Carlton (1992), Sheldon Jackson, the hailed Presbyterian missionary, belonged to the latter category. He was “an amateur with a great deal of interest in and enthusiasm for collecting” (p. 8). Some historical accounts of Sheldon Jackson maintain that he was more concerned with collecting than he was with winning souls, although his philosophies proved that assimilation and collecting went hand-in-hand. Creating a convenient scheme, Jackson used cultural objects, which he either bought or convinced the Tlingits to turn over, to fund his missionary efforts. His efforts were justified by the idea that the objects, which he convinced the Tlingit (and others) to relinquish or sell could be, in turn sold to support his Christianizing efforts (Carlton, 1992, 1996; Cole, 1995). Based upon historical evidence, one can argue that Jackson’s missionary work was not his actual vocation, but a guise for his voracious appetite for collecting and his desire to be ‘known’ in the academic and museum world for his accomplishments. This relationship is evident with the establishment of his collection at the Princeton Theological Seminary, called the *Sheldon Jackson Home Mission Collection*. Before Jackson’s missionary work, he had a documented interest in collecting native artifacts that went back to his boyhood interests (Carlton, 1992, 1996). As Jackson matured and developed his religious worldviews, his passion for collecting fit ‘nicely’ into the concept of saving souls. That is, he could justify his collecting through advocating his missionary work.

Museum studies, under the guise of scientific discovery, also led to a significant amount of pilfering. In 1915, the University of Pennsylvania's Museum sent Louis Shotridge, a Tlingit who was educated in the Western tradition, to southeast Alaska on a

collection expedition. Shotridge encountered resistance among those who held traditional Tlingit values, “I know where most of the important things are, and my only obstacle is the everlasting esteem of the Native owner for them” (Enge, 1993). This concept of ‘everlasting esteem’ is an English interpretation of the Tlingit relationship to the ancestral landscape. Museum collectors also took advantage of poor families in the midst of rapid change by purchasing *at.óow*. The late Judson Brown (1992) elaborates: “A lot of the beautiful artifacts went by the board during those very depressed times. I know some of our people sold some of their precious garments and ornaments, totem poles and such in order to get by” (p. 31). Hoonah Indian Association president Johanna Dybdahl (Woodford, 2002) claims that, in many cases, the stewards sold the work because of pressure from missionaries and Christian philosophies which viewed the items as being deemed “ ‘witch-doctor’ artifacts” (Woodford, 2002).

For the Tlingit culture, pilfering *at.óow* was akin to stealing Tlingit identity. For example, one of the houseposts that was removed from Southeast Alaska represented the Tlingit hero Dukt’ootl in the story of Strong Man. This well-known story links the people of Klukwan with the clans on Prince of Wales Island. Therefore, if one of the items is removed or stolen from a community or family, then a part of succeeding generations’ identity is lost. Another result of cultural conflicts regarding *at.óow* is that much of the history has been lost with the death of the elders; therefore, much of the *at.óow* remains unclaimed. Since *at.óow* is the physical manifestation of ‘history’ and events, then through the loss of *at.óow* a historical sense of the ancestral landscape is diminished. Clarissa Hudson explains how a “...robe is like the historical document of the event.”

(Appendix C, Line 101, p. 551). According to Tlingit belief, the items are actually the spirits of their ancestors; therefore, the loss of these ancestors seriously affected the Tlingit culture. Research participant Teri Rofkar (Appendix C) claims, “That basket may be one hundred years old, sitting in a museum on the East Coast, but the landscape is still in there” (Lines 111-112, p. 526).

In contrast, an opinion regarding the well-known Whale House case (see *The Whale House Series*, Enge M., 1993) cited in a museum report from Renton, Washington suggests a different point-of-view. The idea that if the house posts were donated to a “...grand museum [they would] promote international recognition and teach people who might have preconceived ideas about the ‘primitiveness’ of Native peoples” (Stewart, E., 2006, p. 8). Not mentioned was the two-million-dollar price that would have been paid for the *at.óow* had it not been for legal intervention. Ultimately, the *at.óow* was returned to the village of Klukwan.

Also, after residing in a museum, the *at.óow* can be subject to auction, further separating the items from their original clans. For example, in 1970, a Chilkat blanket was stolen from Klukwan, and sold to an art dealer who in turn sold it to a museum. A year later, the museum was preparing to auction the blanket when a cultural resource specialist for Tlingit and Haida Central Council spotted the blanket on a Sotheby’s auction list. The blanket has since been returned to the village (Williams, 2003).

Today, the role of museums has evolved from pilferer to caretaker. A change in worldview is exhibited in the cooperation between tribes and museums. Tlingit communities and tribes are considering building tribal museums to care for the *at.óow*

intended for ceremonial practices (Woodford, 2002). Research participant Clarissa Hudson was able to travel to the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian to research Tlingit regalia, including Chilkat weavings: many of which considered clan *at.óow*. In addition, Sitka's National Historic Park provides safe-keeping for the local clan's *at.óow*, including K'alyaan's (Katlian) Raven helmet and hammer. During the Centennial Potlatch held in Sitka in 2002, clan members wore *at.óow*, e.g., the Petrel hat, Eagle hat, and the Shark helmet; These particular *at.óow* regalia were in the care of museum stewards. Contemporary stewardship means sharing among the museums and the Tlingit.

The loss or exploitation of oral traditions is also problematic since oral traditions can be considered *at.óow*. Scientists and authors continue to venture into Tlingit communities to conduct field research and often they are told clan stories, a part of Tlingit *at.óow*, resulting in the publication of sacred stories, sometimes as children's stories. Many libraries contain books written by non-natives who haven't received the proper permission prior to publication. The problem is that authors do not understand Tlingit cultural protocols and traditional law. In *Images of a People: Tlingit Myths and Legends* (DiGennaro & Pelton, 1992), the authors write:

Cross checking the information with the most knowledgeable of the Tlingit elders was almost impossible. The elders were unwilling to talk. We tried to verify information from the Tlingit perspective with the Sitka Native Educational Program, a Tlingit organization, but were told that the information could not be made available (p. xi).

The authors arrived at the conclusion that the reason the Tlingit community was resistant to their inquiries concerning the oral traditions that they were going to write about was a cultural suspicion and hostility towards books and literacy: They ignored the fact that they were about to publish a book that violated traditional Tlingit law. The Tlingit elders' silence, perceived as an 'unwillingness to talk', was a traditional method used to protect clan *at.óow*. However, the authors published the stories anyway. Also problematic is that younger or uninformed clan members, who might not be accustomed to cultural protocols, give consent for an outsider to use a story without explicit permission from the tradition bearers. This causes strife among clan members, especially between the older and younger generations. Some Tlingit experience a sense of loss when they see their culture misrepresented in books, especially when they see a sacred clan story published by non-natives in an unflattering format.

The conflict between Western patterns of inheritance, which are patrilineal, and the customary Tlingit laws of inheritance, which are matrilineal, can also influence how *at.óow* is cared for. In the Tlingit culture, "The steward of a clan house was not the owner of its clan regalia and property, but rather the custodian" (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2004, p. 273). With the introduction of Western laws into Tlingit society, some individuals did not recognize the clan ownership and sought individual ownership of *at.óow*. This conflict between inheritance laws resulted in the selling or transferring of ownership to non-stewards or even non-natives.

By the 1940s, when Frederica de Laguna made a visit to the village of Angoon to conduct her study, it appeared that all remnants of *at.óow*, and traditional artisanship had

been diminished. At the time of de Laguna's Angoon fieldwork, she made the following observation:

Traditional native art is virtually dead in Angoon. Only a few sib heirlooms survived destruction in 1882 [during the Angoon bombing] or are still treasured, and the new ceremonial paraphernalia which is being made for potlatches (mostly beaded robes) is in an altered style. Only a few of the older women still make baskets, and there are no more wood carvers or silversmiths. Moreover, the old paintings and carvings on the house fronts have been obliterated or destroyed, and even if the lineage chiefs felt it worth the expense to have them restored, they would have to search far for a competent artist. The decay of heraldic art involves also a loss of the detailed knowledge of its symbolic meanings. (1960, p. 16)

Yet, perhaps de Laguna's observations were tainted by the fact that Angoon residents were resistant to her anthropological and archeological investigations into their community. Prior to de Laguna's arrival, the community of Angoon had endured fifty years or more of cultural pilfering, including their tribal houses being raided after the bombing by the U.S. Navy in 1882 (de Laguna, 1960). Possibly, village residents were reluctant to share their knowledge, including traditional arts, leading de Laguna to believe there were no competent artists, nor available *at.óow* to be studied.

#### *The return of at.óow and Tlingit identity*

Finally, the concept of *at.óow*, and the protocol surrounding its return, is linked to the concept of balance. Balance is practiced when a member of the opposite moiety is

asked to help with placing or wrapping the *at.óow* upon the selected person (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990). Wrapping a returned clan *at.óow* around a clan member is in a sense a return of Tlingit identity to the individual person and to the clan as a whole. Joe Hotch, Kaagwaantaan clan leader from Klukwan explains, “Tlingit protocol is important during repatriation ceremonies” (Morrison, 2005). Hotch relates repatriation protocols with the Tlingit concept of balance in that, in order to properly welcome back an artifact, there must be both Eagles and Ravens present to spiritually welcome its return. Since the implementation of the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in 1990, communities such as Klukwan, Angoon, and Hoonah are seeing their *at.óow* returned. Clan leaders recognize the connection between Tlingit identity and the return of important cultural *at.óow* (Martin, 2006). In addition, Edwina White claims that, for the younger generations, the *at.óow* are cultural symbols:

I think bringing back all this [*at.óow*] is starting to mean more to our younger generation because they didn’t have anything to identify with other than our words...I think they’re starting to see more and more of our old ways...it brings back a lot of pride and respect in who they are. (Morrison, 2005)

Also, research participant Elizabeth Martin (Appendix D) points out that “Nowadays the kids, they don’t bother, they don’t want no part of it. But in the long run...they’ll be worth something. And the culture will be gone, and then nobody knows what’s going on” (Lines 483-485, p. 646).

In the Tlingit village of Klukwan, a well-known case concerns several Natives who did not understand the sacredness of their *at.óow*, nor understand Tlingit property



laws. They sold their *at.óow* (totem poles) to a museum without the permission of the clan to which they and the *at.óow* belonged. Eventually, the clan elders from the Whale House located the totems and sued for their return (Enge, 1993).

Also, in Angoon, the ornamental bow of a canoe was returned. For reasons unknown, ethnologist George Emmons obtained the ornamental canoe prow and sold it to a museum in New York. The people of Angoon considered the remains of the canoe sacred for the reason that the canoe was instrumental in saving the villagers from starvation after the bombing of their village by the U.S. Navy in 1882. The return of a clan's *at.óow* is always a cause for celebration because it symbolizes the healing of the broken connection between the ancestral past and present (Chandonnet, 1999; Henrickson, 2000).

In contrast, there are also conflicting feelings regarding the repatriation of cultural objects. Teri Rofkar (Appendix C) explains:

I know that one of the robes that was repatriated and was buried, and to me that was just appalling. Just, not only for the exposure, but for the intellectual information that it might have held. I think that reburying things is a good idea, but to allow that, even with a person who has passed on, there is a time of visitation, a time to make closure. And I'm feeling that loss. (Lines 168-172, p. 528)

Through examining the concept of *at.óow* and its many-layered meanings, it is apparent that Tlingit *at.óow* is simply not 'art.' Tlingit *at.óow* are considered sacred items acquired through sacrifice, thus significant for ceremonial purposes. Tlingit's connection

to the landscape is diminished through misunderstandings regarding the sacredness of *at.óow* and lack of adequate stewardship, together with the exploitation and destruction of *at.óow*. Therefore, maintaining a relationship to *at.óow* is essential: *at.óow* provides an important aspect of Tlingit cultural identity. Because of this interconnectedness to all things, *at.óow* is considered to be one of the most important aspects in Tlingit culture. N. Dauenhauer (2000b) stresses that “For the Tlingit people art and other *at.óow* are inseparable from life itself” (pp. 101-106). The role of *at.óow* is to ensure social and spiritual harmony among the clans through the connection of the past to the present, and says N. Dauenhauer, “*At.óow* helps us to survive spiritually” (2000b, pp. 101-106). For the Tlingit who are searching for a sense of tribal identity, understanding *at.óow* and the complexities within the Tlingit worldview is a priority.

Respect, balance, and *at.óow* are three of the most essential concepts in the Tlingit worldview. V. Mork (Appendix B) claims, “The idea of respecting one’s ancestors has not disappeared with the introduction of other cultures, but it has begun to grow” (Lines 591-592, p. 511). Although I attempted to define them from my outside/inside stance, the narratives in Appendix A through D provide greater insights into these concepts from the Tlingit perspective. Ultimately, the concepts of respect, balance, and *at.óow* are best understood through cultural practices and everyday interaction within the Tlingit culture.

### *Section two: Contemporary methods of transmitting cultural knowledge*

Due to the changes within Tlingit society, the context for cultural transmission required innovative methods. New adaptations of old ways of knowing and transmission

of traditional knowledge are becoming customary (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2004). Traditional values and concepts are re-contextualized in new venues such as culture and language camps, language nests, master/apprentice program, through the written medium of curriculum and literature, in addition to clan conferences and Celebration. In this section, I provide some contrasts and concerns related to the methods used to transmit Tlingit protocols and traditional knowledge to younger generations. The values have remained the same, however, the contexts have evolved to adapt to contemporary society. In several of these contexts, such as Celebration, what was non-traditional is now becoming traditional. I provide an in-depth look at how Celebration and the other contexts contribute to the continuation of Tlingit worldviews.

#### *Culture and language camps*

Tlingit culture and language immersion camps are designed to promote traditional values as reconstructions of a tribal past. According to research participant Vivian Mork (Appendix B) “There is also a difference between the Western culture and the Tlingit culture and many concepts in the Tlingit culture can only be taught in a traditional context” (Lines 298-300, p. 497). Today, many Tlingits do not have extended time away from their jobs to put up their subsistence foods; therefore, subsistence activities are often weekend ventures. Short excursions in the boat to berry picking spots are common and often families combine fishing, hunting, and berry picking activities. And yet, for some, the cultural camp becomes the annual camp excursion.

For twenty years, John and Roby Littlefield have operated Dog Point Fish Camp. The camp is located a few minutes by skiff outside of Sitka on the north end of Baranof Island. Dog Point Fish Camp is a part of North American Traditional Indian Values Enrichment (NATIVE), an organization that provides workshops and educational field trips for children ages six through sixteen. Created in 1988, the fish camp is a means to perpetuate the Tlingit lifestyle, including values and traditional knowledge. On average, Dog Point serves twenty-five to thirty-five students at each of three summer programs. Both Native and non-native children are welcome to attend and there is no charge for the camp experience, although Dog Point relies upon donations. The camp revolves around the concept of the year-long subsistence activities. At the beginning of the Tlingit calendar, in the summer, the camp provides opportunities for gathering berries, medicinal plants, hunting, and fishing. In the fall and winter, there are occasions for deer hunting and harvesting shellfish. Participants learn how to hunt deer along with the processing and protocols that occur during and after a hunt. The camp takes advantage of regional subsistence activities; during the spring, herring egg harvesting and preservation are highlighted. In addition, seal hunting occurs in the spring, as well as the harvesting of other marine mammals. Additionally, participants learn language, Tlingit protocols, drum making, singing, and dancing. At the camp, Tlingit values are incorporated into daily activities. The camp setting also provided Tlingit elders with an organized setting in which to disseminate traditional knowledge that they might not otherwise have. ‘Traditional Native Values’ were developed out of Dog Point Fish Camp by Tlingit elders and are found in Table 11: *Dog Point traditional native values*.

Table 11: *Dog Point traditional native values*

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*Traditional values from Dog Point Fish Camp elders**It is important to:*

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Know your family tree  
 Know your clan history  
 Know your ancestral language  
 Traditional values from Dog Point Fish Camp elders  
 Know your kinship ties to others  
 Know your tribal responsibilities  
 Have respect for all living things  
 Have a spiritual relationship in nature  
 Have respect for yourself  
 Have respect for others  
 Have respect for Elders  
 Provide for your family  
 Be loving to children  
 Share with Elders  
 Be skillful with tools  
 Be fair in trade and barter  
 Be physically strong  
 Be humble  
 Be brave  
 Work hard  
 Avoid conflict  
 Have a sense of humor  
 Be adaptable to circumstance

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Note. Resourced from Littlefield, R. & Littlefield, J. (n.d.). *Dog Point Traditional Native Values*. NATIVE. Dog Point Fish Camp. Sitka, Alaska.

In the summer of 2007, the Littlefields conducted a Lingít language immersion camp at Dog Point, which is typically a fish camp. This was the first time that the focus was wholly on Lingít language immersion. I, along with thirty-five others, attended the week-long experience; seven elders were among those in attendance. Most of the attendees participated as families with various levels of language acquisition. The youngest participant was six months old and the eldest was in her 80s. Two stages of commitment to speaking Lingít were allowed. Since there were all ages in attendance, allowances for English were made if only used for instruction. Whispering in English was

also permitted, but only when a translation was needed. The camp meal and clean-up preparation was divided according to cultural protocol with the Ravens and Eagle/Wolves taking turns cooking and cleaning. For example, on one day, the Ravens cooked and the Eagles/Wolves were allotted clean-up duty; the following day, the Eagles/Wolves cooked and the Ravens cleaned. Lingít language students and instructors were able to try out lesson plans that they had been working on. There was singing, dancing, swimming, and the preparation of traditional foods: berry picking, fishing, cleaning, smoking fish, deer hunting and skinning, all of which were prepared through instructions in the Lingít language. For some participants, this was the first attempt and opportunity to speak Lingít. For others, the camp provided the occasion to use the Lingít language among friends as well the opportunity to teach younger learners. According to Vivian Mork (Appendix B), a research participant and Tlingit cultural and language specialist:

It's important to learn in a natural setting. You remember things better that way. By putting holistic knowledge, that students apply to their own world, into more than one place in their brain, reinforces learning, and probably later, the student can recall what they learned. (Lines 497-499, p. 506)

Camp experiences such as this are important for many Tlingits who are searching for their cultural roots and values.

In contrast research participant Owen James (Appendix D) learned his extensive traditional knowledge from his elders:

I learned to process fish and deer by going around and helping the older folks. That is how I learned the different ways of cutting, drying, and smoking fish. I

helped them cut the seal and the deer—I didn't ask for payment; I would just do it. There were different styles. They would ask me how my father did it but I would just smile. I would tell them that I did not know. However, I would help them and they would always give me some: This is how I learned. (Lines 163-168, p. 584)

In addition, for Tlingit elder Elizabeth Martin (Appendix D) the fish camp was an essential part of her life:

At fish camp, it's our crabs, we even get that. You know our camp was right by a crick, and you have to go way up where the fish spawns... It starts September, October, to November and then December they get thin. So we always went to the camp about that time... We use to have a lot of fun. You really enjoy it. (Lines 248-264, p. 635-636)

Although Owen learned from his elders, the camp setting provides a means of transmitting traditional knowledge in contemporary society. For the past twenty years, in July, communities such as Kake also sponsor a camp. The camp teaches Tlingit culture and traditions to youth with the assistance of adult volunteers. According to research participant Owen James (Appendix D):

Now we have culture camps that teach kids who do not have anyone available to teach them... It taught them survival too. I would go out with the kids and teach them to survive... When the kids go out with me, they learn where to go and what tide is good for harvesting the variety of beach foods. (Lines 189-196, p. 585)

Also, the Prince of Wales Island Culture Camp in Kasaan is sponsored by the Organized Village of Kasaan. The camp is for youth ages ten years to 18-years-old and instructs participants in the Tlingit and Haida language, art, song, dance, and the harvesting, preparation and preservation of subsistence foods. They learn how to harvest subsistence foods along with the values that accompany the lifestyle. For many Tlingit families, it is sometimes hard to make time for subsistence activities and there are few opportunities to speak and learn Lingít exclusively. In addition, the camp setting is also a place where youth are introduced to the oral traditions that are related to that specific area or clan. Owen James (Appendix D) states, “There is a story that I usually share at the culture camp...[The story] has been passed on in our culture from generations to generations, in our culture...(Line 550, 621, p. 602).

The instructors, elders and learners have the philosophy that the language must be used in modern settings in order to survive. One outcome of the camp experience is that several Tlingit language instructors are planning to create language ‘nests’ and opportunities to speak the Lingít language immersions in small settings, such as two or three day camp outs, potlucks, and in public settings such as restaurants or shopping excursions. According to N. and R. Dauenhauer, language study is becoming a popular identity marker (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2004). The most popular identity markers, beading, dancing, creating regalia, singing, traditional foods, weaving, and carving are undertaken at these camp settings. And through the culture and language immersion camps, Tlingit ways of knowing become a means towards the identity-building process (Kawagley, 2000a). Incorporating language learning into camp settings



creates a means of acquiring the “thought world of our ancestors” (Kawagley, 2000a, p.4). For the Tlingit, tribal identity is evolving to fit into modern society and “as identity becomes more elective and personal, so also the selection of emblems of identity becomes more selective and personally charismatic” (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2004, p. 263). At the same time as children and adults are learning these ‘badges of ethnicity’, they are also learning traditional values.

In response to the loss of language, Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI) organized the first Lingít language immersion retreats. The camp experience is part of SHI’s new focus: to perpetuate the Tlingit (Haida, and Tsimshian peoples’) language. The retreats were funded through a grant from the Administration for Native Americans. The first five-day camp was held in Juneau in the summer of 2002 at a remote location. Five elders participated along with a handful of students, including research participant Vivian Mork. Subsequently, in 2003, a camp was held in Glacier Bay National Park. Two more were held in Hoonah and Sitka in 2004, and then in Angoon and Klukwan in 2005. Each year, the immersion camps grew to enroll as many as thirty students and as many elders, providing for many one-on-one instructional moments. On average, the camps were about one week, providing a constant exposure to the language and the experiential learning that is crucial for language acquisition.

Experiential learning, or language immersion, is the ideal setting for language acquisition because, as learning becomes experiential, genuine cultural awareness occurs as the landscape takes on meaning. In order to learn the Lingít language, I attended the Kusteeyí Institute sponsored by SHI with two of my daughters. The year that I

participated was the second year under the grant program and it was held in Glacier Bay National Park. A fieldnote entry from my experience reflects the cultural meanings behind the language:

Twenty-four participants hiked out to the point. This is a special place to many Tlingit people who can remember a time before the park was closed to subsistence activities. Many of our Elders fished, hunted, and harvested seafood in this area. Today, it was low tide and a perfect day to gather *shaaw* (gumboots) off the beach. On the way out to the beach, young people were walking with the Elders, talking in Lingít, pointing to plants, and asking for their names. Our boots stuck in the mud as we trudged over slippery rocks and orange seaweed. I had never seen nor harvested *shaaw* before, because it is found further North from where I grew up. Some of the Elders hadn't harvested for twenty years and one Elder, an inland Tlingit from the Yukon, claimed she had never harvested *shaaw* before either. Armed with a large zip-lock baggie and a knife, we lifted the heavy seaweed from the rocks. Beneath the seaweed, the *shaaw* lay hidden clinging to the rocks with enough suction that we had to use a table knife to pry them off. But first, we were instructed that we must thank the *shaaw* for giving its life to us. *Gunálcheésh shaaw, gunálcheésh shaaw*. Later several participants and I joined the oldest Elder, as she took her daily walk. We spoke in Lingít to her while learning the names of rocks, trees, moss and other plants. (Martindale, 2002)

In this example, I illustrate how the participants 'experienced' the Lingít language as a part of the landscape. After a couple of days of total immersion in the language, some of

us new learners began to dream in Lingít. Many of the participants were profoundly changed by the camp experience; renewing efforts to revitalize the language and culture. In contemporary Tlingit culture, immersion camps are essential for establishing the language in a cultural milieu, while conveying important Tlingit knowledge to the participants.

*Language nests and master apprentice programs*

Current theories claim that language shifts are indicative of worldwide assimilation attitudes. For the Lingít language to continue, there must be a ‘domain’ or situations and opportunities provided in which to speak Lingit. The Dauenhauers (1998) stress that, “Languages can be learned by individuals, but they are transmitted by groups” (p. 81). The *Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages* (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 2001), under the section, *Guidelines for Aspiring Language Learners* suggests the initiative and the creation of opportunities to speak the language. Language nests, mini-retreats, and master apprentice programs provide the opportunity outside the family and camp setting.

A language nest is a group of committed speakers who gathers frequently in order to provide opportunities to speak the language. The nest is usually a comfortable encouraging setting, and is often a small community setting, e.g., a home preschool or mini-retreat. When the elders die, the language dies with them and so does a considerable system of traditional worldviews, which is why Maori from New Zealand created their own domains. In New Zealand, a group of leaders and parents recognized this loss as

fluent Maori speakers declined from 64, 000 in 1970 to 10,000 in the 1990s (Geary, 1999). One of the main indicators of language loss is how many children speak the language, so in 1982, the Maori developed Kohanga Reo, language nests, which are a nationwide system of early childhood programs offering traditional Maori language and cultural instruction. The language nest model is based upon the concept that forming regular speaking groups with children, family, and friends, along with fluent speakers, creates a 'nest' for speaking opportunities.

The Maori language revitalization programs in New Zealand were the first to offer such a context for learning indigenous languages. According to Geary (1999) language nests provide an environment of continued exposure to the language. The Maori program began with children under the age of five and included participation by Maori elders. Today, there is blend of elders and younger speakers as teachers. As a result Geary (1999) claims there are "over 800 language nests across the country, which have introduced more than 100,000 Maori children to their native tongue (para. 5).

If the Lingit language is to revive and survive, then children must learn it. Environments must be provided for leaning opportunities where the indigenous language is used exclusively (Reyhner, 2001). Therefore, the hope of language revitalization is in the next generation.

According to research participant Vivian Mork (Appendix B) "The best setting for the TPR (Total Physical Response) method is not in the classroom but in everyday settings like the role of an apprentice" (Lines 350-351, p. 500). The master apprentice model follows traditional Tlingit pedagogy. Typically, these programs are conducted in

communities where language loss is at a critical juncture. Students are paired with a fluent speaker for around 20 hours a week in the elder's home or other setting where they are interacting one-on-one. Vivian Mork (Appendix B) describes the master/apprentice philosophy:

It is the idea, in order to save an endangered language, like the Lingít languages, communities are organizing these apprenticeships, especially with very elaborate and intricate languages. They team up people, a speaker of the language or a younger person, or a beginning language learner, who goes into the speaker's home and gets to do everyday living situations in order to learn the language. The student helps the elder out, helps clean house and you both are getting something out of it. (Lines 485-491, p. 506)

These models provide intimate learning opportunities to learn traditional values alongside the language. The apprentice program "is a way we teach 'identity.' Our elders show us who we are" (V. Mork, appendix B, lines 493-494, p. 506).

Master apprentice relationships also occur among artists. Research participant Clarissa Hudson used this traditional teaching method to learn Chilkat weaving from Jenny Thlunaut (see Appendix C). Clarissa, in turn is a mentor to other weavers and reflects upon the importance of the apprentice relationship to the continuation of the Tlingit culture:

It is all before you: your gift has been given. The fact you've been chosen, or the fact you have the talent to do this, the fact that people have chosen you to do this, to carry on a certain tradition. (Appendix C, lines 351-353, p. 563)

Changes within the Tlingit society allowed for adaptation of traditional methods of transmitting cultural knowledge. Tlingit values and worldviews are recontextualized within culture and language camps, language nests, and master/apprentice programs.

*Transmitting cultural knowledge through literature*

Developing curriculum is an important aspect of the Tlingit culture and language revitalization process. Learning the Lingít language is like *Haa shagóon itx yaan too.aat*, walking our ancestors path, meaning that learning Lingít opens up the ancestors' worldviews, including traditional knowledge, ways-of-knowing, and living in today's world (see Chapter Two for an extensive look at Tlingit literature). To facilitate the Lingít language revitalization materials must be created with Tlingit pedagogies, thus strengthening the language and the community. With the support of SHI, Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer developed standard materials such as *Beginning Tlingit* (2000) and *Sneaky Sounds: The Non-Threatening Introduction to Tlingit Sounds and Spelling* (2006). According to the authors, the concept behind *Sneaky Sounds* is to familiarize students with the language in a non-threatening manner. The book can also assist with fluent Lingít speakers to learning to write the orthography (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2006)

Other materials such as a Lingít spelling book, *Tlingit Spelling Book, Aan Aduspelled X'úx'* (1999) by Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer provide an introduction to Lingít orthography including a 60-minute audio cassette where a student can listen to the Lingít sounds. Other invaluable additions to Tlingit literature and

language are the three volumes of research by Nora and Richard Dauenhauer: *Haa Shuká, Our Ancestors: Tlingit Oral Narratives*, Vol. 1 (1987); *Haa Tuwunáagu Yis: For Healing Our Spirit*, Vol. 2 (1990); *Haa Kusteeyí, Our Culture: Tlingit Life Stories* Vol. 3 (1994).

In addition, Native American Indian Values Enrichment, Inc. (NATIVE, Inc.) in Sitka, Alaska offers the *Dog Point Fish Camp CD* (Littlefield, R. & Littlefield, J, n.d.). Their intent is to provide a recording to assist children and parents with filling the communication disparity between fluent elders and learners. The CD set also contains a booklet that provides Lingít and English translations for lessons.

Many of these materials are standard text in university-level Lingít language courses. For research participant Vivian Mork (Appendix B) the language courses played a significant role in her renewed identification as a Tlingit:

When you come from a family with no fluent speakers, you really don't have too many choices about where to go in order to learn. I soon found out that they were teaching the Lingít language at the University of Alaska in Juneau. I decided to incorporate learning the Lingít language into my studies. And after a couple of years of learning the language, it has taken on a whole new life. A lot of us new speakers feel that when we speak, we are waking up the ancestors by using the language, giving them respect and calling on them. (Lines 153-160, p. 491)

Currently, the University of Alaska Southeast offers Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced Lingít, in addition to courses on linguistics and oral traditions, culture, Tlingit history, and revitalization. The problem with the university language classes, however, is that both elders and the learners have confided that some Tlingit elders feel that students

are learning to speak ‘university Líníít’ and not conversational Lingít. Vivian Mork explains:

We hear the Elders speak and note the differences in the language. We realize that people who learn languages today in a university setting differ in dialect and pronunciation from the language learned in the villages, which is the difference between a natural acquisition and a rather “fake” acquisition. (Lines 240-243, p. 495)

Nevertheless, the classes afford the occasion to speak in Lingít to other beginning students and many of those students organize outside learning opportunities away from the college setting.

Another aspect of creating new curricula is the belief that curriculum units should merge language and traditional Tlingit knowledge designed to teach culture through the perspective of the Tlingit worldview. In 2002, the U.S. Dept. of Education, through the Alaska Native Education Program, awarded SHI a three-year grant of \$864,000 to develop Lingít language curriculum. Worl (2007b) claims “The most important thing [about] this curriculum, [is that it] is going to lead to better academic achievement for our students...because it really builds on the environment of Alaska.” A team of teachers and specialists at SHI created the lessons established upon place-based education models. Subjects covered in the curriculum are: canoes, berries, beach, alder, hemlock, herring, hooligan, Elizabeth Peratrovich, plants, salmon, sea mammals, spruce trees, totem poles, and Who am I? An example illustrating the Tlingit worldview from the *Who am I* unit, designed for Tlingit children at the Kindergarten grade level is:



Tlingit children are traditionally taught their lineage through oral history. They learn their family history, what village they are from, what clan they are a member of, what moiety they belong to, and the crests they are entitled to use because of that membership. Through oral history, they learn their Tlingit name, where it came from and what it means. Knowing who you are and where you come from is essential today even as it was generations ago. (Douglas, N. 2006)

The curriculum guides include audio in the Lingít language recorded by fluent Tlingit Elders John Marks and June Pegues, in addition to songs performed by Nancy Douglas and George Holly. The intent of these units is to perpetuate Tlingit identity through traditional knowledge and language and to incorporate Native ways of knowing into the public schools. The curriculum development project was a direct result of the language immersion programs, because several participants in the immersion camp experiences went on to acquire further teaching competencies and language learning but their materials were limited.

The Lingít language revitalization coincides with a movement towards more political power and autonomy; and curriculum development from the perspective of the Tlingit culture is a key component. For some Tlingits, learning their ancestors' language shapes their identity and heals past traumas. New language materials assist contemporary Lingít language learners with understanding their ancestral relationships to the landscape. Much of that relationship is expressed through understanding a word, phrase, concept or value, and how it relates to the Tlingit worldview. Therefore, learning Lingít provides a new avenue for the expression of Tlingit identity.

Contemporary Tlingits often inquire into their own identity and history through literature dating back to first contact. Such an inquiry comes with internal conflicts when dealing with issues of racism, assimilation, abuse, alcoholism, and cultural genocide. *The Blonde Indian* by Ernestine Hayes' (2006) provides the opportunity to study the complexities of growing up mixed-ancestry in a Southeastern Alaskan community in the midst of change. Hayes' experience reflects some of the same cultural issues as exhibited by Sam Wright's narrative. In addition, Vivian Mork's narrative shows similar feelings regarding the attempt to reconcile the loss of many cultural aspects of the Tlingit community. Also, Clarissa Hudson's and Breanne Mork's perspectives mirrors Hayes' sense of separation from place due to living outside Alaska, yet explaining how one can never spiritually leave.

Nora Marks Dauenhauer's collection of poetry and prose and *Life Woven with Song* (2000a) and Andy Hope's *Will the Time Ever Come* (Hope & Thornton, 2000) are examples of contemporary Tlingits who are revealing history from the Tlingit worldview. Also, research participant Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) is actively retelling history through a weaving depicting the Tlingit version of the battle of Sitka: "I am weaving the Katlian robe, the 1804 Battle with the Russians. I look forward to the book, because the robe...is like the historical document of the event" (Lines 98-102, p. 551). This robe is connected to the cover of a book she was also commissioned to design. Clarissa explains the significance of the painting on the cover of the book:

And as he is standing there looking back there is warriors and his intentions, his clarity of mind, also crossing time and space because he is on the book cover he's

looking at you. The person who is holding the book is crossing time and space because we may be descendents we may be related by marriage. (Lines 129-133, p. 552-553)

For Clarissa the meaning of these two projects is significant as she explains how the painting on the cover of the book states that “We are here to defend our culture, our people: our survival” (Lines 127-128, p. 552).

In addition, research participant Teri Rofkar (Appendix A) desires to share an aspect of cultural conflict in the form of re-telling a family story:

My teacup story and I need to make a children’s book about it. It really would be a good one. In fact, someone read about my teacup story, and she wrote me and asked me if I could give her permission to write that into a children’s book. And I said, “well no, I would really actually like to do it. (Lines 319-321, p. 535)

In texts written by the Tlingit, history is retold through poetry, essay, plays, and clan studies. What is important about these contemporary narratives and studies is that they are from a Tlingit perspective and illustrate a variety of cultural experiences.

Also many Tlingits have learned about their own culture through literature.

Research participant Teri Rofkar is a world renowned Raven’s Tail weaver who learned Raven’s Tail weaving from a book by Cheryl Samuel (1987) as well as a class that was sponsored by the author. Teri (Appendix C) explains:

I didn’t figure the [Raven’s Tail Weaving] out... And in 1989 a gal by the name Cheryl Samuels came up. She’s not native, but she had written a book called, “Raven’s Tail.” ...it was the first time she came up to teach... I’ll be honest, it

was a little tongue and cheek. I had thought, “You know, we were weavers, why didn’t Grandma even mention this kind of weaving?” She said nothing about Raven’s Tail. I had never heard of it, so I went to the class. Oh my gosh! It is not done on a loom, it hangs loose, it’s twined, the design elements are the same. We even know the meaning of them because they continued in basketry. It is in basketry and wool. It was the same knots. It was the same weave. (Lines 139-150 p. 527)

Also, Research participant Clarissa Hudson uses literature to teach the next generation of weavers. Clarissa has self-published a book on Chilkat weaving called *Jenny Weaves an Apprentice: A Chilkat Weaver’s Handbook* (2005). The book is intended as a companion to her weaving workshops as well as a personal look at the relationship with her mentor, Jenny Thlunaut. In a culture that was predominantly oral, the written word has taken on a greater meaning, although for some Tlingit, the emphasis placed on the written word can be conflicting. For example, although Clarissa (Appendix C) has written a book on weaving, some apprentices expect to learn everything there is about Chilkat weaving through the book:

I just had an apprentice from Teslin and I was telling her some thing’s and I was showing her some things and she says to me, “How come these things aren’t written in your handbook?”... And I looked at her, “Because there are some things that I cannot write and should not ever be written except conveyed energy one-on-one, eye-to-eye, heart-to-heart, not thru a book...(Lines 507-512, p. 570)

For the Tlingit, literature has the power to inform and disseminate traditional knowledge. Developing curriculum and writing history from the Tlingit perspective is an important aspect of the Tlingit culture and language revitalization process. In addition, many Tlingit are retelling history through literature as well as using literature to learn one's own culture. Learning about what it means to be a Tlingit in contemporary society is a means to *Haa shagóon itx yaan too.aat*, walking our ancestors' path.

*Transmitting cultural knowledge through clan conferences*

Clan conferences also offer a contemporary venue for transmitting cultural knowledge. In March 2007 in Sitka, Alaska, a clan conference was held titled *Sharing Our Knowledge: A Conference of Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlingit Tribes and Clans*. For five days, several hundred Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, academics, scholars, and artists gathered to share their knowledge with one another. The conference provided a venue for all levels of learners; some originated from communities that have lost much of their cultural knowledge through assimilation. According to Andy Hope, one of the organizers, the conference was presented in a non-traditional format yet allowed for participation in traditional events such as naming ceremonies and the transfer of *at.óow* to a new stewardship (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 2007).

The clan conference was the most recent in a series of conferences that began in 1993 with 500 attendees held in Haines and Klukwan. Subsequent conferences were held in Sitka in 1995, Ketchikan in 1996, and Sitka in 1997. The 2007 Sitka conference was the first held in ten years. The conference was sponsored by the Southeast Alaska Native

Educators Association, was hosted in Sitka by Sitka Tribes of Alaska (STA), and included support from a grant award from the National Science Foundation in conjunction with financial support from Shee Atiká Inc., the Juneau and Anchorage School districts, and the University of Alaska Southeast (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 2007).

Participants came from Alaska, the continental United States, Canada, and Russia. Scholars, including academics, historians, elders, clan leaders, educators, youth, and artists gathered with the intention of perpetuating Southeast Alaska Native history, culture, and language. Importantly, conference organizers documented the conference talks and workshops for succeeding generations resulting in over 62 hours of recordings. An example of the knowledge that was being shared were: care and use of *at.óow* and clan regalia, language endangerment, seagull egg harvesting methods, clan naming workshop, Sitka smallpox epidemic, clan identity, traditional Tlingit law, petroglyphs, and subsistence management.

Since first contact, the Tlingit have struggled to maintain a sense of Tlingit identity; and, due to assimilation and acculturation, important traditional ecological and cultural knowledge has been lost. Therefore, the clan conference emphasized the importance of documenting and sharing knowledge among everyone. Research participant Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) shared her knowledge of weaving with conference participants:

I am doing a presentation on several robes of Jenny's that I saw in the museum.

I'm going to talk about museums... Some people don't know you can put a

signature on your robes. I will demonstrate at the clan conference. I will show people how that is done. I also learned some very interesting information. I am doing a demonstration class on spinning your one wool. When other weavers come and look at the robes, you can tell them. Some people don't know a signature: What's that? And I show how it's done. I also learned some interesting information some tricks of the trade. (Lines 158-168, p. 554)

Clan conferences offer solutions to an ever-changing society, where tribal peoples can maintain cultural identity through learning more about new scientific discoveries that validate their own traditional knowledge. Elders and Tlingit scholars in attendance were able to share their knowledge with a wider audience than what was traditionally available, since hundreds of people typically attend. Also during the conference, there was a sharing across the boundaries of clans and tribes, i.e., Tlingits were able to impart their knowledge with the Haida, and Tsimshians were able to share their knowledge with the Tlingits. Consecutively, non-native scholars were able to learn from the Tlingit. According to Hope (2007a), the clan conference venue provided an opportunity for those, "involved in the study and documentation of southeast Alaska Native history and culture" (para. 2).

*Old meets new, past meets present*

The character of the conference was non-traditional, providing a mixture of older means of transmission as well as contemporary methods. The atypical conference format permitted traditional events such as a canoe welcome, traditional naming ceremony, and

the transfer of *at.óow* to new stewardship. In an interview in the *Capitol City Weekly*, Andy Hope explains, “People are hungry for this sort of thing” (Hope, 2007a). Hope’s comments illustrate that Tlingit are searching for knowledge about their culture. In an interview with the Juneau Empire, research participant Clarissa Hudson, also a presenter at the Sitka clan conference explained, “It wasn't just about fun and performance, it was educational in all ways, regarding so many things. It reminded me of all of our Alaska Native cultural and social events rolled into one” (Metcalf, 2007b).

Connecting the past to the present proved to be a pervading theme at the clan conference. Drawing upon research conducted by non-natives, the attending tribes attempted to make sense of studies deemed at understanding their worldviews. For example, Elaine Abraham and Judith Ramos (2007) presented a workshop on a detailed aspect of Frederica de Laguna’s fieldwork, called, “This is Kuxaankutaan’s (Dr. Frederica de Laguna) Song.” De Laguna had conducted fieldwork for Bryn Mawr College in Yakutat from 1949 through 1954 resulting in her monograph *Under Mount Saint Elias* (1972). According to the presenters, they wanted to convey the personal side of de Laguna’s fieldwork, which included the fact that she was adopted into a local clan and her fascination with Tlingit music. The research included a song composed by de Laguna in honor of the Yakutat people that she worked alongside of. This example is illustrative of the concept of utilizing older research by non-natives and transforming that knowledge for use within the contexts of a contemporary Tlingit worldview, i.e., becoming the owners of older research through adaptation to Tlingit paradigms.



At the conference, drawing connections between old and new knowledge and adaptation to change were apparent. Adams (2007) writes, “When outside influences came, their purpose was to conquer. This caused an unbalance in Native Americans’ lives that we are still struggling with...” In a talk on Tlingit warriors, presenters compared traditional warrior training with current Iraq war veterans (Bennett, et al., 2007). Some of the scholarly research reflected on cultural issues as recent as a decade ago and other scholarly inquires examined Native culture hundreds of years ago. Ken Austin (2007), a Tlingit scholar, journeyed back nearly ten-thousand years with his presentation *Historic Journey of Glacier Bay*. Austin’s research imparted evidence of Tlingit inhabitation in the Glacier Bay region dating back 9,000 years. His presentation also pointed out the local Hoonah Tlingit’s conflicts with the U.S. Park Service’s worldviews concerning the human aspect of management. This discussion drew upon the oral traditions of Glacier Bay for connecting the past to present social conditions.

Language revitalization and cultural repatriation of sacred objects were two contemporary issues that pervaded the conference. The Dauenhauers’ keynote address *Revival and Survival: Two Lifetimes in Tlingit* (2007) concerned their long history of working to ensure the continuation of the Lingit language. Tribal peoples in attendance were eager to learn more about protecting and revitalizing culture, providing opportunities to link language revitalization efforts across tribal boundaries. Conference presentations discussed language revitalization: *Visible Grammar: Tools for Revitalizing Tsimshian Sm’algyax* (Anderson, 2007), *Psychological Implications of Lingit Language Loss* (Chester, 2007); and *Virtual Community Language Learning House* (Jackson, P. M.,

2007). In addition, NAGPRA topics were of concern to the attendees: *Tribal Historic Preservation Efforts* (Krauss, 2007); *A Canoes' Journey: From Angoon to NYC to Angoon* (Jacobs, 2007a.); *At.óow: Care and use of Clan Regalia* (Hope, 2007b); and *Smithsonian Repatriation of the Killer Whale Hat to the Dakl'aweidi clan of Angoon* (Jacobs, 2007b).

Ancestral relationships to the landscape were evident in the presentation *Preserving a Sacred Landscape* by Ken Grant (2007) and *Clam Gardens of the Pacific Northwest* (2007) presented by Kenneth Grant, John Harper, Bob Sam, and Chief Adam Dick. In addition, oral traditions connecting science to Tlingit worldviews was provided by Steve Langdon in *Ish: Thinking about Tlingit Relations with Salmon*, and *Mapping Salmon Stories, Events, Names: An exercise in Historical Ecology* (2007a).

In addition to the academic and traditional workshops, the conference included a night of dance performances and oratory; The traditional oratory was presented in a new format. In the Sheet'ka Kwaán Naa Kahídi (tribal/community house) research participant Vivian Mork read her poetry and storytellers Ishmael Hope, Bert Adams, and Walter Porter participated. As well, Tlingit scholar Nora Dauenhauer and her husband Richard performed poetry. Other poets and artist participants were Donna Foulke, Martin Strand, Robert Hoffman, and myself. It proved to be a blend of Tlingit oratory in a contemporary venue that reached across tribal boundaries and generations.

Ultimately, the clan conference had a positive impact on the younger generation. Clarissa Hudson claims "It's no wonder there has been a resurgence of our culture in recent years: We have been 'starving' for a long time" (Appendix C, lines 556-557, p.

572). The younger generation utilized academic modes of transmission via paper presentations, and electronic media, among others; and panels of elders and experts were reminiscent of talking circles. For example, cultural protocols and traditions were instructed at the presentations *Clan Naming Workshop and Ceremony* (Davis, H., 2007) and *The Role of Elders, Families, and Respect* (Davis, V., 2007). Knowledge was shared across clan boundaries, i.e., information about the Tlingit culture was openly shared with the Tsimshian and Haida. In addition, 'outside' academics and researchers participated in a reciprocal relationship with the attending clans. Also, the influence on the young was evident at the conference. In an online blog (an internet journal) posted by J. Marilyn (2007) titled Captains Blog, one woman wrote about her participation at the clan conference, "the impact of my experiences there are resonating deeply within my soul. Since then I have not been able to fully articulate what happened to me and us... us meaning other members of my community who I traveled with and shared this remarkable experience with." The blogger perceived the young people conducting themselves in a traditional manner and 'felt the respect'. She expressed this in terms of a reawakening of traditional values.

At the clan conference, the predominant themes were adaptation to change, drawing correlations between older and newer traditions and research, transmission of cultural protocols, and relationships to the ancestral landscape. Old and new knowledge symbolized not only the specific knowledge being transmitted, but also how it was being transmitted and by whom. At the Sharing our Knowledge conference, the venue appeared

to satisfy the needs of both the older and the younger generations, bridging the gap in the modes of transmitting traditional knowledge.

*A celebration of Tlingit culture*

Today, the Tlingit worldview consists of a combination of Western and traditional values. However, there appears to be a need to express cultural identity in a dominant society that encourages the ‘melting pot.’ In the past, Western worldviews were forced upon the Tlingit, but this generation looks to traditional values for answers to social problems. The arrival of Western culture led to the repression of traditional customs by the new government. According to Worl (2002) “Some Tlingit themselves chose to abandon their traditional ways or they moved away from their home communities to pursue education or employment...” (para. 6). I begin with an examination of the history behind the Tlingit cultural revitalization efforts. Next, I will provide a look into one of the most significant expressions of cultural identity in Southeast Alaska: *Celebration*. I also argue how *Celebration* is another venue for sharing cultural knowledge, though not without its critics and conflicts.

Beginning in the 1940s, a sense of Tlingit pride among the population emerged with the fight for equal rights for all Alaska Natives. Subsequently, in 1966, the Alaska Federation of Natives was organized and, by the time the 60s ended, the Native claims were at the forefront of state and national politics. In 1971, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) provided political power to corporations and their stockholders. Although pride in one’s Tlingit identity arose from these significant social changes,

difficulties adjusting to this new sense of corporate identity also occurred. The Dauenhauer's (2004) argue that "ethnic identity remains important, but we suggest that its emblems, models and manifestations are becoming increasingly corporate not clan" (p. 259). Now, many Tlingit value their registry with their corporations or federally recognized tribes. Because of the political power afforded to Tlingit under ANCSA, the Tlingit can bring their concerns about the welfare and education of their people to the federal, state, and local governments.

Many Tlingit struggle with the pull between what the Western society views as values, the individual conflicting with the traditional community mindset. According to Carol Williams, "We are cultural thinkers. We are always thinking about how things will impact our culture" (personal communication, 2001). Despite adverse changes in family lifestyle, the Tlingit remain committed to upholding some aspect of communal structure. Celebration provides the link between the secular and the sacred, the communal and the individual. However, the bi-annual Celebration festival held in Southeast Alaska today is not the first time there was an attempt at organizing such an event. Chevney (1965) describes a similar Tlingit festival organized by the Russians during Russian occupation of Alaska. In 1841, in Sitka, then the Russian capital of Alaska, the chief manager of the Russian-American Company, Captain Adolf Etolin organized the first Celebration-style event:

...in a new relationship with the Tlingits. He had instituted an annual fair for them at New Archangel, to which they came from as far away as Yakutat and Vancouver Island to feast, sing, dance, and show off their wares." (pp. 209-210)

Etolin served in the manager role from 1840 to 1845. The account of this Celebration-style event does not specify the number of Natives that attended, but alludes to the fact that the festival was well-advertised and attendees came from long distances. Indicative of the distance some attendees traveled and the mention of Vancouver Island, there were probably Haida and Tsimshians in attendance and possibly Kwakwakw'wakw, Nuuchahnulth, and Salish peoples.

*A contemporary venue*

Celebration has evolved into another venue for sharing cultural knowledge. Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI), the founding organizer, is a Native nonprofit established in 1981 to administer educational and cultural programs for Sealaska shareholders. Sealaska is a regional Native corporation formed under ANCSA with a mission is to perpetuate and enhance Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian cultures. Since 1982, the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian peoples have gathered biennially to celebrate the richness of their culture. The first Celebration was attended by twelve dance groups including 150 dancers and has grown to over fifty dance groups. Despite the claim that Celebration is non-traditional and is a “secular folk festival”, thousands of people now attend from all over Alaska and the lower 48 (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 2004, p. 265).

Celebration was organized as a result of an Elders Conference held in 1980, when elders expressed concern over cultural loss. Subsequently, the organization of Celebration was for the explicit reason to gather together clan groups, dance groups, families, artists,

and individuals in signing, dancing, and celebration. According to research participant Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C):

When our culture was nearly “lost” during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some elders felt that, through song and dance, a revival could happen, possibly saving some of the cultural remnants they were holding on to... Through the traditional songs and dances, the revival of our culture began to sprout. People began learning, and eventually teaching, the old arts: carving, basket weaving, beadwork, metal smithing, button-robe making, Chilkat and Ravenstail weaving, subsistence hunting and fishing techniques. Now some are working to revive our language...(Lines 615-623, p. 575)

During the first weekend in June, Tlingits, Haidas, and Tsimshians from around the state, and others from outside Alaska, travel to Juneau, the state’s capital, to attend Celebration. According to Worl (2002), “It embodies the values of the Southeast Alaska Indians and binds Native people to their ancestors. Remembering and honoring ancestors are integral aspects of their culture” (para. 15). In addition, attendees can participate in workshops that vary from year to year. Past workshops have been conducted on ANCSA and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). Celebration 2006 included language workshops and a Baby Regalia review, a juried arts show, a seaweed contest, and an artists market.

For those Tlingits who are searching for knowledge about their culture, Celebration provides a contemporary opportunity. Research participant Breanne Mork (Appendix A) explains that “... at Celebration, to see that many Natives together, just to

do the same things, to lean more to meet people was fun...I feel comfortable in Alaska...everyone knows what family we are from” (Lines 228-232, p. 439).

Other Tlingits recognize that they are there to learn. Ross Soboleff points out that “You enter saying ‘I want to learn.’ When you get in the front door, you find out that there are a tremendous amount of things here and they are all about me. They are all pieces of my identity” (Christianson, 1992, p. 45). Moreover, Stella Martin explains “the young people are becoming more curious, and more knowledgeable. I think it is giving the younger people a change to really learn our heritage” (Christianson, 1992, p. 19.). Others express Celebration as a ‘haven’ and an emotional time for cultural expression (Christianson, 1992, p. 24). Referring to the Grand Entrance at Celebration 1990, Edward K. Thomas writes, “...where a few hundred dancers paraded in showing a lot of pride...there was a vast amount of pride they showed...there was so much pride in the faces of the elderly people” (Christianson, 1992, p. 21). Therefore, for many elders who have experienced the trauma of assimilation and acculturation, the chance to transmit Tlingit knowledge and pride in Tlingit heritage is beneficial.

#### *Celebration critics: the sacred and the secular*

Celebration is not without its critics, however. An incident occurred in 1996 when the late Paul Jackson, along with a few other attendees, staged a protest by taking over the microphone prior to the largest attended event, the Grand Exit. Jackson was concerned that Tlingit protocol wasn’t being followed. Although Celebration ‘96 offered protocol workshops, the workshops were separate from the dancing and singing venue.



Thus, a separation of self and community occurred, unlike the *koo.eex'* ceremony, where spirituality is blended throughout the entire ceremony and instruction in Tlingit protocols are found within the ceremonial context. At Celebration 1996, protocol workshops were not well-attended. A Celebration participant, a Sealaska board member said, "There was room made for clans to discuss their own protocol, but not many took advantage of it" (Holst, 2002). Lack of interest in protocols means that there will eventually be errors, which can lead to cultural conflicts, especially within a secular setting. Elder Clarence Jackson worries, "One of the dangers is that we can start changing, because of errors, some of the history of our culture" (Christianson, 1992, pg. 13).

There is also a danger of broken taboos due to converting spiritual ideologies and realities to fit into a secular event. An example from the 1980s illustrates the possible confusion that can occur in this area. In 1980, at an elders' conference in Sitka, Alaska sponsored by Sealaska Corporation, a local dance group performed during the welcome dinner. The group performed *yéik*, shaman spirit songs, which are only to be sung at a *koo.eex'* because there is specific protocols involved with their performance. Without adhering to protocols, an offense could result in both spiritual and physical trauma to the participants. This breach of cultural protocol caused the elders in the room to respond with speeches and words in order to counteract the presence of the shaman spirits. Nora Dauenhauer in *Because We Cherish You* (1981) describes the event:

The elders began to treat the songs with their own songs, spirits, and words to insure the safety of everyone of the dancers and all participants of the conference,

that they would be cleansed of any unattended spirits lingering in the air. (N.

Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, introduction)

In one of the speeches following this incident, an elder relayed to the next generation the importance of replying to the spirit songs, “I reply with my grandfather’s spirit,” he told them (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1981, p. 40). In addition, Tlingit elder George Jim, Keikóok’, used oratory to restore balance so the words of the powerful spirit songs would not go unanswered:

All of you who came out here I am bracing you that it not turn bad, that your words not float aimless in the air.

*Ladkát yeewáan yáa daak yeey.aadí yee yát áwé shaxwligás’ ux kei aa utéegaa yee yoo x’atángi ch’a kaawayíkt unaxéegaa.* (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1981, p. 42)

This incident, which occurred at a Tlingit sponsored event, illustrates the complexities within the Tlingit worldview regarding the conversion of the spiritual to fit the needs of secular ceremonies.

Within the Tlingit worldview, there is evidence of an element of secular and sacred, i.e., a sense of balance within their culture. One example can be seen in the sacred vs. secular art as defined by Jonaitis (1986). Other examples of this worldview are the play clothes, *koolyát kanaa.ádi*, and the cultural objects called *ls’aatí at*, a masterless thing, which may someday become *at.óow*: sacred. But, can a ceremony that is deemed secular become a sacred event? Rosita Worl (2002) claims that Celebration honors ancestors with “new traditional practices that arise from ancient values and practices”

(para. 2). However, if Celebration operates in the secular world does it trade the spiritual reality of the Tlingit culture for a secular one? Elders who have grown up participating in the *koo.eex*, where the spiritual and the secular are balanced, in contrast, view Celebration as lacking a spiritual content. There is a feeling that Celebration is becoming a ‘pow-wow’ of sorts and is not what some of the elders envisioned. Paul Marks stressed “We are not all beads and blankets,” confirming some elders’ beliefs that the Tlingit culture is becoming something that one can chose to participate in (Holst, 2002). Possibly, the elders perceive the event as the symbol for the assimilated Tlingit culture; and in contrast, younger performers and attendees view participation in Celebration as an emblem of tribal identity.

According to N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (2004), Tlingit society is changing from a *gemeinschaft* society, where a person’s identity is determined at birth as the matrilineal Tlingit heritage establishes, compared to a *gesellschaft* society where one decides where they belong. The Dauenhauer’s argue that the Tlingit people, who are now experiencing cultural shifts, are able to select their identity markers or ‘badges of ethnicity’ ”(p. 263). Because of assimilation and acculturation, Tlingits delineate their tribal identity with certain aspects of the culture such as weaving, carving, dancing, and yet may view participation in the *koo.eex* or learning the Lingit language as unimportant to maintaining cultural identity (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1998, p. 75). Celebration, in itself, has become an essential identity marker, along with many of the aspects within the festivity. Dancing as an identity marker is evident in a Celebration participant’s account:

Tlingit dancers come out for potlatches (parties, giveaways), funerals, weddings, clan gatherings, and almost any excuse to dance we can find. We are different from the powwow dancers because we only know how to dance as a group. We don't have individual dances or competition. (Fulmer & Fulmer, 2007, para. 2)

Celebration provides a venue for a shared sense of identity; although the reality is, that many of the Tlingits dancing on stage might never have been to a traditional *koo.eex*'.

Especially for the younger generation who has grown up with Celebration since 1982, there has also been an increase in children's participation in the dance groups over the years (Pardes, 2000a). In an interview at Celebration 2000, a dance participant says, "I've been coming to Celebration since I've been [young]...this is a huge part of my life...There are two things that are important to me, basketball and dancing" (Pardes, 2000b). This young woman identifies herself not only with dancing, but also with Celebration, which has become an aspect of her tribal identity.

Many young Tlingit spend significant amounts of time practicing for Celebration festivities. Because Celebration is a biennial event occurring every two years, there is ample preparation time, which integrates suitably into contemporary Tlingit culture due to the familiarity with taking up to one or two years to arrange a *koo.eex*'. Many families and dance groups prepare through dance practices, making regalia, and constructing traditional and contemporary wares to sell at the market. However, problems can occur when uninformed dance leaders attempt to use sacred songs and dances at the secular event. Dennis Demmert, acting president of Sealaska Heritage Foundation in 1996, explains, "The whole thing about Tlingit protocol is very complex... We are past the time

when people know it well” (Holst, 2002). Demmert also expressed frustration over how some of the elders, who were criticizing the lack of spirituality, were also in conflict between themselves over proper protocols (Holst, 2002). These cultural disagreements often perplex the younger generation who are looking to the elders for guidance.

Research participant Owen James reflects upon the problems he has had teaching traditional knowledge to the younger generation at Celebration. He explains the protocols surrounding the Peacemaker role, the Guwakaan, in Tlingit ceremony:

When I first seen it at Celebration the young ladies were using that Peace Blanket. I tried talking to them but they turned and won't listen. [They] start saying things out of anger or frustration, turned, and walked away. Later I tried talking to them about it. And later on they talked to me about it, “My father gave it to me, it's supposed to be that way.” I start telling them [about how] you have to be trained-up to use the Peacemakers Blanket. How do you tell people so you don't insult them? I thought about how to go about it. Because it hasn't been shared, they think you've been making it up. (Appendix D, lines 785-792, pp. 612-613)

Mr. James' frustration is evident because he was unable to convey his traditional knowledge to the younger generation within Celebration's secular setting. Thus, the confusion over secular vs. spiritual and the importance of cultural protocol is being lost or misused in the secular setting.

Originally, the Tlingit elders who conceived the first Celebration were considering the loss of cultural knowledge. They recognized that many of the venues once used for transmitting traditional knowledge to the next generation no longer existed

or were seriously depleted, e.g., fish camps, the avuncular system, and the adaptation of the nuclear family rather than the clan house model. The elders were searching for a contemporary venue in order to instruct the next generation. Does their instructional model, Celebration, meet the standards that the founding elders intended? Or has it evolved into a secular event because Tlingits have become more secular in their worldviews? In an article on Celebration, Sealaska Heritage Institute (formerly a Foundation) Board member Patrick Anderson commented that he adhered to a written plan in order to manage Celebration because of the size of the event. He also noted that “lots of our cultural imperatives have changed. We’ve had to make adaptations” (Holst, 2002).

Celebration, despite its perception as a contemporary Tlingit folk festival, provides a means for transmitting traditional knowledge. Through the act of interacting with others who have undergone similar experiences regarding acculturation, a sense of community returns. In the secular realm, Worl (2002) claims, “Celebration has become a vehicle for Native people to transform ancient cultural beliefs and practices embodied in song and dance to accommodate the demands of modern life” (para. 22). For some, Celebration is the consummate symbol of assimilation, yet for others it is a spiritual event, a time to celebrate being Tlingit.

### *Conclusion*

Interwoven into the contemporary Tlingit worldview are the ancestral relationships to the landscape. Traditional tribal values and ceremonial protocols establish the basis for the Tlingit person to recognize who he or she is as a member of the Tlingit social groups: moiety, clan, house, *kwáan*. The Tlingit worldview also serves as a point of reference to facilitate a sense of what it means to be Tlingit in contemporary society. Carol Williams (Appendix A) stresses, “To be Tlingit means that you do have a strong sense of pride because you have fully learned what it means to be Tlingit” (Lines 107-108, p. 418). The key point is that in contemporary Tlingit society, becoming culturally competent is a process. Venues such as culture and language camps, language nests and apprentice relationships, written literature and curricula, clan conferences, and Celebration, all offer contemporary Tlingits the opportunities for learning more about their culture. Despite assimilation and acculturation among the Tlingit, the concepts of respect, balance, and *at.óow* continue to be significant identity-defining concepts within the Tlingit worldview. Embarking on a study of these concepts, the Tlingit will encounter a wealth of self and cultural discoveries: to discover *Lingítx haa sateeyi*, we who are Tlingit.

## Chapter 6

### Ancestral Landscapes in the Narratives: Summary and Discussion

#### *Introduction*

In this chapter, I present a summary of my study: *Lingíx haa sateeyí, we who are Tlingit: Contemporary Tlingit identity and the ancestral relationship to the landscape*. First, I provide the purpose of my study, its significance and an overview of the research problem. Next, I provide a summary of my research methods and discuss the questions that lead to selecting this particular study design: the narrative format. I also point out several issues related to research within Tlingit Aaní. Then I identify the major findings in the form of narrative analyses and provide concluding remarks. I then outline my findings related to the literature: cultural change and cultural expression. I also discuss my unexpected findings: identity markers, conflicting worldviews, and changes in the mode of transmitting traditional knowledge. Finally, in the conclusion of this chapter, I present the implications for action and my recommendations for further research in addition to my concluding remarks.

#### *Summary of the study*

As explained in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study is to understand how the ancestral relationship to place contributes to identity in the Tlingit worldview. Throughout my life experiences, I have noted that many non-Natives do not take into consideration that Alaska has been peopled for thousands of years. From this perspective,



I discovered that divergent views on the Tlingit ancestral relationship to the landscape of Southeast Alaska often leads to conflicts between Western-oriented government agencies, public entities, and the Tlingit people themselves. According to research participant Vivian Mork (Appendix B):

The solution is...to become more aware of the Native peoples around them and their ways of thinking: their worldviews are different. Because despite the fact that assimilation has been going on for a long time, many Euro-Americans think that we are just like them. (Lines 98-101, p. 488)

The agencies enact laws and policies that do not consider the ancestral relationship to the landscape.

N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1994) wrote, “All clans have historical and spiritual connections to certain places in their territory that are usually the origin of ancestral covenants” (p. 861). When I read these words, I lived in Hoonah, Alaska, where my children have their spiritual and historical connections. Therefore, my research among the Tlingit first began with this inquiry: Who are my children? That one question led to more inquiries and eventually I had many questions: Who are my friends and relatives? Who will my grandchildren be? What values am I supposed to be teaching my children and grandchildren? What protocols do we follow? What happened to our language and where do I go to learn it? Ultimately, these questions solicited knowledge concerning what it means to be a Tlingit in contemporary society. I asked these questions because I am a part of a Tlingit family who struggles to maintain a sense of tribal identity in a rapidly changing society.

However, what is known about the Tlingit is often a result of outdated sources and materials exhibiting cultural biases. Often these biases develop into prejudices and even racism. Moreover, for the Tlingit themselves, an inquiry into their histories is fraught with frustration because of the often inaccurate and misrepresented portrayal in studies and literature. Therefore, I argued for appropriate literature about and by the Tlingit (see Chapter 2). In examining the literature, I established some internal guidelines: who wrote it, in what decade was it written, and what are the objectives and outcomes.

Through acting as participant observer, I document changes in the Tlingit social system as interrelated factors: the loss and struggle with maintaining the Lingít language, implementation of subsistence regulations and resultant conflicts, and diminishment of the ceremony called a *kóo.eex*' (a memorial party). As Federica de Laguna (1960) inquired:

It would be of interest to discover what aboriginal institutions or attitudes are still alive, what aspects of culture have broken down almost completely, and which ones have proved most responsive to change without losing their continuity with the past (p.7).

Next, I investigated how those changes affect contemporary Tlingit identity. The best approach to understanding the influence of those changes was to interview others from the Tlingit nation. In Cruikshank's (1998) analysis of Yukon narratives she writes, "Stories, like good scholarly monographs, explore connections underlying surface diversity" (p.1). Therefore, I collected nine personal narratives from research participants

from within the Tlingit nation. The narrative format permitted the exploration of personal histories to facilitate an understanding about how Tlingit contemporaries maintain their cultural identity, i.e., their ancestral relationship to the landscape. Research participant Vivian Mork (Appendix B) points out that “the concept of identity is different from the way most Euro-Americans view identity: viewed from the singular self” (Lines 125-126, p. 489). The narratives provide insight into the dynamics at the intersection of conflicting worldviews and the role this plays in shaping contemporary Tlingit identity.

I then examined Tlingit values and cultural competencies as well as important concepts such as balance, respect, and *at.óow*. Because there are specific Tlingit values that remain embedded within a contemporary Tlingit worldview, I inquired as to the manner in which these values are conveyed to the next generation. I then identified five contemporary methods of transmitting the Tlingit worldview and values: culture/language camps, language nests and master/apprentice programs, literature and curricula, clan conferences and Celebration.

In embarking on this study, I ascertained research considerations such as language and cultural and intellectual property issues (CIPR) as foremost, because the research participants discussed their *at.óow*, such as Lituya Bay, and the Glacier Bay story. I also became aware of the factors that could have inhibited my interviews: taboos against bragging, Tlingit property laws, and familiarity with the research participants.

Ultimately, this study was intended for two audiences: for the Tlingit themselves who are struggling with identity issues and for the agencies and general public that will

benefit from a better understanding of the Tlingit worldview including how the Tlingit maintain their ancestral relationships to the landscape.

### *Review of the methodology*

During the course of my study, I relied upon participation, observations and interviews. My role as participant observer required me to decolonize my methodologies. I participated in traditional Tlingit research methods which included observation, experience, and listening to both the natural, spiritual, and social world. I participated in the *koo.éex'*, subsistence activities, a clan conference, language immersion and cultural preservation projects and assisted in Hoonah City Schools.

The qualitative studies from indigenous scholars, Nora Dauenhauer (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1987, 1990, 1994), Oscar Kawagley (1995), Barbara Fleek (2000), and Beth Leonard (2007) led the way for collecting personal narratives. I interviewed nine research participants with open-ended questions, which led to other inquiries based upon those initial questions. I then explored the personal histories of the research participants in order to understand how these contemporaries express and maintain their cultural identity.

During the interview recording process, I used both a micro-cassette and digital recorder and took field notes. I then transcribed the interviews into the narrative format. In the final documents, I included line numbers in order to facilitate reflection and analyses. I present the research participants' narratives in appendices A, B, C, and D. Although I structured the narratives into sections, many of the subjects overlap. They are

organized as follows: Appendix A: *Glacier Bay and Hoonah Káawu: Residing in the Ancestral Landscape*; Appendix B: *Lingít X'einax'*, Tlingit *Yooxatangi*: Lingít Language, Tlingit Thinking; Appendix C: *The Contemporary Tlingit Artist and the Ancestral Relationship to the Landscape*; and Appendix D: *Contemporary Tlingit Identity and the Ancestral Landscape*.

*Major findings: Lingít haa sateeyí, we who are Tlingit*

The research participants' narratives demonstrate that the ancestral relationship to the landscape, although changed, remains a means of identifying oneself as a Tlingit. V. Mork (Appendix B) explains that a Tlingit "sense of self...belongs to something bigger than ourselves. It belongs to the culture, the Tlingit people, and knowing that we are doing something not only for ourselves but also for generations to come" (Lines 122-124, p. 489). However due to the influence of the dominant Western culture and worldview, the method of transmitting identity from one generation to another is altered. Kan's (1982) research determined that all of the "changes would require another dissertation..." (p. 411). Kan points out the main changes he observed: decline of the aristocracy as a class; weakened lineage and clan solidarity; breakdown of moiety exogamy; adaptation of nuclear family; adaptation of paternal inheritance; and the loss of language. Each of these factors plays a role in the lives of the research participants in this study. The values and worldviews that were once a part of their ancestors' lives are still valid today; however, in contemporary Tlingit culture, defining oneself as a Tlingit often comes with

choosing between two cultures that exhibit conflicting values. The narratives I collected portray the experiences of growing up Tlingit during a time of drastic cultural change.

### *Narrative analyses*

#### *Carol Williams: The oral traditions and the Tlingit worldview*

Carol Williams (Appendix A), as tradition bearer for the Glacier Bay story, bears a great responsibility because the oral tradition is a significant aspect of Chookaneidí' *at.óow*. Williams had to audition for the position of tradition bearer of this story, and in order to learn the story well, she had to retell the story to elders from the Chookaneidí' clan. The tradition bearer of the Glacier Bay Story has a significant role in assuring that the story is told accurately. Carol describes the concept of the importance of words in a teaching parable her father told her as a child. He told her that whenever she spoke, to imagine herself in a crowded room with a ten-foot stick. The stick was a symbol for her words: "If I turned the wrong way or misspoke I could hurt someone" (C. Williams, personal communication, October 2001). According to Carol Williams (Appendix A):

Words are like a stick, if you hit someone with your words, no matter what you say or do you cannot take it back. When you walk into a room, you should pretend that you are holding a ten-foot pole that will be your words. You cannot hurt anyone, bump anyone, and harm anyone with that pole. (Lines 136-140 p. 420)

The Glacier Bay Story may be recounted during special occasions and in certain contexts if special permission has been given: a reference of clan ownership. Although

there are two versions of the Glacier Bay Story, I focused on one version, the one told by Williams, who verified that six different elders told her this version. Williams claims that the story of Kaasteen and the lessons in it are important because it ensures that Hoonah's cultural traditions will continue.

For Carol, the Glacier Bay story teaches many of the values found within the Tlingit worldview. One particular lesson in the Glacier Bay story concerns respect for traditional foods: an important concept within the Tlingit worldview. According to Tlingit traditions, the misuse of food has serious consequences. In the story, the young woman "taunted what shouldn't have been taunted, what should be respected" (C. Williams, personal communication, October 2001). Another lesson found in the Glacier Bay story is the value of 'quiet obedience', which includes an aspect of cooperation across clan divisions. Williams points out, "Whatever the task, you work together, you stay together" (C. Williams, personal communication, October 2001). In the Tlingit culture, people are taught to share burdens and support each other in times of happiness and times of sadness: "That is caring. That is how grief is handled" (C. Williams, personal communication, October 2001).

Today, the heavy grieving song associated with the Glacier Bay story is used in Hoonah during the *koo.eex'*. The Chookaneidi people still feel the loss of their ancestral homeland and their ancestor. However, Williams also stresses, "You take care of each other. You do what is important because life is not all sadness. You don't spend all your time grieving" (Appendix A, line 289-295, p. 427).

In Carol Williams' version, the emphasis is on the grandmother staying behind. The grandmother accepts the responsibility for the actions of the young girl's mistake. This is an important concept for the Tlingit, exhibiting how mistakes can affect the entire community. The grandmother redeems the family and the people of Glacier Bay because in saving the younger woman, the grandmother has ensured the "biological survival of the people, but the old woman will guarantee the spiritual and social survival of the people" (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1987, p. 408). Furthermore, Williams explains the preparations that the clans made in order to leave Kaasteen and then following her death and the loss of the village, the people had to find a new place to live. This story highlights the respect for women, the respect for generations not yet born, and the preparations and expectations of each member of the clan. Williams said this accountability is typical of the Chookaneidí clan: "We try to teach that to our kids today" (C. Williams, personal communication, October 2001). Williams points out that if a Tlingit commits a 'wrong' that person would not stand by him or herself to be corrected: the whole clan is responsible.

The Glacier Bay Story serves as a reminder of a historical event and at the same time, it is a teaching story. Archeologists have uncovered evidence of villages in the Glacier Bay area, but Williams knows that the story is true because of three factors: the existence of the Glacier Bay Song: *Ishaan Gushei*; the descendants that know this story; and the Glacier Bay ceremony. When the Chookaneidí venture into the Glacier Bay area they must first make an offering to Kaasteen. Williams explains that if you are new to the



area you must introduce yourself properly to the glacier recognizing that all glaciers are living things.

In addition, sharing and working together are important aspects of the culture in Hoonah, even today. According to Williams, this act of nature [the glacier overtaking the village] had a great impact upon the people. It was devastating to the clans and their culture, but there was no animosity and as Williams's states, "No one was ready to give up. People were willing to work together. This standing together is significant because it speaks to the love that the people had for each other" (C. Williams, personal communication, October 2001). The lesson is that even though times may be difficult, things can be worked out.

The values, as outlined by Carols Williams (Appendix A) give an insight into understanding the Glacier Bay story in its cultural context. On the subject of Tlingit values, Williams stresses:

And then learning and preserving the culture is important but one of the things I learned is that how this culture has been able to survive for so long. A lot of it is the values that are taught and how we are able to accept change. And it has changed with the times and maybe we haven't adopted other ways of speaking or demonstrating our values, but we have adapted it to meet the needs of our people.

(Lines 129-134, pp. 419-420)

An aspect of the Hoonah Tlingit's historical record is the Glacier Bay story and in contemporary times, the story is a mode of transmitting traditional worldviews and the Tlingit values.

*Breanne Mork: Relating to a sacred landscape*

For Breanne Mork, Glacier Bay is a sacred landscape, though the landscape is experienced differently by her than by research participants Carol Williams and Sam Wright. Breanne actually lived in Glacier Bay during one summer as well as lived in Hoonah. Essentially, hers is the same story, but as Cruikshank (1998) points out, “what appears to be the “same” story, even in the repertoire of one individual, has multiple meanings depending on location, circumstance, audience, and stage of life of narrator and listener” (p. 44). The historical references to her ancestral homeland connect Breanne to the oral traditions, through both a historical story and another story from contemporary times. B. Mork (Appendix A) explains, “My ancestors and the clans related to my people were the first ones who lived there. We were here first—The Tlingit people, and we lived on this land that had all this food, and wood, and water” (Lines 7-9, p. 429).

Despite government-imposed limitations, Breanne’s family and clan has remained physically and spiritually linked to Glacier Bay. In the article, *Person and Place: Lessons from Tlingit Teachers*, Thomas F. Thornton (2000) describes the connection to *at.óow* as an “organic link” to a place that is owned by a clan (p. 80). The Tlingits are connected to the land, including Glacier Bay and Lituya Bay, through *at.óow* articles such as button blankets, vests, and masks. When a Tlingit dons a button blanket, depicting a place owned by their clan, such as Glacier Bay, or hears a story about their ancestral homeland, the landscape literally becomes a part of their social being.

For many Tlingit, living away from home while acquiring and maintaining a sense of one’s ancestral landscape is difficult. For example, to maintain a sense of Tlingit

identity, Breanne traveled to Alaska to attend Celebration, visit family, and to partake in subsistence activities. However, the struggles from having to interact in two worlds is apparent for Breanne, as her college experiences have included conflicts with identity:

Being from Alaska is... being Tlingit is, I guess, an exotic thing to other people. It's a big part of me. When I am in class, every semester people think it is cool... Sometimes I tell them I'm Native, but sometimes I get dirty looks. Depending on the people sometimes I get dirty looks. (Lines 209-214, p. 438)

Throughout Breanne's narrative, there is the perspective that it takes an effort to maintain a relationship to one's culture if one is separated from the landscape. Breanne describes the conflicts concerning living away from her ancestral landscape: "I think it would be nice if I learned the language... because I am not surrounded by it, it's harder" (Lines 264-267, p. 441). Breanne feels a pressure from, or obligation to, other family members to learn more about the Tlingit culture: "It seems as if she [my sister] is trying to push it on me. She thinks that if I don't learn it I am letting my family down, my culture down and other family members down" (Lines 298-300, p. 402).

Breanne, like many contemporary Tlingits, chooses specific identity markers in order to keep a connection to her culture. Breanne identifies with the language, Tlingit songs, and her ancestral landscapes: Glacier Bay and Lituya Bay. These physical and tangible things are aspects of her tribal identity, i.e., T'akdeintaan identity. Breanne relates to her landscape through earthquakes and waves: "There are lots of earthquakes in this area. A part of our stories. There is a story about one of my relatives. An uncle who rode out one of the biggest tsunami waves" (Lines 22-24, p. 430). Breanne's connection

to the landscape is through the oral traditions including a family tragedy that documents a historical event:

Our stories come from that area which means that we come from there. Near there is the Fairweather Mountain Range. Where Raven did some of his creations. And a place that is supposed to be where Raven lived. He lived in that area. And in my own family, my great aunt died in the area of the Alsek River. In Dry Bay it is dangerous there. Anna was out fishing and they never found her body, only her skiff. (Lines 119-124, p. 434)

In the Tlingit worldview, a sense of sacredness derives from the loss of life in that particular landscape. According to B. Mork (Appendix A), “That is how places become sacred. When there is a loss of life. When someone dies things can become sacred. So it makes the places even more sacred” (Lines 123-125, p. 434). In her narrative, B. Mork also discusses the concept of sacred and what that means to her. There is a variety of stories that links her to a particular landscape:

We have stories of death, tidal waves, Raven creations, glaciers. And we have the one about the glacier crushing a village, and giant octopuses. These stories are a part of us: Lituya Bay, Glacier Bay, Hoonah. All these places are a part of me, my clan. (Lines 125-128, p. 434)

Breanne (Appendix A) also uses poetry to express hers and her father’s disconnect with the culture and the landscape. The poem, *Tlingit Aani*, recalls her own longing to be home as viewed through her father’s eyes, “I close my eyes/inhaling the

memory.../Yet here I am fastened/with steel rings in cement/climbing the white man's totem pole” (Lines 355-362, p. 445).

For Breanne Mork, relating to a sacred landscape is many-layered and is expressed through her poetry and the oral traditions, both historical and family accounts. Breanne recognizes the importance of her Tlingit identity and her relationships to the landscape, “I still feel a connection to that place. It is a part of our *at.óow*, which means our sacred place. We have sacred places and this is the Tlingit's sacred place” (Lines 12-14, p. 429). Breanne's ‘identity’ as a Tlingit is maintained through writing, the language and visits to her ancestral homeland.

*Sam Wright: Living in a landscape of change*

Research participant Sam Wright's (Appendix A) life reflects struggles with living in a landscape of change. For Sam those changes are cultural, spiritual, and physical. Sam maintains his Tlingit identity through learning the Tlingit language, his continued participation in Hoonah's cultural activities, and as a mentor to the younger generation. In addition, for Sam, studying the Lingít language has opened up a new level of understanding the Tlingit worldview.

A majority of Sam's worldview seems to be in how he conceptualizes the changes in the Tlingit culture: change in family interactions and changes in the traditional *koo.eex*; changes in his physical self. Sam rebelled against cultural change in his early youth, which led to difficulties throughout his young adulthood. Nevertheless, as a young man Sam claimed an intimate connection to the landscape:

...learning all the trails and playing games taught me how to run around in the woods, but then for me that was just part of my peace. See I had to work all my life. One of my favorite places is right back here. I found this one place that was just perfect: it was a perfect circle inside the woods. (Lines 141-144, p. 454)

Typically, as young men, some Tlingits experience the landscape through a combination of commercial and subsistence activities. Throughout his narrative, Sam expresses the significant changes in commercial fishing and subsistence laws causing him to lose his ancestral connection to Glacier Bay. Due to closures in the Hoonah region, Sam was forced to fish with relatives in the lower regions of Southeastern Alaska. Eventually, when the government opened up fishing areas around the village of Hoonah, Sam had to relearn his ancestral landscape:

And I fished five years down there in Ketchikan. So I know Ketchikan like the back of my hand. I know were all the rocks are, I know the whole shore. I know all the way down to Union Bay all the way up to Wrangell...all the way up. And I was only 12-years-old running around. When I was 17, it finally opened up here, and I had to learn new country, my own. (Lines 167-171, p. 455)

Sam's knowledge of his ancestral landscape increased to include knowledge about the habitat of the Glacier Bay halibut, Inian Islands tidal activity, deer hunting, and the ceremony, the *koo.eex'*. Constant interaction with the landscape for his livelihood created an intimate relationship.

This relationship to the landscape, including his traditional training with his mentor Mrs. Joe White was interrupted by an accident that left Sam a paraplegic. He was

recuperating and rehabilitating in Anchorage but felt the draw to return to his homeland: “Then I broke my neck and I ended up there then I came back” (Lines 606-607, p. 475). It was the love for fishing, hunting, and his culture that drew him back to the village of Hoonah. Sam explains how he “...wanted to come back for my family. A lot of my family wanted me to come back. For me, I felt too I was losing a lot of my culture. A lot of my culture was being lost because I wasn’t fully in tuned” (Lines 600-602, p. 475).

Sam describes his relationship to his ancestral landscape as a sense of being ‘fully in tuned’. And, in order to become ‘in tuned’, Sam turned to participating in the *koo.eex*’ and learning the Lingít language. For Sam, the *koo.eex*’ remains an important aspect of his identity. Kan (1982) emphasizes, “Among other things, there remains a very strong sense of distinct cultural/ethnic identity maintained, to a large extent, by the older generations and through the annual memorial potlatches” (p. 411). In regards to some Tlingit family’s decisions on whether or not to conduct the ceremony, Sam explains, “It was sad [because] they didn’t even have a party for him. Usually they would have some kind of party or something for him, even if he wasn’t here. They never did nothing for him” (Lines 111-114, p. 453).

Although Sam has survived a debilitating injuring making him a paraplegic, he continues to view his role as a teacher to the younger generation. Sam perceives a traditional role as uncle and teacher. Sam and his fiancé Lily accompany young hunters in their van out the logging roads. Sam sits in his wheelchair inside the back of the van and instructs the young hunter about where to go and how to track a deer. Sam also contemplated how to go hunting with his disability. He describes his plan:

I've even been thinking about getting a tripod, and put velcro underneath it for the gun and just go cruise around on my wheelchair and go where it's kind of flat. I know there's a couple of places where that crick is that road going up there. There's some real nice spots up there, with lots of deer. Oh there's a few places where it's just real flat. It goes about a quarter of a mile. I was thinking of putting a tripod, like for a camera. We'll just put it up like that, with the velcro it will just stick like that on the tripod. Yeah, I've been thinking about it for a while. I'll try to borrow my brother's gun and just go practice somewhere. (Appendix A, lines 346-353, pp. 463-464)

Sam's worldview involves sharing food, language, and his hunting and food preparation skills with others. His traditional foods are linked to his involvement in learning his Lingít language, which includes hosting language immersion dinners at his home where the participants only speak in Lingít and traditional foods are served. Sam (Appendix A) explains the role that traditional foods plays in Tlingit upbringing and continues to be a factor in his identification as a Tlingit:

But the food, I never knew how important it was until later on. When I was growing up, I would think of it as work, it wasn't as much as tradition. This is what I'm supposed to be doing for my culture. I sat there, 'I have to get up I have to go get a deer.' (Lines 539-542, p. 472)

Sam's relationship to the physical landscape is limited by his disability; and although his life as a hunter was drastically altered, traditional subsistence foods are a major portion of



his diet. Sam retains a significant amount of traditional knowledge regarding subsistence food preparation.

Through Sam's narrative, it is evident that he has maintained an ancestral relationship to the landscape, although altered significantly from his ancestors 100 years or even fifty years ago. Moreover, despite his physical disability, the adverse effects of cultural change, the loss of Glacier Bay as a subsistence site, changes in the *koo.eex'* and changes in traditional Tlingit clan structure, Sam remains committed to learning more about his culture and giving back to his tribal community.

*Vivian Mork: Lingít language, Tlingit thinking*

Vivian Mork's (Appendix B) narratives in *Lingít X'éináx, Tlingit Yooxatangi: Lingít Language, Tlingit Thinking* provide a glimpse into the struggles that ensue with a search for identity. For some Tlingit, the loss of language and the inability to identify oneself with the Tlingit culture manifests itself with a barrage of social illnesses, e.g., alcoholism, abuse, and identity issues. Vivian's narratives are also reflective of the differences in worldviews between the dominant Western culture and the Tlingit culture, and how those differences influence every aspect of life.

Vivian's first narrative, *Educational experiences in a non-traditional setting*, discusses the complexities of receiving a college education in an academic setting that promotes the Western worldview including the expectations of the dominant culture in regards to a college education. She was informed by an instructor that her writing style, "was 'illogical' and that my thoughts were not set up on a logical way. Eventually, I

found out the instructor wanted my paper set out in a very linear order that didn't make sense to me every time I sat down to write" (Lines 57-60, p. 486). Interestingly, college played a role in re-contextualizing her Tlingit identity because many of those involved in the revitalization of the language first began to learn in the university setting. In addition, many of these students took courses on Tlingit culture, e.g., anthropology, linguistics, Alaska Native languages, and Cross Cultural Studies. The college experience bonded Vivian to other Tlingit students:

College has helped me learn about my culture and a sense of identity though. Learning the language has helped a whole group of us Tlingit students. It has helped us find a stronger sense of self that isn't singular. The sense of self we have belongs to something bigger than ourselves. It belongs to the culture, the Tlingit people, and knowing that we are doing something not only for ourselves but also for generations to come. (Appendix B, lines 119-124, p. 489)

In her narratives, Vivian also discusses the effects of the boarding school generation on her generation including how it affects her teaching the Lingít language. Nora Dauenhauer stresses, "Our language is the vehicle for the culture. We need to document and preserve it for our grandchildren. We need to share what we do have with them" (Christianson, 1992, p. 53). Therefore by sharing their knowledge through language and culture the elders are facilitating their grandchildren's' and great-grandchildren's healings. V. Mork claims that for her and others involved in the revitalization effort, learning the Lingít language has 'saved' people from self-destructive behaviors.

For Vivian, in teaching the Lingít language she is faced with an ancestral past that includes the abuse of her elders in addition to a culture that experienced many radical changes which affected how her own relatives viewed themselves as Tlingits. One of Vivian's narratives describes the transgenerational trauma of boarding schools, "Many Tlingit elders were punished for speaking their language in the classroom, but now we encourage them to participate" (Appendix B, lines 309-310, p. 498). Moreover, one of the ways that Vivian identifies as a means to healing from historical trauma is, "...that Indigenous languages taught in the public school system have the power to free Indigenous minds from the Western worldview" (Lines 325-326, p. 498). Thus for Lingít language teachers it is important to look at the world through Tlingit eyes, i.e., the Tlingit worldview. And by intimately exploring and then knowing this worldview a deeper sense of Tlingit identity emerges.

Interestingly, Vivian also uses poetry to reflect her feelings and frustrations over being unable to speak the language. From her poem *Haa Shagoon*, which means: our ancestors, "Who do I turn to/when my grandparents/can only tell me/what they learned/ from boarding schools?" (Lines 777-781, p. 519). And in the poem *Civilized Indian*, she plays with the irony about how someone from the dominant Western culture perceives the Tlingit as being assimilated. In the poem, she uses the Lingít word *eeshaan*, which means 'poor thing' and then tongue-in-cheek thanks the Russians from first contact; the Norwegians from her own heritage, and the America of the colonizers. As well, in the poem and in her life, there are still struggles within and against the dominant culture:

Civilized Lingíts still fight/ the Dleit Káa invasion (*Dleit Káa*, lines 692-693, p. 515). As reflected in the poem the impact of tourism is linked to the colonizing past.

Vivian uses traditional oratory in a contemporary venue: reciting poetry. She recites her poems, without reading, to audiences within the public school system as well as other cultural settings. None of the poems have been published in the written medium, yet they are becoming ‘known’ in the Tlingit oral traditions. Her poetry, similar to the oral traditions, tells stories and lessons to the next generation. In addition, the poems are an act of remembrance so as not to forget the historical trauma and to remember to grow stronger.

Vivian also explains the barriers to learning and teaching the Lingít language in the dominant society, pointing out that:

...resistance to teaching from the Tlingit point of view reveals prejudices against Tlingit language and culture. Some people think anything that has to do with the Tlingit culture, is ‘evil.’ Even our language is evil. (Lines 327-320, p. 499)

In addition to missionary pre-conceived notions, Vivian identifies the struggles with teaching from the Tlingit worldview as political because if you give Tlingit people power over their own lives, ‘politically’ the power-struggle will shift from the dominant Western culture to the Tlingit people (see Appendix B, pp. 17-18).

Despite the barriers, in her narratives Vivian describes her teaching her students the language as successes, because it “offers them a sense of connection” (Line 412-413, p. 502). Vivian is offering a generation the tools to heal from generational trauma and form a healthier sense of Tlingit identity:

The whole assimilation, being separated, being in two worlds, and how when you start to learn the language, you start to find out about who you are. And then you start learning that the Tlingit people have been here 10-thousand years at least. That kind of sense of connection to everything around you it helps you have that sense of belonging. You know who you are you know who your ancestors are you know where you came from. You have that and no one can ever take that away from you. (Lines 413-419, p. 502-503)

For Vivian, learning the Lingit language offered the opportunity to heal from her identity crisis and in turn, she is offering healing to her own students. Thus by showing her students how to examine the Tlingit worldview through language, she is connecting the students to their ancestors.

In the Tlingit culture, a sense of well-being is inherently linked to an internal worldview and language. For Vivian, the discovery of her tribal self first emerged through learning the Lingit language, thus strengthening her ancestral relationship to the landscape. In addition, participating in language nests, master/apprentice programs, and language and culture camps, allowed Vivian to reconnect with her tribal heritage. Vivian was also afforded the opportunity to learn more about her culture and language at the University of Alaska Southeast, a new mode of transmitting cultural knowledge. In turn, within the public school system, Vivian taught the next generation of Tlingits about their culture, utilizing curricula developed by herself and Sealaska, in addition to the texts written by Nora and Richard Dauenhauer.

*Teri Rofkar: Journeying with the ancestors' knowledge*

Teri Rofkar (Appendix C), a T'akdeintaan weaver, identifies herself with her ancestral landscape through her grandmother, Grandma Eliza. For Teri, Grandma Eliza's spirit is always present through the act of weaving. Also, in accordance with a traditional Tlingit worldview, some families believe that aspects of the deceased personality is reincarnated in the child who is named after the ancestor. Teri reflects on her Lingit name that connects her to two previous generations: "I actually have her Tlingit name that my grandmother gave me....it was the same name as my auntie Anna" (Lines 13-14, p. 521).

Teri's identity is directly related to her vocation as a weaver: the weavings are a spiritual and physical manifestation of who she is. According to Teri, "And I am very meshed in what I do, it's a part of who I am" (Lines 102-103, p. 525). For Teri, the landscape is alive through the daily practice of weaving. The techniques behind the process: the gathering of roots, the splitting process, handing the roots, and weaving, all connect the Tlingit to his or her ancestors. The gathering of materials 'takes her on a journey'— a journey to visit the ancestors (p. 522). And this 'journey' is a multi-generational one. For many Tlingit an ancestral landscape holds a multi-layered generational meaning. For example, Teri describes her relationship to the trees that provide the roots for basket weaving. She explains how the trees have 'known' her family for many generations, "Some of the trees I visit are several hundreds of years old; they have known my family for many generations. The 'Tree People' have helped me in my journey as a weaver" (Rofkar, 2007, para 3). Teri's heritage connects her with her ancestors, "who have been weaving baskets and ceremonial regalia on this coast for

thousands of years. In the Tlingit culture, we recognize that not only people, but animals, plants, objects, and places all have spirits” (2007, para. 3). It is these relationships with the present forest that connects the weaver to their ancestors.

For the weaver, recognizing the patterns in her ancestors baskets links her to her Tlingit worldview and the intimate relationships to the landscape. Teri (Appendix C) describes the tidal pattern on one of her baskets:

And I’ve heard it described in both tides or waves. And the tides are ...like lines of black seaweed along the beaches as the tide come in and goes out... right now you can go out and see if it’s not too stormy, you can see those two lines of seaweed. And it’s that imagery. And... with waves and the essence of movement isn’t necessarily literal, so if you’ve ever been on a swell, when there’s a chunk of wood that floating, you kind of go down into the trough and you don’t see it and you come up and you see it and then you go back down and you don’t see it. But it doesn’t mean that it isn’t there, you just are not seeing it. So tides includes essence...(Lines 494-504, p. 543-544)

For Teri, there is a sense of intimacy when she describes the intricate detail that she sees in the landscape, a detail that was shared by her ancestors. Teri still sees the bare spots on the bark, still walks in the same places, weaves the same patterns, and uses the same techniques her ancestors did. Thus, the ancestral landscape is rich with relationships.

Teri’s art in itself is a ‘relationship’ and it is one that she chooses to share with others. Teri explains how she has a relationship to the landscape through the baskets she encounters in museums:

I could almost close my eyes and smell the spruce that's coming to life in the spring. It's that moisture that's coming out of the ground and those fresh, clean, new spruce roots that have been growing all winter; those are in that basket. That basket may be one hundred years old, sitting in a museum on the east coast, but it's still in there. I guess that relationship is so many times captured in it's...it's an entity that is not only a way for myself to have an example, but it's always a way that I can share my relationships with others, and for me I think that's part of art is all about. (Appendix C, lines 109-116, pp. 525-526)

Just as the ancestral relationships are important to Tlingit identity, so are contemporary relationships. From Teri's perspective, it is important to have her weaving reflect the contemporary lives of the Tlingit to have meaning today. To Teri, 'traditions' are for the present generation and these 'traditions' are always being recreated for new participants, evolving to suit the values that are important to the next generation. The robes and the baskets she weaves today have as much significance as the older totem poles and art of the past. Teri claims that, "If I want this to be alive, it needs to be alive today. So that those younger people that I'm teaching, maybe they are in their 20s or 30s, can take ownership" (Lines 95-97, p. 525). Although realizing that someday her work will be considered *at.óow*, she wants today's young adults to claim ownership now to enjoy the robes and weavings.

The creation of the Lituya Bay robe and the Earthquake robe are examples of creating meaning from the past as stories are interwoven into the patterns. The earthquake robe contains symbols of Alaska's 1964 9.2 earthquake. Teri describes her patterns as



guides to ‘remember’ and ‘recognize’, thus the robes are a living map to the past. In addition, the Lituya Bay robe (see Rofkar, Figure 7, line 445, p. 541) contains “powerful, strong, incredible images with huge legendary events. The robe had to be equally that” (Lines 117-118, p. 526). Included in the images are tidal patterns, blue-green ocean swells, and bear tracks. Bears are the spirits of the people who have been drowned at the head of Lituya Bay, where there exists a dangerous tidal current and waves that are notoriously known for swamping boats. In the Tlingit worldview, the spirits of the drowned in Lituya Bay are transformed into bears.

The many-layered worldview of the Tlingit is evident in the narrative contributed by Teri Rofkar. Teri’s relationship to the landscape remains alive through her spiritual relationship to her grandmother, her auntie, and the unknown weavers who left their mark on the trees. In addition, she maintains relationships to the ferns and the spruce roots that she harvests for her baskets, adhering to traditional Tlingit protocols that recognize the spirit-in-all-things, *haa shagéinyaa*.

*Clarissa Hudson: Weaving into a state of grace*

Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) uses her art to define who she is within contemporary Tlingit culture. Her worldview is a blend of contemporary and traditional. She is a Chilkat robe weaver, as well as an artist who works with glass, beads, fibers, and paint. Her ancestral relationship to the landscape is evident in her passion for weaving, and the colors, shapes, and patterns in her contemporary creations reflect an intimate spiritual and physical intuition and relationship to her ancestral landscape. Clarissa points

out that “It is a total physical, spiritual, [and] emotional experience for me [that] I can tap it” (Lines 77-78, p. 550).

Clarissa is a T’akdeintaan woman and aspects of her identity are linked to her mentor weaver, Jennie Thlunaut. Jennie’s spirit and her daughter Agnes Bellinger, also deceased, are ever-present in Clarissa’s life. For example, her print *Shax’saani Kéek’ Weavers Circle* created by Clarissa and her husband Bill Hudson, super-imposes the image of Jennie on the body of a man in a Chilkat Tunic. The man in the old photo is a relative of Jennie Thlunaut’s. The faces of the contemporary weavers are set where the spirit faces on the robe should be. This print contains a multi-generational layer of meaning through the unknown woman who wove the tunic (probably one of Jennie Thlunaut’s aunts or a grandmother), the man who was photographed wearing it, and through Jennie, whose face is transposed in the print. The print reflects the weavers that Jennie taught. For Clarissa, this print is, “representing people carrying on a tradition...[the print] is crossing time and generations” (Lines 398-403, p. 565 ).

Clarissa’s work appears to contain a spiritual theme, although this might not always be apparent to the novice. In Clarissa’s painting of Katlian, upcoming on the cover of N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer’s *Battle of Sitka* (due 2008), she depicts Katlian wearing a Raven’s tail robe. In the robe, she incorporated various elements of an older robe that was once worn by Katlian, but added her contemporary perspective. The painting is surreal because it crosses time boundaries. Katlian is portrayed in a historical event readying for battle, but in the painting his head is turned and he is looking over his shoulder making direct eye contact with the viewer. Clarissa stresses that Katlian is also

looking at the warriors behind him (who are not in the painting) on the beach. She emphasizes that Katlian, as well as the painting, "...link[s] the past, present and future generations, crossing time and space" (2005, p. 41). Clarissa (Appendix C) explains:

What it looks like is that he [Katlian] is standing there by himself, but he is not. He is standing there before his men on the shore. all his men are behind him and he is looking at them. We have come a long way to this very moment, to the battle we have prepared ourselves for. We may not come home safely, we may be wounded, or die, but we have prepared ourselves emotionally, physically, spiritually, Our family members know this. We are here to defend our culture, our people, our survival. (Lines 122-128, p. 552)

Clarissa's work tends to blend her ancestral tribal identity with a contemporary perspective.

Clarissa, like many contemporary Tlingit artists, searches older artists' works to understand what constitutes Tlingit or Northwest coast art. Clarissa's search for knowledge has recently taken her across the country to the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) to study dance regalia, specifically Chilkat weaving. For Clarissa, the research was emotional because "I felt I was visiting my ancestors and my relatives, who in my mind and heart are very much alive" (Hudson, 2005, p. 49). Every time she sits at the loom, she is 'visiting her ancestors.' In this study, Clarissa narrates an account of the concept of *at.óow* to the weaver who is potentially weaving a piece that will be passed down from generation to generation. Both the women weavers in this study identify themselves with the elder woman who taught them how to

weave. Even after the elder dies, the weaver still maintains a relationship with the teacher.

Clarissa's narrative reflects an ancestral worldview as one who desires to connect herself to the landscape through her creations. She reveals her struggle with living in a contemporary society that doesn't acknowledge relationships:

It could come from Taiwan or be made in China or over in India, but I don't know who those people are who made it. They're not my relatives, sure they are other human beings, but I don't know who they are, where they live, what they are paid, nothing, I am totally disconnected. The only thing that connects me to them is that there is a label that says it's a country way over on the other side of the world.

(Lines 21-28, pp. 5457-548)

For Clarissa, her weavings, art, and other creations, contain authorship, a sense of identity and relationships. When Clarissa's children were young she made their clothing; For the artist within Clarissa, her children were 'wearing' her. This sentiment is in line with Clarissa's Tlingit worldview as evident in the *koo.eex* because when a person drapes an ancestor's *at.óow*, e.g., a Chilkat robe across their back, one is literally wearing a particular ancestor. For artist Clarissa Hudson, her art contains stories, oral traditions, and historical references signifying the worldviews of the Tlingit. In many of her pieces, there is a theme of transcending time and space reflecting the past to the present generations, thus forming an intimate relationship to the ancestral past.

Clarissa's narrative explains the struggles concerning living in an intimate tribal and extended community in Southeastern Alaska. She also reflects on her reasons for

choosing to move outside of Alaska to focus wholly on her art. As an artist she feels one has to be in the right place, both physically and spiritually, in order to weave. In regards to her role as a teacher Clarissa adheres to specific protocols, some traditional and some new. Some of these protocols include: rules regarding weaving circle patterns, absence of human hands, barring men as students, only teaching indigenous peoples or those with a specific relationship to the landscape (Northwest Coast), and preparing oneself to weave through the abstinence of food. In addition, Clarissa recognizes that learning to weave contains a sense of following a path, and encourages apprentices that there is "...a toddler stage and you are clumsy..." (Lines 519-520, p. 570). Clarissa explains that a novice weaver has to allow herself to be clumsy because this beginning stage is a time of grace:

...because you are just weaving into a state of grace—chose the grace. Why?

Because some day your hands will just fly, your spirit will just soar and you'll go to places you never even knew were there before. (Lines 520-523, p. 570)

This 'grace period' or state-of-grace has allowed Clarissa to explore her own creativity through moving outside of Alaska and giving herself a time to discover the extent of her artistic creativity. This time of grace has also allowed her to become Jennie's apprentice and in turn, the experiences provide her the opportunity to be a teacher to others and to share her ancestors' knowledge.

Clarissa's narrative also explains how important it is to maintain the traditional values found in her culture. She claims, "...there must be agreements among the people involved to identify the values and traditions and make the commitment to actively

maintain these things...” (Lines 609-611, p. 574). Clarissa actively maintains her tribal values through teaching others and through her art.

*Owen James: Haa atxaayí, our food is our lifestyle*

One of the living examples of the Tlingit value of sharing is the *atxaayí kusteeyíx sitee* of research participant Owen James (Appendix D). Many Tlingit communities in Southeast Alaska rely upon a few people to provide *atxaayí* for a large portion of the community. Owen is considered one of Hoonah’s major subsistence providers. To the Tlingit, when you share your food, you are sharing with your ancestors (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990, p.35). In the Tlingit worldview, *atxaayí*, (food) is steeped in protocols, among them sharing with the ancestors which is accomplished through partaking in the *atxaayí* (as activity). In the Tlingit culture, the concept of sharing relates to food gathering, distribution, and to community and cultural wellbeing.

For Owen sharing is a significant aspect of his identity as a Tlingit. Sharing, *atxaayí*, ceremony, and family are very important concepts in the Tlingit worldview. In the Tlingit culture, sharing is part of the *kusteeyí*, way-of-life. Many aspects of the Tlingit culture are connected to the idea of sharing resources. Thus, sharing of food creates balance in the life of the subsistence hunter/fisherman as well as the community. In contrast, in the eyes of the Western world, the subsistence lifestyle is often viewed as an activity for poor people. Yet, it is often those who have financial means that are able to go out and hunt and fish for local families. In addition, many of the Elders who rely upon *atxaayí* consider themselves blessed because they continue to enjoy their traditional

foods. They are provided for by local fishermen and hunters like Owen, who supply them with fish and deer meat.

Although Owen is not an elder in terms of age, his knowledge reflects that of an elder. He is a tradition bearer for *haa atxaayi haa kusteyix sitee*, our food is our way of life. For many years, Owen raised six children on mainly *atxaayi*, however, because Owen is now employed in the tourism industry, he has less time to go out and hunt and fish. This influences not only his own household, but also others in the community who rely upon providers such as Owen. It also affects the *koo.eex*' because it often takes a year to provide enough to serve the hundreds of people who attend the *koo.eex*'. Owen's father, Kelly James, died two years ago at the age of 104. One of Owens's duties is to supply a huge amount of subsistence foods for the attendants which will likely amount to hundreds of people.

In essence, by giving and sharing with others, a Tlingit person is maintaining their ancestral relationships to the landscape, the place where they were created to be. "Subsistence foods are valued and saved for distribution at the *koo.eex*' ...[with] special hunts...undertaken by the men..." (N. Dauenhauer & R. Dauenhauer, 1990, p.55). Thus, subsistence gathering is essential to not only the physical community but also the spiritual and social community.

Owen James' traditional knowledge about his landscape is extensive. Most of his knowledge is built upon generations of learning. Owen says that he learned this knowledge from "My grandfather and my father, through my grandfather when he was growing up he learned...from his father, my great-grandfather" (Lines 505-506, p. 600).

Owen is also ingenious when it comes to developing upon his ancestors' knowledge:

I can say where I learned how to call a seal, part of it was from my father and the other part was when my son was a little baby. When I was listening to him crying. When he started crying, "aaa, aaa," he sucked the air in. Then I was listening to him...(Lines 404-407, p. 595).

Although Owen learned in the traditional manner from his father and played a role in teaching his son and his nephews, changes in the Tlingit culture have resulted in variations in modes of transmitting traditional knowledge. Today Owen (Appendix D) uses a combination of traditional transmission mixed with the contemporary cultural camp venue:

Now we have culture camps that teach kids who do not have anyone available to teach them. If Hoonah Indian Association creates a culture camp here in Hoonah, I will enjoy teaching the kids. I taught at a culture camp in Kake. It taught them survival too. (Lines 189-192, p. 585)

Despite the change in the mode of transmission, Owen still feels that it is his responsibility to pass on his knowledge. Thus, Owen's lifestyle exhibits the valued Tlingit concept of sharing, for without his *atxaayi* activities many people would do without their traditional foods. Owen's relationship to the landscape is maintained through his subsistence lifestyle. His life reflects the epitome of a contemporary *atxaayi* provider.

Although Owen is best known for his subsistence activities, he identifies himself most with being a dancer and a teacher of traditional dance. In Owen's narrative, he



shares a miraculous recovery from a childhood illness that left him unable to walk: “I was supposed to be a paraplegic when I was growing up. I didn’t start walking until I was seven-years-old” (Lines 724-726, p. 610). By watching and observing the elder dancers, Owen learned how to dance. He explains how “the other kids used to run around they chased them out because they were too noisy. I paid attention to everything they were doing. And so that’s how I learned to native dance. I learned the different styles of dance” (Lines 741-743, p. 610).

Dancing is another aspect of tribal life that Owen hopes to pass on to the next generation. Owen’s narrative discusses the difficulties with teaching traditional knowledge to the younger generation:

And they start teaching different things, how to go about it, how to solve problems, how to talk about it. The only thing about it you see, a lot of things I want to say, but I don’t say it because a lot of folks don’t want to listen anymore: ‘That was way back then.’ (Lines 774-777, p. 612)

Owen James’ traditional knowledge is extensive but he struggles to balance his new job in the tourist industry with his obligations for providing food to the community. Owen also recognizes the changes in the Tlingit culture in regards to dance protocols and ceremonies. He noticed that at Celebration, the younger dancers are breaking protocols. Owen strives to teach his traditional knowledge in a changing culture and has had to adapt his teaching skills to the camp setting. His reward is that he has successfully taught his extensive repertoire of traditional knowledge to Tlingit children whom otherwise might not have learned.

*Mitch Mork: Contemporary Tlingit identity*

Mitch Mork (Appendix D) was raised with an *atxaayí kusteeyíx sitee* and fished commercially as well. Mitch's family, like many Tlingit families, relies upon commercial fishing for income and to supplement their diet with traditional foods. Many times, though, this relationship to food and the landscape is altered due to having to leave home to pursue an education or jobs. Because for many Tlingit food is an important aspect of identity, this can be problematic especially if their landscape has drastically changed.

For modern Tlingit, a reliance on *atxaayí* is connected with traditional knowledge that has been passed down from generation to generation. Mitch describes his subsistence education:

My dad [taught me to hunt]. [The] first hunting we ever did was on Zarembo island near Wrangell... We would go out on three wheelers on these logging roads and look for deer and go up in the woods. It was a lot of fun, I loved it. And then there weren't a lot of deer, but they were big deer. Then we moved to Sitka and we started running the beaches in our boat in Hoonah Sound, and there was lots of deer. Lots and lots. We got boat loads of deer and shared them with all the family when we brought them back. My dad taught me how to blow a deer call with the blueberry leaf. How to make one out of branches and leaves or branches and a rubber band. That's always been useful...(Lines 36-44, p. 615).

Technological advances such as four-wheelers and gas-powered boats provide a greater opportunity to pursue subsistence activities because hunters and fishermen are able to go longer distances away from home. Many now supplement commercial fishing with

another job. Mitch and his dad were able to go out on weekends to hunt and fish. Again, sharing food was an important part of his upbringing. When Mitch and his dad went hunting, it was a part of their belief to bring the deer meat back to share with others.

Today, Mitch believes that the skills he learned hunting and fishing, mainly problem-solving, work well with the engineering field. Mitch does not view his newly gained scientific knowledge as incompatible with his traditional knowledge. He blends newly acquired scientific knowledge with his traditional knowledge. Mitch explains, “I’ve taken about 30 science courses. I understand why things act the way they do. That’s kind of neat. I can calculate everything” (Lines 130-131, p. 620). Mitch’s identity as a Tlingit has its roots in his new-found scientific knowledge in addition to his relationship to the landscape which his narrative describes as ‘passionate’, i.e., a genuine love and respect for the landscape.

Technology has allowed today’s Tlingit the ability to move through their landscape easier and to live in other areas of Southeast Alaska away from their original tribal lands. Having to learn a new landscape in youth was a similar experience for research participants Sam Wright and Owen James. Mitch’s narrative discusses the difficulties with leaving the ancestral landscape, as well as moving to a new area and having to relearn a new landscape:

When I moved from Wrangell, where I knew all the beaches and places, to a new place, Sitka, it sucked... But I went out hunting a lot and we would go crabbing and I drove every time, the boat and I learned my way around pretty well. And that’s how I learned the water around there. (Lines 163-167, p. 622)

Although Mitch learned to hunt and fish from his father and his uncle, many of the taboos and traditional values related to hunting and fishing were nonexistent. However, in Mitch's family, the belief in the landotter man, the *kooshdaa kaa*, is evident in the oral traditions of his family. Mitch relays an actual event that happened to his great-grandparents:

[They] were out hunting near Wrangell somewhere and they were in the woods and it was starting to get dark and they were heading out of the woods, you know how in the woods it gets darker earlier? And their skiff was on the beach, or their boat. And they heard wolves howl and they turned and looked because they were still in the woods, right at the shoreline and they looked up at the horizon, I mean up on the hill and there was some wolves. Three or four of them, running on the thing. And when they turned and looked, they saw the wolves stand up and walk like men, and they got really scared and they ran the rest of the way out onto the beach. (Lines 150-158, p. 618)

The ancestral landscape is connected through a variety of experiences with the landscape and through the oral traditions. Mitch related his great-grandparents' story to an encounter he had with wolves while out snowmobiling.

Mitch also used his ancestral landscape to heal himself from the effects of his parents' divorce. Mitch said that "after my dad left...I stopped going out on the water and I still didn't go in the woods at all, or that much...that's when I moved down to Washington and I missed it. And I came back and I started learning about the woods a lot" (Lines 167-170, p. 622). Therefore, Mitch recognizes the healing properties in his

ancestral relationship to the landscape. Mitch left Alaska briefly to attend college in Washington State, but returned several months later because he missed his homeland. Now he actively maintains a relationship to the landscape that is reciprocal in nature:

But for the most part I think I just missed it [the landscape] so much that when I got back to it, I realized how awesome it is and I don't want to disrupt it, so I try my best not to impact it too much. It makes me mad when people don't respect it. All the time I pack out garbage. (Lines 107-110, p. 619)

Mitch also reflects on how his spirit and mind prepare for the next season. He views the sign of dreaming about bears as a signal to start getting ready to go hiking and camping. "When it's spring and I'm starting to think about camping more in the summer time getting excited about that, bear encounters start happening in my sleep" (Lines 141-143, pp. 620-621). Like his clan relative Teri Rofkar (See Appendix C), Mitch instinctively looks for signs in nature to guide him to another season. Teri uses these subtle 'signals' to prepare for gathering roots for weaving. Mitch uses these signals to ready himself spiritually, physically, and intellectually for the tasks that he must do each season.

Today, Mitch uses the medium of photography to reconnect him to the landscape (See Appendix D, Figure 8, p. 614). Through this medium, Mitch is able to notice the smallest details in nature, taking pictures of raindrop patters in ponds and on leaves or shadows of the devils club plant in the forest. Being a photographer also affords him the opportunity to experience nature thus reconnecting himself with a sense of his ancestral

landscape. Mitch claims, "...I love being outside. I would much rather be outside than inside, any day, all day, even if it's raining" (Lines 63-71, p. 617).

In Mitch's family there is a long line of commercial and subsistence fishermen., Mitch is the first male in his paternal side not to use fishing and hunting to supplement his lifestyle. Still, for Mitch, experiencing the ancestral landscape is more than a physical occurrence: it is the most significant part of his identity as a Tlingit.

*Elizabeth Martin: An elder's cultural landscape*

Research participant 92-year old Elizabeth Martin (Appendix D) identifies heavily with both her Japanese and Tlingit heritage. Her mother was a Tlingit woman from Angoon who married a Japanese man who came to Alaska to work in the canneries. Elizabeth experienced early childhood in Killisnoo, a community that no longer exists. After a fire destroyed the cannery at Killisnoo, her family moved to a location near Angoon, a small Tlingit village on Admiralty Island. Elizabeth lived her childhood in Angoon and spent her adulthood in Alaska's state capital, Juneau. Elizabeth's experiences are varied, but her narrative reflects upon the changes in the Tlingit culture through showing how things were done in the past. Elizabeth claims, "Now everything is modern. But in Angoon, I like the beach and everything. It was something. I see a lot of changes" (Lines 196-197, p. 633).

For the Tlingit, traditional foods are a common identity marker. Elizabeth recalls learning traditional knowledge that is still used today:

I used to go with my dad to hunt and we shot a deer; we had to split it. I couldn't pack the whole thing. I had to pack some of it on my back. And then he trapped, we used to go pack the traps on back of us. (Lines 81-83, p. 627)

For Elizabeth, there were fond memories of gathering traditional foods and she still relies upon acquiring specific seasonal foods.

Cultural conflict occurred within Elizabeth's household as a result of her Japanese father who didn't want the children exposed to certain aspects of the Tlingit culture. Her father and the local school played a role in discouraging specific cultural practices including the language:

I went to school in Angoon and no they [the teachers] weren't [mean] because we were half, we weren't full blood Tlingits. We weren't all white. We couldn't speak Tlingit in school. We would get into trouble, so no we never did. I grew up speaking Tlingit. My mom spoke it a lot. My dad didn't like it. (Lines 492-495, p. 646)

The basis of missionary policy was that Alaska's Native language could not adequately express concepts within Christianity; therefore, English was the language of the civilized society (R. Dauenhauer, 1997). Children were punished and even beaten for speaking their own language. In the Tlingit culture, this loss is still felt today through the trans-generational impact of cultural traumatizing. Those that did adapt to a Western lifestyle suffered from confusion because in smaller villages like Angoon, a 'traditional' life was still adhered to and changes in dress and lifestyle were frowned upon. Elizabeth's childhood reflects one of being an outsider in many ways, because her family did not live

in the village but on the outskirts. Also, a 'Western' influenced life at home conflicted with the life in the village. Elizabeth points out:

We had good clothes and the reason why is some of the kids who were jealous of us in school, we dressed the best to go to school with good clothes on. But those kids they didn't have good clothes, that's why they didn't like us very much.

(Lines 77-80, p. 627)

Another missionary policy that appears to have influenced Elizabeth's worldview is that 'cleanliness is next to godliness'. She describes her grandparents as being 'clean':

They were so old, but still they were clean. They couldn't stand up like this, they were hunch back like this, but they were clean. She would sit on the floor with her knees and wash the floor. That's how clean they were (Lines 90-94, p. 628).

It appears that Elizabeth's narrative makes a distinction between how she was raised, outside of the village setting somewhat, with the others in the village. "I remember she [my mother] always used to go to Angoon and go with some of the Indian people dancing, you know" (Lines 232-233, p. 633). Elizabeth did not want to learn traditional dancing when she was young, identifying with her father who didn't want to learn as well. This distinction between the "Indians" who lived in town and themselves seems to be due to her father's insistence on adopting the Western culture and choosing to live a distance from the center of the community.

Elizabeth's father had trouble adjusting to a traditional lifestyle once he moved from the village of Killisnoo to Angoon:



My mother used to try to teach him how to fish halibut and how to cut the heads off the fish. And he use to get mad, "I'm not an Indian," he said "I don't like it, god damn it! I want to go home." He didn't want to learn, but he finally did after a while. It took him quit a while to get used to it. It was hard for him. Yeah, my mother used to try to teach him to filet halibut. He said, "I'm not an Indian."

(Lines 242-247, p. 635)

There seemed to be a clear distinction between what her father perceived as an "Indian" lifestyle from his own traditions, although Elizabeth fondly reminisces about her father's ingenuity for adapting to life outside of the cannery setting.

Elizabeth also used the term 'American' to distinguish the 'Indians' from the non-Natives (pp. 59-60). Similar to other Tlingit families with mixed ancestry, Elizabeth chose to identify with certain aspects of her Tlingit heritage. Elizabeth describes how she experienced the discrimination by people who made the distinction between her family and those who lived in the village. Elizabeth explains, "They didn't like us for some reason...they didn't care for us very much because we weren't full Indian... discrimination" (Lines 40-41, p. 625).

A part of her identity as a child living in the village of Angoon, however, reflects a traditional worldview: "I'm Raven and I'm part of the bear house too. There are two different houses. My Tlingit [name] means I'm an Island Mother" (Lines 2-3, p. 622). After she moved to Juneau, her clan identity shifted to a more urban and contemporary one due to her involvement with the Alaska Native Sisterhood, which she fully identifies with. She is a member of Grand Camp 2 in Juneau.

Like most elders, she reminisces about difficult times and misses her relatives who have died. Elizabeth's relationships to the landscape are tied to traditional subsistence ways, yet those ways of life are no longer in existence in the city. Elizabeth also correlates hard work with a good life. "That was the olden days. Nowadays, everything is so modern compared to then" (Line 187-188, p. 630).

It is hard to imagine life in Southeast Alaska in 1915, during a time of great cultural change. At that time the Tlingit still relied heavily upon a subsistence lifestyle, but many lives were influenced by the intrusion of large cannery operations, as was Elizabeth's mother. Some of these canneries, like Killisnoo, offered Tlingits jobs and transitioned them to a Western cash economy. In her lifetime, Elizabeth experienced the loss of her subsistence lifestyle, loss of language, and because her family were somewhat 'outsiders' Elizabeth wasn't able to fully participate in the tribal life of Angoon, essentially the *koo.eex*'.

#### *Narrative analyses and concluding remarks*

Significant changes in the Tlingit culture have influenced contemporary Tlingit ancestral relationships to the landscape. However, the research participants' narratives demonstrate that the ancestral relationship to the landscape remains a significant means of identifying oneself as Tlingit; yet each participant expresses this relationship in a variety of different ways.

- Carol Williams' identity is linked to the spiritual and physical landscape of Glacier Bay through her ancestor, Kaasteen. Carol's role as tradition bearer

allows the oral traditions to thrive so that the next generation can maintain an ancestral relationship to the Glacier Bay landscape. For Carol, the Tlingit values are an important aspect of her individual and tribal identity. She also uses the public schools system to transmit Tlingit values to the next generation.

- Breanne Mork is connected to her ancestral landscape through a historical rendition of a family story, through her studies about her own culture, and how she conceptualizes herself in relationship to other Tlingits. She also makes a conscious effort to re-identify herself as a Tlingit each time she returns to her homeland. Breanne's professional goals are to help other Native children who were bullied in school and are having trouble living in both worlds.
- Sam Wright maintains a sense of tribal identity through participation in the traditional Tlingit ceremony, the *koo.eex*'. Sam Wright adapts to a new life with severe physical boundaries, yet strives to learn more about his culture through language and the *koo.eex*' protocols. In addition, subsistence foods, activities, and language acquisition provide Sam the means of identifying himself as Tlingit.
- Vivian Mork reconnected with her Tlingit identity through language instruction and literature. Every new word she learns brings her a greater understanding of her ancestors' worldview and draws her closer to her ancestral relationships. Vivian writes poetry reflecting the trauma over losing her language and trying to learn it again. She connects to her ancestral landscape through learning her Native language and teaching what she has learned to others.

- When Teri Rofkar weaves a robe depicting a place from their ancestral lineage, she literally becomes the landscape. When she rolls the mountain goat hair, pulls the ferns from the soil and the cedar bark from the trees, she is physically and spiritually sensing her ancestral landscape. Teri Rofkar's ancient weaving methods provide a link to her ancestors and yet she weaves robes with both a contemporary and a historical significance.
- For Clarissa Hudson, the link between the corporeal and the spiritual is thinly veiled, and the past and present blur so that she is able to tap into her ancestral relationships in order to create her unique artwork. Her ancestors and mentors are a very real aspect of her identity as a Tlingit.
- Owen James' relationship with his ancestral landscape is evident in his subsistence lifestyle and his extensive knowledge of the environment. Owen's lifestyle connects him to his ancestral landscape through relying heavily upon traditional Tlingit knowledge in regards to a subsistence lifestyle.
- Mitch Mork's identity is inherently linked to the natural world and he uses the medium of photography to capture the intimate details of his landscape. Mitch blends his scientific knowledge with traditional knowledge and intuition, and views his ancestral landscape through direct interaction.
- Elizabeth Martin remembers a life of living off what the landscape offered her family, thus her traditional and multi-cultural life are an aspect of her identity. Elizabeth has survived nearly 100-years of cultural change, thriving in the world that has transformed around her.

*Common factors*

The common factors in these narratives are many-layered. First, traditional clan identity is varied, but the landscape as identity is still evident. Some of the common factors I have identified are an ancestral link to Glacier Bay, the concept of mentor/relationships, food as cultural identity, and the physical landscape's role in healing.

The first common factor is that there remains an 'ancestral covenant' between Glacier Bay, Lituya Bay, the village of Hoonah, and the research participants. The oral stories in the Tlingit culture, including the Glacier Bay Story, provide a vital link to their history. This story links most of the research participants to their ancestral homeland: Carol Williams, Vivian Mork, Breanne Mork, Mitch Mork, Clarissa Hudson, Teri Rofkar, and Sam Wright.

The second common factor among some of the research participants is that even though the avuncular system for teaching the next generation is no longer actively sought, there is evidence that the research participants either assumed the role of mentor or sought out apprentice relationships to further their own learning. For example, in the women's narratives, Teri and Clarissa reflect on the elder women who have shaped their own lives, either through mentorship or familial relationships, and a spiritual relationship is maintained even after the elders were deceased. In Clarissa's (Appendix C) reflection on the presence of her mentor Jennie she explains, "She is not dead and gone. That woman is powerful and she knows how to travel between the worlds" (Line 336-337, p. 562). For Carol Williams, her elder/mentor is the Chookaneidí ancestor, Kaasteen. The

spirits of their ancestors still play a vital role in their contemporary art, whether through inspiration, remembrance, or providing strength and inspiration. In addition, Breanne also draws strength from identifying with the other well-known T'akdeintaan women in this study: Teri Rofkar, Clarissa Hudson, and her sister Vivian Mork.

A third common factor is the importance of traditional foods to Tlingit identity. According to Carol Williams (Appendix A):

Eating your traditional foods is like perpetuating the culture; you know how to gather it, you know how to preserve it, and you know how to enjoy it. The food is there not for show, it is there for your enjoyment and when you use it in a good way it gives back. (Lines 190-193, p. 422)

Several of the research participants made references to sharing their traditional foods as an aspect of their upbringing. For Carol Williams, the Tlingit protocols about food are transmitted to the next generation through oral traditions such as the Glacier Bay story. Owen James' life is about traditional food gathering, preparation, and sharing: "I raised my whole family on subsistence foods. And I learned that there are seasons for everything..." (Line 139-140, p. 582).

Moreover, although Sam Wright has experienced physical changes that don't allow him to pursue a 'traditional' subsistence lifestyle, his Tlingit foods still play a significant role in his identity as a Tlingit. According to Mitch Mork, "I try to eat as much traditional foods as I can... of course I'm going to teach them [my children] how to go out" (Appendix D, lines 189, 193, p. 623).

Elder Elizabeth Martin's knowledge of traditional food preparations define how she perceives herself as being Tlingit. In addition, when Breanne misses home it is the 'food' to which she refers.

A fourth common factor is reorientation of oneself to the landscape in order to provide healing. All of the male research participants experienced some form of separation from the landscape in their young adulthood or youth and subsequently had to reorient themselves to their homeland or to a new landscape. This reorientation was a form of healing for both Mitch Mork and Sam Wright. In addition, for most of the research participants 'studying' their culture and ancestral relationships brought some form of healing into their lives. For Vivian Mork, learning the language and the Tlingit worldview closed a gap in her identity. Clarissa Hudson uses her art to bridge the disconnect she feels when she is away from her ancestral landscape. Clarissa (Appendix C) says that she has "...been disconnected, yet connected by way of art and spirituality, disconnected from the land, from my food source, very important...It's important to make my way back home..." (Lines 66-68, 82, pp. 549-600).

In conclusion, each of the research participants' narratives reflects the ever-present changes in the Tlingit culture. However, the narratives provide evidence that the landscape is inseparable from contemporary Tlingit identity.

*Contributions from the literature*

*Cultural change*

Changes in language, subsistence, and ceremonies are evident through the exploration of the literature by and about the Tlingit. Through examining the literature, one realizes the extent of the cultural changes since first contact. N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (1987, 1990, 1994) documented narratives, Tlingit oratory, and oral traditions in the midst of cultural change. The work of these volumes helps one to understand the complexities of the Tlingit culture: the *koo.eex'*, Tlingit oratory, the oral traditions and *at.óow*. Most of the elders in their narratives discussed the importance of carrying on traditions. Nevertheless, for many of the research participants in this study, the role of the elders in their lives has changed. Some of the older relatives experienced the boarding schools; others no longer practice subsistence lifestyle. As well, the data recorded by de Laguna (1960, 1972), Emmons (2002), Kan (1989) McClellan (1975) Cruikshank (1990, 1998), Hope (1982), and Hope and Thornton (2000) provide valuable information on the Tlingit culture in the midst of change.

Similarly, Thornton (1995) discerned that changes in language, material production, and social organization affected how the Tlingit interact with their landscape (p. 6). In contemporary Tlingit culture, orientation towards the ancestral landscape continues through the Tlingit values and worldview as reflected in the perspectives of research participant Carol Williams (Appendix A). The distinctive ways in which the research participants identify themselves as 'Tlingit' reflect the cultural changes they experienced. Although the research participants are culturally a part of a social group,



i.e., a clan, their individual experiences differ. For example, the members of the T'akdeintaan clan all experienced their ancestral landscape in various ways (B. Mork, appendix A; V. Mork, appendix B; Rofkar, appendix C; Hudson, appendix C; M. Mork, appendix D). Tlingit identity is dependent in part upon what communities they grew up in, i.e., the level of assimilation and acculturation in that particular community, and whether or not they grew up in a blended Tlingit and non-Native family.

As Joyce Walton Shales (1998) identified in *Rudolph Walton: One Tlingit Man's Journey Through Stormy Seas, Sitka, Alaska, 1867-1951*, changes in the larger society ultimately influence how one perceives his or herself in relation to tribal and individual identity. Literature such as Ernestine Hayes' (2006) memoir, *The Blonde Indian*, provides the opportunity to study the complexities of growing up mixed-ancestry in a Southeast Alaska community in the midst of change. Research participant Sam Wright (Appendix A) experienced a similar troubled childhood due to changes in the larger society, i.e., in both the Tlingit culture and the dominant Western culture. In addition, Nora Marks Dauenhauer's (2000a) collection of poetry and prose in *Life Woven with Song* documents a clash of worldviews, in regards to the use of the Lingít language, subsistence rights, and ANCSA.

### *Cultural expression*

There are a myriad of ways that contemporary Tlingits exhibit their ancestral identity. However, Newton and Moss (2005) clarify that, "The Tlingit *atxaayí* way of life is just one of the many ways the Tlingit people have reasserted their Native identity,"

(p.2). The values perpetuated with the *atxaayí kusteeyix sitee*, our food is our way-of-life (subsistence) are changing in regard to how food is prepared, caught, and who is able to participate. However, the spiritual, ceremonial, and social, connection to traditional foods is evident in this study (S. Wright, appendix A; O. James, appendix D).

Older ethnographic studies recognized a sign of civilization through ‘identity markers’ such as speaking English, growing potatoes, (Krause, 1956) and not participating in fish camp (Shales, 1998). In comparison, the Tlingit adaptation to the dominant Western culture illuminates specific cultural competencies. For example, for some Tlingit the recognition of certain art forms is an important aspect of knowing their culture. Other forms of cultural expression, such as the Lingít language provides research participant Vivian Mork with a clear identification of what it means to be Tlingit.

Aldona Jonaitis (2007) explains that the contemporary Tlingit artists continue to struggle with the expression of Tlingit identity. The expression of Tlingit identity is evident in the research participants Teri Rofkar and Clarissa Hudson’s narratives (Appendix C). In Clarissa Hudson’s narrative she explains how the landscape holds specific cultural information that the artists express through their art forms:

In every Indigenous culture, there is a physical path, a so-called art form that holds information, the essence of that landscape. It holds specific knowledge and information that is unexplainable yet explicable and put it into words, its not about words, it’s another level of intellect: it’s an energy. (Lines 276-279, p. 559)

Cultural expression, whether through art forms such as weaving or literature, seeks to counteract the dominant society’s preconceived notions about the Tlingit. An inquiry into

Tlingit identity through cultural knowledge is a common occurrence. Jonaitis' (1986) research draws a correlation between the secular/social world and the spiritual/ceremonial world. The artists' narratives in this study appear to show an interrelatedness of the sacred and secular rather than a clear demarcation. And especially in contemporary Tlingit society, there appears to be a desire to bring sacred cultural expressions into the dominant society's secular venues. Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) explains the role of the artist in bridging the gap between the sacred and the secular in contemporary society:

Without even realizing it, perhaps, artists sometimes find themselves in a leadership position. They are a "voice" in the breath of any culture, breathing forth new life and new ways of looking at the world, while acknowledging where they come from. (Lines 573-575, p. 573)

In the Tlingit worldview, the landscape shapes the community as much as the community shapes the landscape. Mitch Mork (Appendix D) claims, "I would imagine, I think being Tlingit affects your relationship to the land. There might be some subconscious thing in there, but I just feel like I love it" (Lines 178-179, p. 622). A majority of the research participants in this study maintain an ancestral relationship to the area surrounding Glacier Bay including Hoonah and Lituya Bay. Thornton (1995) claims that "to be born Tlingit means to be placed in a sociogeographic web of relations indexed by geographical names" (p. 295). Knowing your place as a Tlingit through geographical research is a new method of looking at the ancestral landscape. Maps that include narratives from the perspective of the Tlingit provide an in-depth look into the ancestral

relationships to the landscape. Breanne Mork (Appendix A) points out:

I would probably try to learn the language if I moved back here. Maybe I would learn more about the culture. I think it is interesting the place name maps. The real names of things. Glacier Bay has several names. (Lines 330-332, p. 444)

Moreover, through studying Tlingit place-name maps, the changes in the Tlingit worldview become apparent in addition to the adaptation to the Western worldview, e.g., the cash society, subsistence laws, and cultural property laws. Importantly, the language on the maps comes alive with meaning: a sense of revisiting the ancestral worldview. According to research participant Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) the sense of the ancestral landscape is a movement between the spiritual and the world that is revealed at a specific time in history:

...the veil between the worlds is very hidden and information that needs to be retained that it's not proper for it to come in certain times in that cultures' history, remains maintained and protected in a sense until that culture is ready to receive it. In every culture, in every Indigenous culture there is this movement. (Lines 282-286, pp. 559-600)

In addition, research participants Owen James, Sam Wright, Teri Rofkar, and Breanne Mork all make references to their ancestral identity through familiarity regarding their clan's migration routes (see O. James, appendix D; S. Wright, appendix A; T. Rofkar, appendix C; B. Mork, appendix A). Clan affiliation with the land is strengthened through intimately knowing the landscape and provides an important step towards restoring the ancestral relationship. Cultural expression then is evident in *knowing* the landscape in a

multi-layered sense: thorough oral traditions, migration stories, subsistence activities, language, and through the art forms that consistently recreate the Tlingit landscape.

### *Unexpected findings*

#### *Identity markers*

Attempting to define Tlingit identity can be problematic; therefore the ‘identity markers’ as defined by N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (2004) are important to understanding cultural change. Because cultural change is often subtle, people are mostly unaware that they are experiencing a cultural shift; and people unconsciously choose certain aspects of their cultural identity over others. According to N. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (2004), Tlingit society is changing from a *gemeinschaft* society, which is the state of being when a person’s identity is determined at birth, as in Tlingit matrilineal heritage, to a *gesellschaft* society in which a person can decide where they belong. The Dauenhauers argue that the Tlingit, who are now experiencing cultural shifts, are able to select their identity markers or ‘badges of ethnicity’ ” (p. 263).

In her Angoon study, de Laguna (1960) perceived that the Tlingits who were college graduates, teachers, town officials, and even commercial fishermen, were somehow estranged from their clan heritage and traditional values. Thus, at the time of her study, de Laguna already had preconceived notions about *who* the Tlingit were. One of the results is the assumption of assimilation into mainstream Western culture.

According to Clarissa Hudson (Appendix C) adapting to change is essential for the survival of the Tlingit culture:

Since time immemorial we have adapted to many changes: changes in the environment; changes when war broke out amongst neighboring tribes; changes when the Asians came across; changes when the Westerners arrived and stayed, installing new laws and boundary lines. Change is constant. We are still here because we have been able to adapt and become part of a bi-cultural society.

(Lines 591-595, p. 574)

The narratives provided by the research participants in this study explore these theories, questions and preconceived notions. For example, does learning the Lingít language make one a Tlingit? Is a person less Tlingit if he or she attends college to learn the ancestral language? Does one still have a relationship to the ancestral landscape if he or she does not reside there? How does a subsistence lifestyle influence identity despite the cultural changes? How does the knowledge of ancient basketry and weaving make one ‘Tlingit’? And as each narrative explores the topic of Tlingit identity through the ancestral relationships to the landscape, does the larger Tlingit culture recognize these aspects of contemporary identity?

Through acting as participant and observer in many Tlingit functions ranging from schools to culture and language camps and the *koo.eex*, I discovered the validity of Dauenhauers’ claims. Through many anonymous conversations I have heard similar statements: Our family doesn’t participate in those ceremonies, referring to the *koo.eex*. I also noted defensiveness regarding learning the Lingit language. Other comments such as “Indian ways,” “old ways” or “Native ways” regarding specific cultural activities convey a sense of detachment from identifying oneself as Tlingit. In my own familial

experiences, comments range from, “I am not ‘Indian’ enough to eat stink-heads” to “We do not participate in those Native things.” These comments suggest that for some there are specific activities, foods, and ways of knowing that define one as being Tlingit.

### *Conflicting worldviews*

Throughout this study, I repeatedly encountered the dynamics of conflicting worldviews between the dominant Western culture and the Tlingit. The narratives provide insight into the dynamics at the intersection of conflicting worldviews, and the role this plays in shaping contemporary Tlingit identity.

Tlingit ways of knowing is a form of consciousness that differs from modern industrial Western society. For example, separating the human element from nature upsets a cultural balance and is one of the primary differences between these worldviews, ultimately affecting subsistence laws. In the Tlingit worldview, there are numerous marine animals that are important to the *haa atxaayí haa kusteyíx sitee*, food and way of life, of the Tlingit people. A Tlingit elder once told me that seal oil is Tlingit “soul food” (Anonymous personal communication, 2006). Moreover, for the Tlingit, the ‘subsistence’ life, *haa atxaayí haa kusteyíx sitee* is related to Tlingit spirituality.

Tlingit leader Rosita Worl (2007a), President of Sealaska Heritage Institute says, “There is this long-term relationship with the oceans and here we see the development of very complex cultures in the Northwest coast region because of the rich maritime resources” (*Unique Tlingit curriculum*). Thus, the current subsistence laws are ‘artificial’ and do not reflect the worldviews of the Tlingit people. Newton and Moss (2005)

describes the perception of the Tlingits as, "...culture blend[ing] together and incorporate[ing] the physical and biological environment so successfully, that the division between the 'natural' and the human world seems artificial (p. 37).

Conflicting worldviews are also apparent in the historical trauma resulting from the boarding schools, in addition to the contemporary English-only laws. These factors are apparent in implementing Tlingit language worldviews and language in the public schools. It is also the reason why conflicts occur during daily interactions with Tlingit and the dominant Western society. Thus, through examining the values, protocols, and concepts within the Tlingit culture, I have sought to understand and identify the differences. Contemporary Tlingit identity still reflects the tribal past, as many Tlingit still recognize themselves by their moiety or clan identity first. For humans, identity is both an external and internal construct. In the Tlingit culture, social identity is connected to the *Shuká*, the past, present and future ancestors. The Tlingit sees himself or herself as part of a whole: the whole in relationship to the past, the present and future, i.e., the complete ancestral landscape.

Concerning the *koo.eex'*, the early missionaries perceived the *koo.eex'* as conflicting with their Christian worldview. Thus, changes and diminishment of this ceremony was a direct result of diverging worldviews. Today the conflicts that remain regarding whether or not to practice this ceremony and its importance in perpetuating Tlingit identity are primarily reflected within the Tlingit community. Yet these conflicts have emerged from the influence of the dominant Western culture.



The differences in worldviews are also apparent in how the Tlingit describe the concepts of balance, respect, and *at.óow*. Exploring these concepts provides an insight into how changes in these concepts might affect future generations. For example, when my own children are told to ‘respect their elders’ it doesn’t simply mean ‘don’t speak with disrespectful words’, it usually means some form of ‘action’, e.g., continuing to practice proper oratory protocols to learning about one’s culture.

The differences in worldviews are also apparent through examining the adaptation to new methods of transmitting cultural knowledge to the next generation. Many of these newer modes of knowledge transmission are adapted from a combination of Western worldview and Tlingit worldview, e.g., the implementation of Celebration. In addition, implementing Tlingit values and language into the public schools is often confronted with conflicts between the dominant Western worldview and the Tlingit worldview. As research participant Carol Williams (Appendix A) stressed, “The Tlingit values system shouldn’t be confused with religious values systems. It’s our guide in how we live...how we make decisions, how we take care of each other” (Lines 242-245, p 425).

#### *Changes in the mode of transmitting traditional knowledge*

During this study, I researched Tlingit worldview through examining the Tlingit values, protocols, and significant concepts: balance, respect, and *at.óow*. I then explored how this knowledge, including a sense of Tlingit identity, is being passed down to the next generation. I discovered that for many elders, disseminating traditional knowledge to the next generation is often fraught with conflicts. In Alaska during the 1800s, the

missionary effort and the implementation of the boarding schools as a means of educating and assimilating Native children altered the Tlingit traditional mode of knowledge transmission. The Tlingit worldview was essentially altered through a shaming process, and the outcome was severe internal conflict often resulting in self-destructive behavior (Bradshaw, 1998).

Bradshaw (1998) claims that the internalization of shame creates the feeling that the person is “flawed and defective as a human being” (p. 41). For some elders there is a reluctance to talk about these painful experiences. There is a sense of confusion created in elders when they are invited into the schools to teach their language to the new generation because they were forbidden to speak the language in the past. Thus, a basic understanding of the boarding school experience is essential to grasp the reluctance some elders have with teaching the Lingít language in the schools. This history affects those who are able to assist the instructors or volunteer in the schools. It also influences a large population of what is termed ‘dormant speakers’, i.e., those whose first language may or may not have been Lingít, but who understand the language though aren’t able to speak it. Paul Marks, as quoted in a Juneau Empire article, describes the dormant speaker:

It's like a person who is wounded who is starting to feel better now...we weren't talking before. It's like we were in a coma. Now we're waking up. It's because of the younger people who are excited about it and asking. If it wasn't for them, why would we want to continue on? (Fry, 2003)

Despite the past atrocities, however, many elders are stepping forward to help a fresh generation of speakers/learners/instructors learn and teach the Lingít language. For many

Tlingit, language is an integral part of their identity. Today, cultural and language immersion camps, language nests, and university settings are all venues for learning the Lingít language.

Although the *koo.eex*' still remains a vital aspect of Tlingit culture and an important mode of cultural transmission, it has adapted to changes within the culture. The changes in language acquisition and transmission of cultural knowledge through the *koo.eex*' are interrelated. Traditionally, the *koo.eex*' was where many of the oral traditions were heard, particularly the ones that are a part of a clan's *at.óow*. And as explained by Carol Williams in her narrative (Appendix A), the oral traditions are a traditional method of transmitting cultural values. Yet today, the Glacier Bay story is often passed on in a school setting on a venture into Glacier Bay National Park during an annual trip sponsored by Hoonah City Schools and the National Park Service.

As my argument suggests, changes in the *koo.eex*' and its diminishment in cultural importance to the Tlingit individual or family results in a significant loss of Tlingit identity. Therefore, the loss of oratory and its function in Tlingit culture has a definite influence over how transmission of knowledge occurs. And, the loss of oratory is directly related to the loss of the Lingit language. In the *koo.eex*', there are fewer people who are able to speak the Lingit language because there are fewer fluent speakers to pass it on.

In addition, due to adaptation to the Western nuclear family model rather than the clan structure, many contemporary Tlingits rely on explicit instructions regarding the transmission of cultural knowledge rather than implicit behaviors. As a result, written

literature is taking on the role of transmitting traditional knowledge over oral tradition. Scholarly venues, such as the Sharing Our Knowledge Conference and Celebration, also contribute to cultural renewal and the transmission of knowledge. As well, knowledge about composing traditional songs, naming, subsistence and food preparation is being passed down increasingly through the cultural camp medium.

These changes occur in context with one another, not as separate factors and have forced contemporary Tlingits to re-contextualize his or her identity. According to Vivian Mork (Appendix B) “the concept of who we are is not concrete. Native people are not stuck in time. We have the right to change and still be ourselves just like every other culture in the world” (Lines 597-599, p. 511). Identity markers, differences between the dominant Western culture and the Tlingit worldviews, and changes in the mode of transmitting traditional knowledge all imply that contemporary Tlingits do not view themselves as ‘Tlingit’ in the same way that their grandparents did even fifty years ago.

### *Conclusions*

#### *Implications for action*

This study attempts to understand how the ancestral relationship to the landscape contributes to identity in the Tlingit worldview. The narratives provide insight into the dynamics at the intersection of conflicting worldviews and the role that plays in shaping contemporary Tlingit identity. The narratives also provide the opportunity to change prevailing beliefs about the Tlingit. Foremost, the target audiences for this research are members of the Tlingit culture, who are able to speak with their own unique voices.

Moreover, because values are difficult to define outside the context of the culture itself, this study provides a guide for a person from within the Tlingit culture who is searching for information about the Tlingit worldview.

Researching a contemporary relationship to the ancestral landscape among the Tlingit contributes to the genre of Native American and Indigenous literature. The body of knowledge also contributes to the fields of Cross Cultural Studies, Alaska Native Studies, and Education. The study provides a multicultural perspective, establishing a foundation to begin studying the Tlingit culture. As well, government officials, public schools, academics, and the authors of public policy must understand how worldviews influence the laws and policies they create. Ray Barnhardt (1997) suggests:

What is necessary, is a recognition that such differences do exist, an understanding of how these potentially conflicting cultural forces can impact peoples lives and a willingness to set aside one's own cultural predispositions long enough to convey respect for the validity of others. (pp. 1-2)

Thus, a realization that not everyone, even in America, thinks from the same frame of reference, nor should be required to, is an eye-opening experience. What is necessary is recognition that such differences do exist and an understanding of how these potentially conflicting cultural forces can impact people's lives, including the formation of their identity.

*Recommendations for further research*

More research needs to be conducted from within the Tlingit culture, by Tlingit tradition bearers, which includes, though not all-inclusive, educators, academics, medical professionals, politicians, scholars, and writers. In addition, Tlingit scholarship should be encouraged in the areas of language curriculum, traditional ecological knowledge, creative writing, e.g., the memoir, and other scholarly and academic pursuits.

As well, during the course of acting as participant/observer and gathering the interviews, numerous subjects related to identity arose. Among these are the struggles of the after-borns, i.e., Alaska Natives born after the Native corporations were formed under ANCSA. Another related inquiry is how the use of blood quantum by the BIA and/or tribally implemented identity cards affects identity. Importantly, we need an investigation into Tlingit identity for those who do not have clan affiliation due to their biological father being Tlingit and their mother a non-Native. Moreover, how do the Tlingit who are living outside of their original homeland, e.g., Anchorage and Seattle, maintain their Tlingit identity? An inquiry into urban Tlingit identity would be worthwhile.

Ethnic studies similar to my own investigation provide unique perspectives about our contemporary world. Although my viewpoint is one from a multi-cultural family, a non-Tlingit mother with Tlingit children, I suspect there are many more issues that families similar to mine face each day. One of the issues I ascertained is the complexities regarding the important concepts within the Tlingit culture. Many concepts arose that I didn't completely understand, such as *at.óow*, a concept featured in this study. Because my family lived in a community that did not practice the *koo.eex'* many of the important

concepts were either lost or could not be explained for one reason or another. As well, concepts such as *Shúka*, *haa Shageinya*, and *Shagóon* necessitate further exploration by someone who is ethnically Tlingit.

### *Concluding remarks*

The narratives drawn upon in this research provide insight into the dynamics at the intersection of conflicting worldviews and the role this plays in shaping contemporary Tlingit identity. In contemporary Tlingit culture, the ancestral relationship to the landscape contributes to identity. The narratives also demonstrate that there is a sense of individual and tribal identity remaining among the younger generation, although far removed from their great grandparents' generation. In a changing society, Tlingits are creating new ways of knowing and understanding their culture: they are re-contextualizing the ancestral landscape in contemporary Tlingit culture. Today, the Tlingit not only look to their ancestors to form a sense of identity, but to their contemporaries as well. These are the voices, the contemporary lives of the Tlingit. These voices say: We are still here, we who are Tlingit, *Lingíx haa sateeyí*

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## APPENDIX A

Glacier Bay and Hoonah *Káawu*: Residing in the Ancestral Landscape

In this chapter, I include three narratives concerning the ancestral relationship to the landscape. These three research participants all have ancestral ties to the community of Hoonah and the surrounding region. Hoonah, Alaska is the largest Tlingit village in Southeast Alaska and is located on the northern tip of Chichagof Island in Frederick Inlet. Hoonah has a historical link to Glacier Bay National Park. These narratives examine relationships to Glacier Bay National Park, but from the perspectives of members of different clans and generations.

The first narrative is provided by Carol Williams. Carol currently resides in Hoonah, Alaska. Carol is the Title IV director at Hoonah City Schools. The second narrative is presented by research participant Breanne Mork. Breanne is a twenty three year old who is currently attending Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. Sam Wright provides the third narrative. Sam is in his late 40s and is in a wheelchair due to an accident that left him as a paraplegic.

*Carol Williams: The oral traditions and the ancestral relationship*

According to authors Richard and Nora Dauenhauer in *Haa Shuka* (1987) through stories and traditions, “We begin to learn who we are, no matter who we are” (Preface *Haa Shuka*). The Chookaneidí maintain an ongoing spiritual and organic link to the Glacier Bay area. In this first section, I focus on one story, the story of Glacier Bay, which includes the Chookaneidí ancestor Kaasteen. This narrative illustrates the high value placed upon the oral traditions, and the role the oral traditions play in the identity of the Chookaneidí.

The second narrative provides Carol’s interpretation of the Tlingit values. This narrative provides a means to understanding the ancestral relationships to landscape, including the role these beliefs play in shaping contemporary Tlingit identity.

*The Glacier Bay story*

When a young girl reaches maturity there was a ritual that the young girl went through. She was put in seclusion, separate from the rest of the clan. Her aunts and friends attended her to. She was prepared for womanhood by learning  
5 patience, cleanliness, strength and endurance. Because the clan realizes that young women are going to be mothers and they will be the first teachers of their children, out of respect for the new door she will walk through, they will put the woman through this ritual. There was a lot of respect. Fine foods were put aside for her and the finest furs were used for her bed, to ensure that she went through this ritual with  
10 no hardships.

At night the young girl was able to go for walks. One evening when she was eating her meal, she took a bit of dry fish and just like a person who calls a dog—*koos, koos, koos, koos*—she called the glacier. She taunted the glacier with a piece of dry fish. That night people could hear and feel a rumbling. No one knew what  
15 had happened, but her attendants observed her. When people went to investigate they saw that the glacier that was closest to the village was starting to move forward. They knew that the village was in trouble. And so they made preparations to leave. They knew that they weren't just leaving their summer place: they were leaving their home. It was really devastating to the people.

20 When they made preparations to leave, there was a woman named Kaasteen. She was the mother of the clan leader of the Chookaneidí. She had decided she wasn't going to leave. Everyone pleaded with her to come with them.



Her son spoke to her and said he couldn't bear it, that she needed to come with them. But she had made up her mind. Kaasteen said, "I am old and it will be a  
25 burden, it will be really hard." So they prepared her for burial.

They gave her the finest of furs and the most precious and best foods. Everything was laid before her and they prepared her for burial in one of the nicest community houses. So everyone made preparations to leave the Glacier Bay area. It was really hard because they were leaving behind their possessions, their home,  
30 and their trapping areas. They knew that where they lived was a good living area. And they knew that their future would be uncertain. The families would stay together but things would never be the same.

One of the things the Tlingit people pride themselves on is a quiet obedience. They launched their canoes into the bay. When they were in the bay and  
35 they were all in their canoes, they watched the glacier go over the community house that contained the woman, Kaasteen. The part they respected, honored, and marveled at was: not a whimper was made, not a sound. She accepted her fate. She knew death was close.

The chief created a song and today we use the song as the heaviest grief  
40 song. The song is called *Eeshaan Gushei*. It talks about the loss of the land, the village, the people, and his mother. Usually, the men never cried, but at this instance, the men cried so you knew the loss was great. They directed the T'akdeintaan to go ahead and prepare a place. It was hard because they were the first to prepare food and shelter. It was a heavy burden but no one complained.

45 When the T'akdeintaan took on their task, the Wooshkeetaan followed and built it together.

The clan leader said that the Chookaneidí would bear the burden of what happened because it was a Chookaneidí girl that called the glacier. They all accepted it. The Chookaneidí said we'll stay behind and we don't want to leave  
50 until everything is settled in the bay, and everything is taken care of. At this time the Kaagwaantaan people said something very significant. They said, "We will stand with you." Together they made sure everything was safe and all the people were safely taken to four new areas. Some went to private summer camps, some went to Excursion Inlet and some came to Hoonah.

55 The story is an important part of our history. In our culture, we think of ourselves as an iceberg. When one part breaks off and melts it could be lost, but if we stay together as a whole, the iceberg will last longer.

*Carol Williams: Tlingit values, Tlingit worldview*

60 Respect: When you are addressing respect and you want to teach a child, what you want to say is what my mother said to me, "I want you to be more respectful Carol." And I looked at her and she said, "What is that you want, you want, in your heart and in your mind so that you'll keep for the rest of your life." Having respect means that you have it set in your mind already how you're going  
65 to behave and then you automatically will give people respect simply because they

have survived a lot. You give it to the elders because that is what they've learned and you will want to learn because you will want to live a long time.

When respect doesn't come, when you don't have it, it hurts really bad. You think it doesn't but it will affect you. But when you do have respect it will

70 enlighten what you want to accomplish. And this is something we need for you to be respectful; it is something you have to work for. [If] you don't work for it you will never have it. So when you address the youth regarding respect, some people say things like "We don't always have to respect the elders, they have to earn our respect." I have a hard time with that one. There are certainly going to be instances

75 where you see some behavior that you question, that an elder might display, but it shouldn't take away the respect that you might have for that person at another time. So having respect, being respectful, is something that you earn. [Respect is] not how others might view you, but [respect is] for yourself. I have always thought that was how it was taught to me. In our culture, we teach that there must be respect for

80 all things. Everything is here for a reason and we do these things not because its traditions or because its expected of us, we do this because everything has a balance, everything has a reason for why it exists. It is here for our use; we abuse it, and we lose it, then we won't have it anymore.

How I teach the traditions and values is: I say that when you have a tragedy

85 it's a natural instinct to go back to basics and what is basic to you is basic to everybody: to go to your family. So to have a family it takes a lot of work and it also takes a lot of planning and time, but the reward is you have family: you have a

support system You have someone you can go to when you are in need of aid,  
 someone you can celebrate with when you have reason to celebrate. And  
 90 remembering your traditions is very important and all of it is based on family.

Balance: To be Tlingit is based on balance. Everything that we do we try to  
 create a balance and you don't just be respectful to your parents and treat your  
 sister in a terrible way. One day she will be a parent. One day you will be a parent.  
 And taking the time to communicate well, taking the time to spend time with each  
 95 other has its rewarding payoff. What is traditional in your family is what you gain.  
 But what is wonderful about the Tlingit culture is that we have a deep sense of  
 extended family. We go by the African saying 'It takes a whole village to raise a  
 child.' We reprimand or comment whether or not a mother is present. We don't  
 leave it up to the mother to be the only one to reprimand the child.

100 Sharing: Sharing is also important because that's instilled that knowledge  
 you have that willingness to share what you have. Taking care of others. Taking  
 care of others means that it is never forgotten and there will be a time when you are  
 in need of aid and you *will* be taken care of.

Being proud of being Tlingit is good, but pride comes from fully knowing  
 105 whom you are and what you are set out to do, to be Tlingit. Being Tlingit doesn't  
 automatically mean that you should be proud. And it should never be replaced by  
 arrogance. To be Tlingit means that you do have a strong sense of pride because  
 you have fully learned what it means to be Tlingit. And to be a Tlingit person we,  
 you know the number one rule that every person no matter who they are, is

110 important. And it doesn't matter your age or your standing people learn by  
watching and by example.

Remember: Remember to always to love children. This culture has an  
unwritten rule that whatever we do is going to be in preparation for the next  
generation. And we know that the children, how we teach them, they are going to  
115 be our future. So when we are educating a child you don't want to do it slap-dash,  
and fix it later, you want to do it very well. It takes a lot of effort because you need  
to know what the children are not saying and what the best way to get across to the  
child. And those are the things it takes to educate children. They are not going to  
learn just because you said so, they are going to learn if they can see the example  
120 and if they can understand the fact what is being told to them.

Responsibility: It takes a lot of responsibility to be a Tlingit nowadays.  
What we say, what we tell our children is that our biggest tool that you have in  
your body is not your mind or heart but your mouth. And your mouth can either  
heal or harm. And knowing the strength of your words means that you must always  
125 be careful of what you speak. Choose your words very carefully because once you  
hurt someone you cannot take it back and you learn that the harm you caused will  
affect you. So that is the responsibility you carry. What I try to teach children is  
that you need to be compassionate with your words, stop speaking words that hurt.

And learning and preserving the culture is important but one of the things I  
130 learned is that how this culture has been able to survive for so long. A lot of it is  
[through] the values that are taught and *how* we are able to accept change. And [our

culture] has changed with the times and maybe we haven't adopted other ways of speaking or demonstrating our values, but we have adapted it to meet the needs of our people.

135            Truth: We talked about truth. It's wise to use your words carefully. In Tlingit we say two things. [First] words are like a stick, if you hit someone with your words, no matter what you say or do you cannot take it back. When you walk into a room, you should pretend that you are holding a ten-foot pole that will be your words. You cannot hurt anyone, bump anyone, and harm anyone with that  
140 pole. [The second saying is] when you are speaking think of your ancestors listening. In our culture, we say you should never apologize. If you apologize, it means you have committed wrong. Actually what they are saying is use your head so that you don't have to apologize.

                 Subsistence areas and all nature should be cared for: That [value] goes with  
145 everything is here for a reason. One analogy I try to use is to think of bread that you have at the dinner table and [what would happen if] you did not put that bread away. Think of money that you shoved into your pocket instead of carefully putting it away in your wallet. A loaf of bread and money both of them take care of you, they are designed for your care. You need that food to take care of you. You need  
150 that money to take care of you. And in the morning when you find that your money is lost and that your bread is all dried and curled and you not able to eat it. Our people say that the spirits gather at night and they say, "I'm taken care of here and put in a good place I think I stay." And you don't have, as much struggle because

you've taken care of what is there to take care of. Or the spirits will say, "I'm not  
155 respected here and I think I will find a place where I can be respected." And then  
you quickly lose your money; you have to continually have to buy new food  
because you didn't take the time to take care of it. Things like food and money, all  
those things are designed for your care. If you abuse it you quickly lose it and you  
will continue to struggle. It can be something as small as littering or it can be  
160 something as bad as endangering the land so that it is not livable. So once you learn  
that there is a balance you can see that you are not alone: you are here for a reason.

*Haa Shageinyaa*: We believe that there was always a reason for us to be  
here. We always knew that there was a spirit greater than ourselves. And we do  
think to please the spirit that is near; and when our people learned that *Haa*  
165 *Shageinyaa* was actually our heavenly father, it started making sense. Having a  
sense of reverence, knowing that you are part of that balance, you will start to see  
what are the possibilities of this earth.

Humility: Having a sense of humility. Arrogance and being boastful and  
prideful is the power of your words. If you abuse these powers that you have, that  
170 every person has, and if you don't have compassion or love in your heart you will  
be shown a lesson. And you won't want to learn this lesson, but it will come and  
you will be enlighten by it. And if you don't learn by this enlightenment then you  
will be taught again. Until you learn that compassion and love for each other and  
care for each other is the right thing to do.

175 Care for the human body: This is also for balance, respecting yourself.

When our people first saw a person drunk from alcohol, there was a phrase the people have said, "This will be too much for us to overcome." There was always a fear that alcoholism and drugs would eat away at us and the person would not be as whole as they could be. And when our people first learned of this, they knew that

180 there was a power that was greater and wanted to take away what is good. But it is up to us to decide if we want to succumb to that or if we are strong enough to avoid it. And those that are strong enough to avoid drugs and alcohol it is great: the joy is really great. Because you never have to worry about what you did or even be ashamed of the truth of who you are is very apparent. It comes with a long lasting

185 feeling.

We try to teach that drugs and alcohol are evils that you are strong enough to overcome. There is a phrase *I gu.aa yáx xwán* which means be of good courage. It also means 'know what its like to stand on your own two feet without someone giving you directions.'

190 Traditional subsistence foods: Eating your traditional foods is like perpetuating the culture; you know how to gather it, you know how to preserve it, and you know how to enjoy it. The food is there not for show, it is there for your enjoyment and when you use it in a good way it gives back.

Dignity: Dignity is when you are treating a woman with respect, knowing

195 that a woman is the only person who can produce life. It is treating a man as a man should be treated. Having that kind of dignity and portraying that kind of dignity,



and giving others your respect, strengthens the essence of who you are. It is not something that can be given. It is something that you work for. It is something you want, and once you gain it no one can take it away. There may be times in your life  
200 when someone has decided has mock how you fix your hair, or mock the stain on your shirt. If your dignity or self-esteem is intact, you can overcome those little remarks that hurt your soul. And both comments are going to happen but it doesn't always have to destroy. That's one of the good reasons it's wonderful to have dignity in your soul.

205           Peace: When I was growing up it was instilled in me...look for peace and once you have that peace, keep it facing your heart. Enjoy that peaceful time [and say], "this is my peace." When you are surrounded by something that disrupts your peace, then you know what you need to do to go back to that peaceful place. When I'm really troubled what I like to do is to sing my Tlingit songs. This puts me back  
210 into my mind of finding peace so that I am not always troubled. You don't know what life has in store for you. But you do know that you will need to find you own way in which to survive. That's the key to life: how to survive. We are always going to have someone that is harmed in someway, or there is something that will hurt you in some way, but you will have survived it. You survived it once you can  
215 survive it again. That's the key to living, is finding those ways. And the wonderful thing is and we revere those people, we still talk bout those people who survived in a good way and still held their head high.

And all of these things, its not a possession that can be given you it is something that is worked for. If you want it in your heart you can have it. When  
220 you get angry, when you are hurt, when you are upset, or when you are troubled by someone else's pain, you know what you need to do to overcome that. What you need to do is remember what its like to have a peaceful existence and go back to that and remember to have courage to stand on your own two feet and go back again without giving up. Giving up is a hard thing for our people to do, to face,  
225 because we persevere knowing that there is a future meant for our children. All of those come before us when we realize that someone wants to give up. It doesn't mean arrogance it doesn't mean fighting back in another way, it means this happened and I know how to overcome it. I know what I need to do for myself and once I accomplish this I will be stronger for this.

230 It's a shame that we have people that like to bully. It is a shame that people create ways to harm other people. You can be troubled by that or you overcome it in a really good way. That's our hope. That is our hope for our children: always each and every time, you will find a good way. One of the things that I was taught as a child is that in everything never lose your hope, never lose your will, life will  
235 get better. Whatever life carries to you it does get better, life always has improvement.

When people work with youth, they have this barrier maybe for lack of a better word. They have this barrier that they shouldn't impose someone else's values on the children. But if you were to ask the child what do they want, what do

240 you want from your parents. I guarantee the answer will be *guidance*: I want to believe in something. That needs to be given to a child. If a child goes without a value system, it will be very hard for that child to make good decisions. The Tlingit values system shouldn't be confused with religious values systems. Its our guide in how we live, how we attack a problem, how we make decisions, how we take care  
245 of each other. All of these things come into being. And a someone might misinterpret our Tlingit values as a religious belief. But what we are talking about is a guide for living. It's too bad that people have this fear, but that's life sometimes.

I'll hear a lot of people when I talk about these things. I'll hear "I'm glad  
250 that you told me I didn't know." I really credit my parents for telling me these things. But I give myself a little credit too because I listened. I paid attention. I didn't just let it pass me by. That's a problem we face; there are all these wonderful ways, the native knowledge we have, people are letting it pass aside because they don't see how it will fit into teaching children, when actually it is how you reach a  
255 child. The [children] can sit and watch you and pretend their listening but maybe they are not. Getting to the heart of a child is a good way to teach children.

Be obedient, the wise never test a rule: But the first things says, "Be obedient, be wise and never test a rule." We never test a rule. I wanted to put it under respect. Here is a good one: When you are in mourning, when you have lost  
260 a family member here are certain things that you do not do. It has absolutely nothing to do with taboo or superstition. But it has everything to do with being

respectful. Being respectful of the state that you are in, and that you know the appropriate way to behave and that you've been taught very well. Testing a rule, if your uncle told you that when you go hunting, you should never walk in a certain direction or move in a certain direction, and you test what he said, you could find out the hard way that he was right all along. We teach our children, don't test these rules. The rule is don't hurt your fellow man by your bad words, [and if] you went ahead and did it anyway, you need to find a way to fix it, you need to find a way to fix the wrong you created. That's why we say that.

270           Family educational responsibility: In our culture, lets say that there are two girls and they are very disrespectful to a crowd of people. The elders would say, "Who are their parents?" They wouldn't say, "Who is that girl?" They say, "Who are her parents?" So whatever you do reflects on your parents. Your parents are going to hear how your daughter behaves. So everything reflects on your parents.

275           Take not the property of others: And that's why we say never infringe upon the rights of others. Never take property that belongs to someone else. If something is lying there and you didn't know whom it belongs to, it belongs to someone, leave it there, they left it there, you leave it there. It isn't any of your business unless someone wants to make it your business.

280           Pride in family, clan and traditions: When we talked about family, it takes a lot of work to be in a family. You have to know what to do in situations; you have to take on the responsibility of being in a family. It means you just can't do as you please. You can't ignore things that are very important; you take time to care of

those things. If someone is having a birthday, you take time to do that. It all reflects  
285 back to you, the importance of family, the importance of taking care of those  
things. The payback is what you get is the love of a family.

Humor. Laughter is healing and it is important to always have happiness.  
We know that in times of grief and times of pain that you are not going to want to  
laugh, but there is a time that you will heal. We try to teach that life is not all  
290 sadness. Because life is not all sadness remember to have humor in you life every  
day.

It is very significant because you are being given permission to put your  
grief away. You're through, you're done, no more grieving. You followed all the  
rituals and once you followed all of them and it gets completed you never go back  
295 again. Because life is not all sadness. Life is sharing, life is loving, and life is  
laughter. You do these things to please the spirit that is near.

*Breanne Mork: Relating to a sacred landscape*

The Tlingit people have always been a part of the ecology of Glacier Bay, but they have been discouraged from subsistence activities in the area since it first became a national monument. According to Nora and Richard Dauenhauer (1994):

It is safe to say that the Tlingit people respect the value of protecting Glacier Bay—even through the National Park system—but they also feel that it is unfair to deny them subsistence and other cultural use of Glacier Bay, especially when there is a substantial non-Native community that benefits economically from tourism in the bay and hunting on private land adjacent to the park. (p.109)

Glacier Bay National Park has a special ‘arrangement’ with the people from Hoonah. Permits are needed to enter the park, and although Hoonah residents don’t have to pay, there are only three permits offered daily to those residents. Other entrance permits are offered for a fee to non-residents and tour groups, however, the majority of access is by very large cruise ships that hold, on the average, 3 to 5 thousand people.

The following narrative is by Breanne Mork, *S’EEK Taawkw Shawaat*, Black Bear Winter Woman, T’akdeintaan, Snail House. Breanne is a 22 year-old college student currently majoring in psychology and early childhood education at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. Breanne is also a poet and is trying to learn her native language. She is engaged and expecting her first baby in the spring. As a teenager, Breanne was able to spend time in her ancestral homeland and for a short time she lived in Hoonah, Alaska. She continues to maintain ties with her family and friends in Hoonah.

Glacier Bay National Park is one of the most beautiful places I've ever lived. I spent a summer during my high school living there. It is my ancestor's homeland. My step-father was a park ranger. Just for that summer. The Bay is huge and it covers thousands of miles. There are a lot of glaciers too. Our sacred  
5 mountain is there, Mt. Fairweather. The most amazing thing about this area. You can go there and see what the land in America looked like thousands of years ago. My ancestors and the clans related to my people were the first ones who lived there. We were here first. The Tlingit people, and we lived on this land that had all this food, and wood and water.

10 About several hundred years ago, the glaciers forced our people out and we had to move. We moved to Hoonah, across Icy Strait. Some moved other places but nearby. My clan and other Hoonah clans still think of Glacier Bay as home. I still feel a connection to that place. It is a part of our *at.óow*, which means our sacred place. We have sacred places and this is the Tlingit's sacred place.

15 Captain Vancouver and other people, like survey crews, I think. They came into Icy Straits in the 1700s. In their reports, they wrote about us, the Natives who paddled out in their canoes to meet their ships. Even though Glacier Bay was still mostly under ice, the Tlingits lived like we always did along the coast of Glacier Bay, like in Lituya Bay. Lituya Bay is a big part of my clan's, the T'akdeintaan's  
20 *at.oow*. This is where we broke off into two groups of people. They are our relatives and clan members... the Cohos.

There are lots of earthquakes in this area. A part of our stories. There is a story about one of my relatives. An uncle who rode out one of the biggest tsunami waves. I think it was in the 50s and my uncle and his son were sleeping on their  
25 boat in Lituya Bay waiting for the next day to go out and go fishing. His boat rocking back and forth: The boat. He got up to see what was going on. There was ice and rocks falling off the glacier, lots of ice and rocks, lots. And that created a wave that was coming towards him. It was a wave 50-feet high about to come crashing into his boat. They say it's like a sink in there...in there sloshing back and  
30 forth. My uncle woke up his son, my cousin, and he put a lifejacket on him. They didn't know if they were going to live. The wave lifted the boat up and over the land...an island in the middle. He told us about how he saw the tree tops underneath him. He called a may-day for help. He had to steer through the water with lots of dirt and ice chunks. And rocks, lots of rocks. He survived and my  
35 cousin survived. They told us about this and it's been passed down to us. It is a favorite story in my family. Because it was a relative...my uncle that this happened to. It was even in a book. Now I think its in several books. It was all over in the newspapers. But I wasn't born yet. My grandpa Elmer and my dad used to tell me about it too.

40 This is also a place where my Tlingit ancestors first saw white men. It might have been my great-great grandfather who went out to that boat. One of our elders, George Betts, tells the story in a book. There is a story about the first white men that came to Lituya Bay. When the Tlingits first saw the white man on their ships



come into Lituya Bay. The natives were scared at first. Then they thought it was  
45 Raven who was going to come back to the people. They looked out at the ship with  
a hollow stalk of some kind of plant. They couldn't look at Raven directly. Some  
think it was skunk cabbage leaves and some think it was Indian celery. They went  
out on their canoes to the ship. When they got out to the ship the white men, the  
Russians were there and they gave them some sugar and rice. Which they thought  
50 were white sand and worms. They didn't want to try it at first. This is the first time  
that alcohol was also introduced to the Tlingit people. They were given brandy.  
When they left the ship, they got to shore and told the rest of their village about the  
white man and the food and drinks they got and how it was all prepared. They  
thought they were nice people. But they didn't know that this started something  
55 horrible. The natives did not realize that this. It would be the start of their land  
being taken away and alcoholism and diabetes. So my ancestors are those people  
who had the first contact, who ate sugar first, who drank alcohol first. I wonder  
who was there at the time.

John Muir also had a huge interest in Glacier Bay National park. But it  
60 wasn't a park then. He went there in the late 1800s. A couple of Tlingit guides to  
him there. I think one of these guides might have been related to me: Towyaat. I  
know the man who has the Tlingit name today. It was the same name as the man  
who took Muir into the bay. I think that John Muir didn't realize the damage he  
caused by bringing in tourists. It's like now he is the grandfather of Glacier Bay.  
65 But we had many grandfathers before him. Muir to wanted to protect it but to take

it away from the people that were there first. They take them [the Tlingits] out of their environment, is a whole different thing. I don't think he understood. My ancestors depended on their land and environment to survive: it was their home.

In my culture it is disrespectful not to live on the land that was given to  
70 them. Given to us. All the "white people" that came up to Alaska, my ancestor's land. They didn't appreciate Glacier Bay. Or that the land there meant to us. It was home to my Tlingit family. And it was being invaded by tourists who forced their "white man" traditions. And they forgot that *man* is part of the land. To push the Tlingits out of the only place they've known. We knew that place really well.

75 Muir's last trip to Glacier Bay he took scientists, writers and photographers. And they collected a lot of stuff. They took things, plants. They broke off a piece of ice from the glacier. They found out everything they could about the bay. After this, there was a huge earthquake. A glacier went and shattered. It broke off. It caused huge pieces of ice to block the entrance to the bay. For a lot of years after  
80 that, the ships couldn't get close to the glaciers. The glaciers did not want them to come back into the bay. It was mad. I know the Glacier's listen. Whatever they did was disrespectful. A story I know from this area tells about how a girl called a glacier like a dog. And that is how my ancestors had to leave. Because the glacier came down on the town we had to leave.

85 My grandfather and my dad and my great grandfather all fished in the bay. This is where the best fish were. They said it was real good fishing there. Back in the early days there was a salmon cannery at Dundas Bay. I used to hear my dad

talk about fishing in Dundas Bay. He spent summers as a kid there. We have pictures of him on an island playing with his brother and his uncle. Uncle Wesley  
90 fished with them too. [We have] pictures of them gathering seagull eggs. They used to gather seagull eggs there.

It was a man named William Copper who started his trips to Glacier Bay. He went to study how the plants come back where the glacier was. The bay has a name something about where the glacier was. We knew our land. But Cooper  
95 wanted to protect the bay. But it was already protected. The Tlingits protected it. What was this man going to 'protect' it from. Us? Maybe in the future he was protecting it from the Whiteman, not us. So in the in 20s the President signed a law and made Glacier Bay a monument. But it was smaller then. About half the size. They kept adding more and more of our land to it.

100 By making it a monument, it meant that the government didn't allow commercial business and canneries. That made both natives and non-natives mad because they had used this area for a lot of years. Hundred and hundreds of years. Then President Roosevelt opened the area to mining. So its like when the government wants to do something they get to even though they say we can't. I  
105 think it's about money. I did a paper on Glacier Bay for a class. Some of this stuff I didn't know until I researched it. Some of the stories I heard from my mom, my Dad.

Then they made the park bigger. They took more land. Land from us T'akdeintaan. It was expanded for the monument, so it more than doubled its size,

110 and it is still bigger than any park. Commercial fishing was still allowed in the  
Glacier Bay area. My Dad and my Grandpa have a lot of stories about fishing in  
Glacier Bay. And then later in the 70s they outlawed seal hunting. It seems strange.  
If we got our traditional seal we would be considered outlaws. We were doing  
things we've been doing for thousands of years. We didn't slaughter seal. We ate  
115 them and they were part of our diet and ceremonies. But scientist say the seals  
aren't around. It's because no one lets the Tlingit people hunt them anymore. The  
natives can't hunt there anymore.

Our stories come from that area which means that we come from there.  
Near there is the Fairweather Mountain Range. Where Raven did some of his  
120 creations. And a place that is supposed to be where Raven lived. He lived in that  
area. And in my own family, my great aunt died in the area of the Alsek River. In  
Dry Bay it is dangerous there. Anna was out fishing and they never found her body,  
only her skiff. I still think about that. That is how places become sacred. When  
there is a loss of life. When someone dies things can become sacred. So it makes  
125 the places even more sacred. We have stories of death, tidal waves, Raven  
creations, glaciers. And we have the one about the glacier crushing a village, and  
giant octopuses. These stories are a part of us: Lituya Bay, Glacier Bay, Hoonah.  
All these places are a part of me, my clan.

Then in WWII the government put in an airport in Gustavus within Glacier  
130 Bay. So there is a town with non-natives owning the land that was once in our  
territory. It's a sore spot. They have more access to our ancestral land than we do.

The Park Service built a lodge and administration area on Chookaneidi land. This might be right where the glacier came down. So it is very sacred. The government removed the land around Gustavus from the Park so the white man could settle  
135 there. And build their community there. And they built the park headquarters on Chookaneidi land. Of course, we weren't allowed to come back there anywhere. No one gave us any land back. The government built a lodge, dock, employee houses, some really nice houses, and a big building for offices. I lived there. It was nice but it made me feel weird.

140 Now it's a World Heritage Site. I don't know how that happened. So I think there is no way we will ever have access to the park again. Oh they study and study and study our seagull egg population. They can take us in the park to gather seagull eggs. Or they let a few elders come up and pick strawberries. Think about it, a grandma picking strawberries with a Park Ranger watching her every move. Then  
145 they film it and act like they did such a great thing. It's strange that I spent my only time there when my step-dad, a white guy who worked for the Park Service. The Park service has more access than the traditional people. It's sad sometimes. I would walk around the short trails at the park. I rode my bike to town. I went out in a boat, a skiff with my mom, sister and step-dad. The park service let us use a leaky  
150 boat that we had to keep bailing. It had a small motor on it. And we went out fishing because the employees can do that. We caught a few fish, small ones. And then something big that we had to let go. We didn't know what it was. I don't think the park service even knew that my family was going out in their ancestral

homeland for the first time. This generation went out, in a leaky skiff owned by the  
155 Park Service.

And there was moose there that kept leaving his mark on the trees, on a path  
near the housing. I saw his scrapes on the trees by the trail. He let us know he was  
there. We knew he was there every day but we didn't see him. One day there were  
some tourists on the beach. We looked out from the trail and saw them. They were  
160 on the beach walking towards a big moose grazing on the beach grass. I think the  
tourists were idiots. You don't go up to a moose. I used to run into moose on my  
way to school in Haines. They are huge. The tourist was crouched down and  
heading to the moose. He had a camera. Other tourists were following her. It only  
takes one. Then the others go along. We didn't want to yell and scare the moose but  
165 he was going to be scared anyway. Dumb people. They think its wild land safari or  
something. The moose looked up and ran away and the tourists wanted to follow  
but we stepped out of the woods and they looked at us and didn't follow.

They [Park Service] brag about how they 'let' my mom and sister and the  
elders pick gumboots on the beach. They had their language retreat there a few  
170 years ago. They were there in their homeland. They had to be with a Park Ranger  
when they went down to the beach. A lot of the elders cried just because they were  
there in Glacier Bay. They were glad that they were there. But sad that they  
couldn't live or hunt and fish there. Even the guy who shot the seal and was  
arrested came there to learn Lingít.

175           I know it hurts the elders the most. I know one man who went hunting with  
my step dad. When he was on the beach, he looked out across Icy Strait towards  
Glacier Bay. He was almost crying. He said that that was his homeland and he  
couldn't go there anymore. I think that elder has a problem with alcohol too. I think  
this is part of it. The man was sad. My dad said he was so sad.

180           Today everyone wants to come see Glacier Bay. A lot of tour ships go up  
there. People kayak and camp and hike. It's *at.oow* to my family and ancestors and  
to see it so commercialized... hurts them to see people trampling all over the Bay.  
Not truly appreciating it. Lots of tourists float up there. Not one Tlingit. It's sad and  
it hurts.

185           I was born in Wrangell and lived there until I was almost ten and moved to  
Sitka. I also moved Wrangell, moved back to Sitka. Yes, I moved a lot because of  
his job [step-dad's]. Then I moved to Haines for almost a year. Moved to Hoonah  
for a couple of months. And then moved down to Kennewick Washington with my  
dad. I'm going to college in Fort Lewis college in Durango Colorado. I'm  
190           graduating with my bachelors degree in December.

              I was raised with Tlingit values when I was little. It's hard to separate the  
values from what you live every day. I went out on the water a lot, out fishing, up  
the river. Up the river I went camping, the garnet ledge, the hot tubs, twin lakes. I  
went fishing with my family. I went fishing with my grandfather. I lived next door  
195           to my grandparents. It was fun when I was a kid because we'd go up and get ice  
cream and sliced cheese. My grandmother had a cannery down by their house, near

our house. And my grandmother and a couple of ladies would pick the shrimp after my grandfather came in bringing the shrimp. I ate all kinds of subsistence foods growing up, a lot of fish, halibut and shrimp. I don't remember eating a lot of store  
200 bought foods. I get hungry for my traditional foods all the time. I don't eat seafood down there from the grocery store, from the restaurants, but when I come to Alaska I bring it back, the fish.

I want my kids to learn the Lingít language. It would be nice if they would learn to speak Lingít. I haven't really. But that's just because I've been away from  
205 school for a long time. But I'd like them to learn Lingít. But that's what probably Vivian [my sister] is going to do, teach them Lingít. And fishing, I want them to always go fishing. I don't care if they go hunting, but I want them to go fishing: they don't have any choice. I especially like the foods, fish, and halibut, a lot. Being from Alaska is, I guess, an exotic thing to other people. It's a big part of me.  
210 When I am in class, every semester people think it is cool. I always have to tell my professors, when they say something wrong, that it isn't that way. Like when someone said that the Whiteman coming to America was good since we brought the Natives medicine and education. Sometimes I tell them I'm Native, but sometimes I get dirty looks. Depending on the people sometimes I get dirty looks  
215 because the white people they don't like it that natives get free tuition [at Fort Lewis College] they don't think it's fair. Sometimes I am with friends or other people and I hear them talk bad about Natives. They ditz the Utes and the Navajos and complain. I have to tell them, then that I am Native and sometimes they don't



believe me. But my freshman year I went to go to the Native American Student  
220 Center to use the computers, and I walked in, I was the whitest person there and I  
got dirty looks so I never went back.

And when I go to the clinic down there on the reservation [Ignatio] a lot of  
the other Native Americans from down in the Southwest, I guess have never seen a  
blonde-haired, blue-eyed Native before. When I go to the clinic in Ignacio they  
225 look at me funny. One of the nurses told me and my fiancé that we where the  
whitest Natives they had ever had in there. He is Chippewa and we don't look  
Native. But I feel fine, comfortable in Alaska, because I know there are a lot of  
other white-looking Indians here. Like at Celebration, to see that many Natives  
together, just to do the same things, to lean more to meet people was fun. I look  
230 Native when I go home because all the Morks have a certain Norwegian Tlingit  
look. I feel comfortable in Alaska. We have the same face so everyone knows what  
family we are from. My sister once took a cab when she was visiting Sitka and the  
cabdriver asked her if she was a Mork. She told him yes and he said, "I used to be  
in love with your grandmother. "

235 Hoonah is definitely a native town. It is small. I don't think I'll ever live  
there again. But it's a nice place to visit. It is pretty. It's nice to just see a town full  
of Native people. I don't know, instead of all the Native people mixed in with the  
white people because then it's like they are all trying to act white. For the most  
part, I feel comfortable in the village. In some situations I do, some I don't, because  
240 they don't know me, maybe they don't remember me so they don't know that I'm

native, because I look white and they don't think I belong there but I do. When I first moved there no one knew who I was but then I said my name and my great-grandmother's name and my grandfather's name and the suddenly I have all these relatives and I am someone's little sister and someone's auntie. That's the Tlingit relative system is how we are related.

And I think Sitka is really into the Native stuff and everything it has a lot of both. I am pretty comfortable here. In Sitka, when I was in Jr. High I wasn't sure about anything: my identity. I was an angry teenager. I wish I could learn more about my culture, but I am really far away living in Colorado and trying to get done with my bachelor's degree with education. So it's hard for me to learn while I'm far away. I have to read books about my culture, like for a paper or something. Or ask my sister or my mom. My Dad doesn't know much and he is the one who is Tlingit. He used to say we were Eagle, but we are supposed to be Ravens. He didn't know the rules.

I've written some poems about being Tlingit and my professors liked them. I wrote one about being a bear in the winter and one about my dad working in construction in Kennewick and being lonely for Alaska in the hot sun. He misses the fish and the hunting. I like poetry. I went to see Sherman Alexie when he was giving a talk on campus. I have a picture of him too. I like his poetry because he tells the truth. My mom is a poet, my sister is a poet. My great-grandfather on my mom's side was a writer. He wrote his life story. My

grandmother wrote her crazy life story too. It is in a book that I have somewhere.  
She made the book herself.

It's hard to learn while I'm going to school and work at the same time. I  
265 think it would be nice if I learned the language but it probably won't happen unless  
I'm done with school or move back up to Alaska sometime. Because I am not  
surrounded by it, it's harder. I haven't decided if I want to move back. I don't know  
if I want to live on an island again. I like being connected to the mainland. It's kind  
of nice and I don't like all the rain in Sitka. But it's nice to be closer to family,  
270 closer to SEARHC hospital but maybe Anchorage or outside of Anchorage. I  
haven't decided yet.

The last time I went back, I came up to Celebration. I went to visit family  
this time. A clan sister and cousin. She's [Teri Rofkar] is funny. She's made a lot of  
stuff, my cousin. Put in a lot of hours with her weaving. It would be fun to learn  
275 how to do it. Even if I don't do it as a full on profession. I still think it would be fun  
to learn it, make a few things. It's really pretty. And I thought only that it was  
Chilkat blankets that looked like that; I didn't know it could be for other ones  
[Raven's Tail]. When I heard stories about my great-great grandmother, Eliza  
Moses. It's interesting to hear about how they did things when they were my age. I  
280 wonder what it was like living a hundred years ago. I'm sure it was a lot of  
confusion and excitement, and then it turned to a lot of sorrow eventually. I'm sure  
it was hard, first contact.

It's kind of cool to go to Hoonah to think about that my family was here a long time ago, what it might have looked like then. I like to listen to traditional stories. I feel a little bit of connection when I see Ravens and Eagles, when I see them. I think it's cool to hear them talking to each other, the Ravens. And I know that that's a part of my history, my family history. It's a connection to a part of the land, the environment. When I think about Ravens, I think I have a big family, a lot of history, a lot of stories. My children will be Ravens too. I'm sure my parents had some influence, my parents taking me out fishing. I think I went out hunting with my dad once or twice but I really don't like hunting. I think my dad misses it here a lot he might be back someday.

I'm not sure yet if I want to be a counselor in the schools or get my PhD and open my own practice. I just don't want to work in the school. I just don't want to teach them. I've thought of coming back to Alaska to work with Native kids. There's a need for that especially with alcoholic families and stuff like that. My older sister teaches me a little bit, about our culture, but I have to squeeze all the information into my head learning all the education and psychology stuff. It seems as if she is trying to push it on me. She thinks that if I don't learn it I am letting my family down, my culture down and other family members down. I think she does try to teach me a little bit. I am interested in Glacier Bay history, in my classes I write and talk about it. I also in my education classes, there are a few natives in my classes. But they usually don't speak up. But usually I'll say something about, not all the time. I mean our professors are always saying that people don't always learn

305 the same but I think they don't incorporate Native students in that. That Native  
students learn different. I think I learn differently and I have a learning disability  
too so it makes it twice as hard. I had some tests done and went to the disabilities  
office at the college. The psychologist at the clinic on the Rez said that I wouldn't  
be able to finish college. I have a letter that says so because of my learning  
310 disability. But I'm going to graduate in one semester. I have a couple of classes  
left. I graduate in December. So I've done it. My sister, my older sister was told  
that she wouldn't be able to go to college because her family were drunks. Maybe  
they mixed the brothers up. My dad and my uncle. But my mom and dad were  
pissed and told the Principal off. It was the Principal who said that. No one told the  
315 Native kids how to get into college, like Fort Lewis. No one knew about the free  
tuition at some colleges for Natives. When my mom found out, she found out and  
went and told everyone. And a whole bunch of Natives up and left for Colorado to  
go to college. Maybe they didn't want that. My aunties and myself have degrees  
from here. My oldest sister went here too. Vivian did. I wouldn't be able to go to  
320 college if it hadn't been for Fort Lewis' policies.

I remember my dad and my grandpa telling me stories, the *kóoshdaa kaa*,  
half man half sea otter, that they would tell and scare the crap out of us. I am still  
scared of those, they still scare me. Mostly while we were out camping, and when I  
was in the car, driving around, I remember hearing about them. I think they were  
325 meant to scare the crap out of little kids, I don't know. I might tell them the same  
stories. I want my kids to learn different songs, to learn to dance. I never did learn

to dance even though I wanted to. It would be nice for them to learn the different songs, but I don't know about stories. I think I remember hearing about you have to get permission to use songs.

330 I would probably try to learn the language if I moved back here. Maybe I would learn more about the culture. I think it is interesting the place name maps. The real names of things. Glacier Bay has several names. I know *Yéil* is Raven. But I don't see *Yéil*, when I see a Raven because my first language is English and that is the language in my head. But if I move back and I am surrounded by it I

335 might learn more. But, when I eat something, a salmonberry reminds me of summer when I was a kid in Wrangell. And I like the smell of it [the ocean] because I am not near the ocean, not near anything in the middle of Colorado. For the most part my spirit feels happy, for the most part. I talk about Alaska all the time to him [fiancé] and he asks me questions sometimes. I was born here. I lived

340 here until I was sixteen; it is a big part of me. It's fun telling people I am from Alaska.

*Expressing Tlingit identity through poetry*

*Tlingit Aani*

345 Sirens flying by, tires screeching,  
stop lights blinking. I am perched  
like my ancestors, ch'aak', high in the sky.  
I raise my hammer to deliver one last blow.

Orange gloves stick to my skin, my tool of choice,  
 350 the gaff-hook. I wrench in the 80 lb. halibut--  
 our supper for tonight. Not the Big Mac from  
 McDonald's or the Whopper from Burger King.  
 Clouds rumble, radios crackle with families calling us in.  
 My brother steers a steady pace, the wind  
 355 brushes my cheeks with cold hands. I close my eyes  
 inhaling the memory of Mercury outboard gas, fish, and the last beer I drank.  
 The rooster tail threatens to overtake the seagulls  
 who are scheming to steal back what was once theirs.  
 Islands surrounded by midnight blue oceans, humpback flukes slapping,  
 360 and longhouses hemmed with cedar. Yet here I am fastened  
 with steel rings in cement,  
 climbing the white man's totem pole.

*Shapeshifting*

365 I am Teikweidí yadi--  
 Child of the Bear.  
 Dawn is coaxing me from the den,  
 with springs promise of fresh salmon in the river.  
 I stretch beneath heavy layers of sod.  
 370 Day break moves the shadows across the landscape,

transforming den into wood and plaster.

And the sent of cedar and salmon into cinnamon rolls.

Time and space shape shifts me from creature to man,

pervading my senses with human inflections.

375 Jingle Bell Rock pulsates at my reality,  
 ushering in my brother's pounce upon my slumber.  
 Wake up, wake up, it's Christmas!

*Grief over Sheryl, Shandell, and Adrian's Murder*

380 Grains of sand scrape  
 beneath my bare feet.  
 The riverbank littered  
 with footprints of ancestors  
 before and gone,  
 385 swallowed  
 by the Shtax' heen--bitter water,  
 a torrent sailing  
 the drift logs near  
 my shifting path,  
 390 threatening to submerge me  
 in the depths of it's  
 soul



*Sam Wright: Living in a landscape of change*

Despite changes in government regulations, the subsistence lifestyle remains a vital part of life in Hoonah with a continued spiritual reverence for Glacier Bay. In the Tlingit worldview, man's physical nature is not separate from his spiritual nature; it is the same with the Tlingit's intimate relationship with the land. People are an essential part of the ecological well-being of land. To the residents of Hoonah, Glacier Bay is home and the subsistence lifestyle is the center of their cultural life.

Research participant Sam Wright, age 48, lives in Hoonah, Alaska. Sam was injured in an accident in Hoonah that left him a paraplegic. He recuperated and lived in Anchorage, after awhile he decided that he wanted to go back home. However, now he has to deal with a lack of home and healthcare services, as well as face the pain of being unable to provide a subsistence lifestyle, as he was accustomed. His fiancée Lily is his main caregiver, but Sam also has to travel to the larger cities for some of his health care, a several-hour ride on the Alaska Marine Highway ferry system. Sam still likes to hunt and Lily and Sam and other young hunters accompany them in their van out the logging roads. Sam is also involved in learning the Lingít language and has had several language immersion dinners at his home, where the participants speak only in Lingít. Sam is interested in learning more about his traditional culture, mourns a time when people used to visit one another, and yet views his role as someone who can teach the younger generation about respect. In Sam's own words, he tells about living in a landscape of change:

Yeah, I was born downtown. My brother Frank's house and was my dad's house. It's on front street. Growing up was a lot of fun. We played a lot of games and stuff. When we were growing up, this is one thing that I've noticed, is that  
5 when we use to have breakfast, lunch, and dinner. At 9 o'clock, we use to have breakfast, 12 o'clock for lunch, and 5 o'clock for dinner. And it was a must that you had to be there, otherwise you wont eat. And I don't see that any more, and I think it should be brought back into our own society because...my son is an example, we would eat together. You can get learn a lot out of just eating together  
10 and talking. But you don't see it here any more, in this town. In this town it was a really big thing about eating on time. [If] you don't communicate as much with your kids, you don't know what they're doing. That was how we grew up: strict. We did what we were told: children are to be seen, not told, that was the thing. You shouldn't be sitting around listening to the old timers, or they would send you  
15 upstairs. But that was a bad thing too, because we could have been sitting around listening to Lingít, you know, Tlingit stories and stuff like that. There was so much discipline then.

And as far as going hunting and all that, I remember I started fishing when I was about eight, going out to Inian island. It's out there by Elfin Cove, Elfin cove  
20 and Fern Harbor. There's a south pass and a north pass, and it comes in by this place. I remember I think it closed when I was twelve, ten years old. I remember there were a lot of folks who use to come here and they'd fill up that whole place,

the Elfin Cove dock, the front dock. There use to be boats all the way back, at least a hundred boats. They use to go out, five, six boats and tie up to each other. You  
25 could see the tides moving them, the whole dock. And all the way down town, that whole thing use to be filled, fix, six boats all the way out.

[We did] mostly, seining. At Inian islands, they used to open it too. That's when the fish would start showing up. A lot of those boats were lost to the water, because they didn't know how to fish in those tides. You got 19 foot to 20 foot  
30 tides coming through the south pass from the north pass.

I remember my first one, [deer] when I was at about eight. That's when I got my first deer. I used to sit there on the bow of the boat, my dad he would shoot the deer first. I use to sit there and watch, because I had to watch first. Then my dad let me go up there and cut it. I cut its throat. And when it was doe season, he would  
35 try to pick that doe up. And my sisters Phyllis and Dorris were crying, telling him that the buck had run. When he shot both of the deer, I went running up there and my dad got mad, "I told you, I didn't want to take you out!" They were all crying. We cut the throat and gutted them and threw them on board. That's one of the things that I really miss with my son. I remember when I started teaching him and  
40 he was eight years old and I broke my back. I was just starting to get prepared.

For me, I didn't really like killing deer. I did it because I had to sit there and provide. Because when it comes down to my childhood, I got kicked out of my house at twelve-years-old; I was almost twelve. That's when I first ran away, and then after that, when I was eleven I was in and out of that house about six, or seven

45 times that year. My dad finally just gave up on me and told me I couldn't come  
back. I remember one time, we were breaking into the stores just to eat. They sat  
there and they were looking for us for about two weeks. The cops were running  
through the trails here. There are trails all the way down by that road: the airport  
road. Well, just up on this side by See Street there use to be trails that when all the  
50 way down to where they have houses now. Those two neighborhoods weren't here,  
it was just woods, all the way up. We use to go through those trails, like with the  
Skafalstads. We use to cut across there, we would go around and cut across there  
and party. We ended up running from these people, from the cops, and we finally  
just gave up, we were tired. I'll never forget the day, we sat there and they said,  
55 "Here comes the cops!"

And we just sat there, "Awe, yeah right!" We all had our gang, there was  
about 13 to 16 people in our gang all the time.

We were around by the airport and someone yelled, "Hey here comes the  
cops!" And we didn't believe them, but sure enough the cops were right on top of  
60 us. We took off and we started running down the crick. The tide was coming in and  
I didn't know that my budding didn't know how to swim. When we crossed the  
crick, we were in water up to our necks. I finally got across and when he was going  
across, he was tip toeing trying to keep his head out of the water and he says, "I  
can't swim, I can't swim!"

65 I dove in and said you \*\*\*\*. But that broke the camels back right there, so  
we turned ourselves in.

We walked right in front of the cop stations and they pulled their guns and said, "Freeze!" And we walked out right past them inside the jail house and sat down. We were all dirty. Rick he'll verify everything I'm saying. We had a lot of fun though. My childhood was a lot of fun because we played a lot of games. We taught the girls how to play football. We played tag football, flag football. But we started teaching them how to do tackles. They were really competitive games. We used to teach the girls to go for the legs, while one hit the top. They learned it really well. Like when I use to run, it used to be hard to stop. The girls, one of them would get my legs and the other one would hit the top. It was Sandy Hinchman, Pam Hinchman , Birdie McKinley and Kathy Marvin. All those girls use to play everyday after school. All the old timers would come and ask, "Are you guys going to play today?" Yeah, the whole dock and that side of the road used to watch us. They use to call it the *Sewer Ball* because the sewer used to go right down town [on the beach]. There use to be turds all over the place. So when we first start playing it was high water. We use to go down and after a few feet we use to scoop the turds off.

This happened right down there in front of the dock, where the liquor store is. We used to throw the ball over the dock and make touchdowns and stuff. It was a lot of fun. A couple of times we hit those pilings. We knocked pretty good. We use to play hop-sotch. We use to play *Red Rover, Red Rover*. And these days, it's like I saw it right off the bat, when T.V. came: T.V. was a bad thing. I never see kids play like that anymore. Like one day, we use to try to catch each other, all day.

You had one team who was supposed to catch the other team. There were about  
90 six-ten guys on your team who had to catch them. You grab them, and you count to  
ten, then they have to be on your side. It would always get down to one guy that we  
couldn't get. His name was Casey. I don't know how he got away, but we just had  
to give up because we couldn't catch him. Because as soon as you wake up, you're  
sitting there outside his house waiting for him to come out. He's got to go to  
95 school. School was the safe spot. If you got to the school, they couldn't catch you.  
This would go on for days! Oh it was fun. It was like Cat and Mouse, sneaking  
around on the trails and stuff. It was really a lot of fun, except the one guy we  
couldn't catch was Casey.

Now I spend my time learning the language. There are different dialects.  
100 Kake has a different dialect too. They're supposed to be really different. My buddy  
understood me really well. I knew a man from there but what a waste because that  
guy was full of knowledge and just because he was mad at his family, he never  
went to parties. But when he'd sit there and talk to people, he was just full of  
knowledge. But he just drifted. His family pissed him off or something, but he  
105 wouldn't share it, he wouldn't come to parties. He was a Chookaneidí and he was  
interviewed quit a bit up there in Anchorage. I sat in on one of those interviews,  
and I never knew he was that kind of a person. He was from Hoonah, and I had  
never, ever seen him, but he grew up here. Just because he was mad at his brothers,  
he didn't share anything. He knew all the big shots, way back when, and how  
110 important they were. He knew all the stories that were, they didn't even bring him

home. He died and Anchorage and they buried him in Anchorage. It was sad [because] they didn't even have a party for him. Usually they would have some kind of party or something for him, even if he wasn't here. They never did nothing for him. His family was kind of cold, but that's the way it is. Right or wrong, you aren't suppose to sit there and talk against an elder. It's a big no-no. You sit there and you have to apologize, even though you know you were right. That's what we did with my dad. When the elders sat there and tried to say that we were trying to take control over his funeral, when my dad passed away, the Chookaneidís took care of it. This lady came up and said that we were taking over and our leader came up and said that they were really disappointed in us. The Chookaneidí they sat there and announced a meeting, and we were to be there at nine o'clock and they had chairs set up for us. And all we did was sit there and we listened. We can't sit there and put our two cents in with what they are going to do with our father because that's just the Tlingit way. We have to let them do it. We have to sit there and listen to what they recommend. We have no say in it, even if it's right or wrong.

Because he [my dad] was Chookaneidí, this lady said, "This is what you guys got to do. You have to put up some money to the Chookaneidís and you have to apologize to them. It doesn't matter what you think, you shouldn't have gone against an elder. You have to just sit there and swallow it."

That's one thing I didn't like about the politics. It's just that she was all upset because she kept insisting that my dad is her brother....Right before my dad

passed away, she was sitting there showing pictures, “This is the proof, this is the proof!” That Tlingit stuff though, it’s pretty strong stuff.

I got interested in learning the language when I saw those kids. I came back  
135 six years ago, watching little kids speak Lingít. Sat there and sheesh, what the  
heck? I was impressed when I saw those little kids talking back to the people in  
Lingít. The only time I ever heard Lingít being spoken, was when elders were  
speaking it. And here there were little kids up there talking Lingít and I was  
thinking, “man!” That was seeing the school program, that’s what really got me  
140 going.

When I was a kid, learning all the trails and playing games taught me how  
to run around in the woods, but then for me that was just part of my peace. See I  
had to work all my life. One of my favorite places is right back here. I found this  
one place that was just perfect: it was a perfect circle inside the woods. It was deep  
145 in the forest, it was a perfect circle. And what I did was clean it all out, I cleaned all  
the brush out, and I use to go up there and cry. I never showed anybody that I cried,  
you know, I was suppose to be tough. And I was, but when I was sitting there and  
what I realized that I missed when I was probably about, nineteen or twenty, was  
that I didn’t have a dad. I use to go up there and get frustrated when I would see my  
150 buddies buy a car for one buck. I would see their dads giving them a nice vehicle  
for a buck and I would have to go work for a buck. I use to go work at the school  
for one dollar for two hours of work. One dollar a day and I had to do that so I  
could eat for my lunches and stuff. For me it was tough and nobody really realized



what I was doing. The only one that I really praised me was Mr. Bud. He was the  
155 school principle. He knew that I wasn't in a stable home and he didn't turn me in to  
the social workers or anything. He even went as far as saving my homework for me  
because every fall I would show up around the tenth of September, and he would  
walk around and get my homework. He said that as long as I could catch up I could  
do this. So every year for four years, I would have to sit there and bust ass at the  
160 beginning, but I graduated.

I went out fishing until the first week in September and all my money went  
to the people that I was living with. It just wasn't much, back then it was really bad  
fishing. Some times we wouldn't even get 40 or 50 fish in one day. Sometimes we  
would make a set and not even catch one fish. We were in Ketchikan, that's when it  
165 was real bad. See what they did was closed the Inian Islands and they closed all of  
this area. So we had to go to Ketchikan and Sitka. And we had to get to know new  
country, ya know? And I fished five years down there in Ketchikan. So I know  
Ketchikan like the back of my hand. I know were all the rocks are, I know the  
whole shore. I know all the way down to Union Bay all the way up to  
170 Wrangell...all the way up. And I was only 12-years-old running around. When I  
was 17, it finally opened up here, and I had to learn new country, my own.

Yeah. And one of the things is, when we were talking about the woods, I  
use to cry because I didn't have everything that every body else had. I use to be an  
Atheist. I didn't think God, if there was a God, I should be living like this, because  
175 I thought I was a pretty decent guy. I thought if there was a God, why do I have to

live like this? I always stuck up for women at a young age. I ended up in a chair because of that, but I've always been a pretty good guy. I ended up sitting here and started realizing that God helps people that help themselves. This has been an experience for the last four or five years now, instead of feeling sorry for myself.

180           Anyway, it works different. It made me strong when I was a kid. I worked for my uncles and they taught me a lot about hunting, and sometimes for other people. But when I was a kid, I use to help my mom pack deer. We use to cut up deer, I spent a lot of time sawing backbones and bones. Cutting up deer into stew meat, making jar deer meat. Well some of it, most of it was stew meat. Jarred deer  
185 meat, was just for fast meals, you know. You just opened a can of jarred deer meat and used it for gravies and stuff like that. It's a fast meal.

          When we were sitting there, we use to make cases of it because there was 16 of us inside that house at one time. My dad took my cousins, there was Barbra and Buddy, and Freddy and Walter. There were 16 of us inside that house at one  
190 time, plus my dad and my mom and stuff. And when we cooked, it was just like a big pan. I don't know how big it was, but it was one of those cast-iron pans, it was huge! [We would] take a big, big pot and make a stew, like you're making it for a party, a Native party. And drying fish and stuff, we had to go to the cannery for that. We'd spend nights down there, sitting around, just drying fish. There use to be  
195 a playground down there too. We use to play around up in the rafters down there.

          It was always a working canary. They worked on the seine nets down there. They got their motors fixed down there at the mechanic shop. I was too young,

when they were jarring and canning fish, so I don't remember that because I was too young. I don't even know when it shut down, but they use to can fish down  
200 there. The crab canary too, that's were the hardware store is now. It use to be a crab cannery, they use to can crab, Dungeness. The little boats use to go out, the *Badline* and the *Duke* use to have them.

Yeah, my mom and them used to clean them, the pots. And Jacob Pratt, he was one of the main cooks for the crab. They use to have this big, huge thing full of  
205 them and then on the side there use to be live tanks on the side of the building. There's the back where the oil station is, they use to load the crab there on the East side. They would load the crab up and they use to dump the crab there in these live tanks. There use to be live tanks there all along the side with water running through them, filled with Dungeness. They use to get them by nets and stuff and they would  
210 just throw them into pots, big, huge pots and just boil them. After they were done boiling them, they use to just sit there and pass it out to all the workers that cleaned them. They had bone pickers. Bone pickers is were you sit there and you had a light underneath it, like a black light. And the bones used to shine underneath that light.

And then they use to can them. Tell you the truth, I've never had one can of  
215 that. They always sent them out, I don't ever remember opening up a can of Dungeness. And they use to make cases of them and ship them out. That canary use to work from seven to 12 o'clock at night, just about every day. I've never worked there, I was too young. They use to have a doughnut shop there, down there by were the gas station is. Where the gas pumps are, there use to be a building there

220 and it was a doughnut shop. Rosie's husband, he use to make doughnuts and stuff  
for all the workers. He use to do a pretty good business.

Other ways we use to make money too was, catching herring. We use to get  
five cents a herring. Oh yeah. But you had to get the ones that were good sized.  
You just had to catch 'em fast, so when all these other people they want no more.  
225 You have to sit there and be early in the morning, try to catch them before  
somebody else does. Other than that, you wouldn't be able to make any money.  
That was the thing, getting up at six in the morning and going fishing, catching  
herring. This is before herring jigs and...we used to use Eagle claws. We use to  
put, you know, the lungs on a crab? When you open it up, they got what I guess  
230 you call 'em lungs. We use to break pieces off and put bait on it. Use it for bait, and  
they use to go crazy for that stuff. It was a hot item then. Put two or four hooks on  
one, and catch four herrings. Then you'd have to bait them up real fast and throw  
them in. Winter's fishing too was for herring, that was something. Colder than hell,  
trying to make five cents a herring. Then you're too late, and you sit there and  
235 you've got a whole bucket of herring and you've got no choice, but to take it home.  
Then when the water froze, we use to pack water. A lot of the town use to freeze,  
so it was 25 cents a bucket.

Where my brother lives going up towards the Indian Association, well just  
over the hill there's a little culvert there. They built a little road there so it goes  
240 down. They used it like a little barricade to keep the rocks on, and the culvert use to  
come right out in the middle of it. And it use to come out from the hill going up to

the Indian Association. There use to be a little river there and then when it got real cold and the pipes would start freezing, we use to go down there and get water from there, and pack water and they use to charge 25 cents a bucket. They would fill up  
245 their tubs. Not every body had like torches and stuff, so everybody would barrow one torch. And Frank Schroeder he always wanted two tubs filled. So he was a money making. I wonder what happened to that one, he had a Model-T He had it in a red shack where that green house is going down toward the Indian Association. It was right down below, right were the sidewalk is, there use to be a red shack. And  
250 he had a model-t in there, and he only brought it out once every five years or so. He hardly every road it around, mint condition. I wonder what happened to that thing. The tires were real good. We broke in there one time and stuff and just looked around on it. It was in mint condition. He kept it all clean, he use to fiddle around inside his shop were it was and it was really nice. Then he died and I don't know  
255 what happened to it. It just disappeared. Then that shack, they just tore down that shack.

As a kid, and an adult I fished a lot up there in Glacier Bay. If you want excitement, that's one of the best places to fish. Because, what it is, is the halibut. They're called *Traveling fish*. When you sit there and you catch one, I could get a  
260 70, 100-pounder. I could see the hooks like bounding around. And you sit there and some times you think you have a 200, 300-pounder, but you get those 100, 150-pounders that are live and man those are a lot of fun though. Then they come jumping out of the water. One of the things I remember was when I made friends

with my dad again, I was about twenty, and I went out fishing with him. My friend  
265 was about nineteen, twenty. But anyway, I went out fishing with him that one year  
and that's when circle hooks for came in. Anyway, we were using J-hooks, and my  
dad wasn't sure about those circle hooks, so we went J-hook, circle hook, J-hook,  
circle hook. And we went up the bay to Glacier Bay. Every circle hook was filled  
and almost all the j-hooks came back empty. We only caught a few, but the ones  
270 we caught too, they were bending the barbs and stuff and we were just like,  
"Wow!" We sat there and we pulled our gear, and we took off full boar trying to  
get back to Hoonah to get the last of the circle hooks and we were too late. We  
spent all day running back and forth. In eleven days we got almost 38,000 pounds.  
But we would have really got them, if we had all circle hooks. Those things are  
275 amazing. You look at the old time Tlingit halibut hooks... That's almost the exact  
same design. If you look at it, how the barb comes in. The barb comes in like this,  
and the halibut bite like that. It can't come out because it's snagged. And the circle  
hooks are pretty much designed the same way. And what ever Norwegian did that,  
got rich! I don't know why we couldn't think of it.

280           Yeah growing up was a lot of fun. I wish a lot of my friends were here and  
stuff. We could just go on and on, we never had a dull day. It was just like fun,  
every day. Yeah, that's what killed me a lot at first with my disability. The second  
year I came home and it hurt real bad. I was sitting at Cannery Point watching  
everybody going out. You know I took all that for granted and I thought, "This is a  
285 job." I don't need to take any pictures of me working, it's tough, I regret it. I regret

that I didn't take any pictures because I've seen some amazing things. You know out in Glacier Bay, sitting there at what's called *Rat's Bluff* where the cliff goes right down into the water and you see mountain goats, licking the rocks on that cliff. Just six or seven of them just standing there like this, on the side of that cliff, straight up and down. It was unreal, just an unbelievable sight. They sit there and they are licking those rocks for salt and you can see them jumping straight up, probably, maybe 600, 700 feet. It goes down probably 10, 15 fathoms, it's really something to see.

There's this one place that's called (....?...), it's way up inside, it sits kind of like a channel, but it's big enough for the boat. It sat down right like that in the middle. Well, what I was saying about that traveling fish, when we use to catch fish up there, we use to turn it over and the white part of the fish was all red. That's when you know they've been traveling. They travel over the rocks there, it's real rough country, you get snagged up there quit a bit. When they go over the rocks and stuff, it makes their bottoms red. When you go out and you catch ocean fish, that's a joke. That's nothing compared to Glacier Bay. Glacier Bay, those fish fight. I've seen, I don't know how many times, 100, 150-pounders flap so hard that they just go right back over board, or they slap people around too. As soon as you pull that thing aboard you just jump up onto the dry hatch. And you just try to ripped the hooks out, but with the circle hooks you couldn't do that any more. Because the with the j-hooks they use to just bend, the barb use to bend. But the circle hooks, it made it kind of hard. And it's because you had to stop and sit there and club it out

and the you had a hell of a time trying to get it out. You know trying to twist it out of it's mouth, and those things they use to go all the way down inside too. That was  
310 one of the things about Glacier Bay, was how tough those fish were. It was just unbelievable, you looked at the line like, what's on the end of that thing? And all of a sudden you can see them trying to fight all the way until you pull them aboard. In the ocean you got 200, 300 pounders coming up and you sit there an, "hook me." Then you pull them aboard and they just give up right there. Ocean fishing is  
315 nothing compared to Glacier Bay. You have to contend with the break up, with the ice bergs and stuff. You have to make sure if you see it start breaking up, you start pulling your gear or you'll just lose it because the ice bergs will just take it out. Indian Islands, yeah that was a place to fish.

Inian Islands looks like an Indian head. There's another place too that's just  
320 a little ways. There's (....?...), then there's a head there. It's got three feathers on it now, but it's got a prefect nose like an Indian head. You go around it and a lot of it will start showing up. A little bit past Elfin Cove, there's another place that's called *Three Hill*. That was a tough place. That was a real tough place to fish, because there's rocks all around that hole, toward Lisianski Island. Inian Islands was one of  
325 the toughest places to fish because a lot of people hardly know how to use the tides. They didn't know how to fish in the tides. We've seen a lot of boats going home because they lose their whole seine. That place sucked up a lot of seines even the experienced ones. They just make the wrong decisions you know and it just sucked their whole sane right up. There's nothing you can do. I've seen one time, Joe



330 White, he was sitting there in a skiff and it got caught in a riptide and it was  
sucking the skiff back. They had to let it go. And he was towing full force, and he  
tried to drag it out, but it just wouldn't budge. So what he told them to do was to go  
up by the cork line and cut it. They cut it and it just went and it just tore right half.  
He only got half of his seine back, and he was one of the rich fishermen. He just sat  
335 there and pulled the rest of his seines and took off. Four hours, eight hours later he  
came back with a brand new seine net. He already had an extra seine ready, he was  
a highline. Joe White he was one of the best fisherman out there. They use to call  
him Jip Johnson, he use to treat his crew pretty bad.

I have a lot of memories of this place. I wouldn't change any of it, it made  
340 me strong. I wish it was different. I wish I was able to walk around and stuff. I wish  
I never broke my neck. I was just starting to discipline my nephews and nieces.  
Teaching them how to do fishing. What really hurt, when I first came home, my  
son was standing by me, *What are we going to do today dad?* He was wanting to  
go out, or into the woods somewhere. When I heard that, I just told him there  
345 wasn't going to be any more of that. But then, I was doing it last year,  
so...(hahaha). I've even been thinking about getting a tripod, and put velcro  
underneath it for the gun and just go cruise around on my wheelchair and go where  
it's kind of flat. I know there's a couple of places where that crick is that road  
going up there. There's some real nice spots up there, with lots of deer. Oh there's a  
350 few places where it's just real flat. It goes about a quarter of a mile. I was thinking  
of putting a tripod, like for a camera. We'll just put it up like that, with the velcro it

will just stick like that on the tripod. Yeah, I've been thinking about it for a while.  
I'll try to borrow my brother's gun and just go practice somewhere.

The best thing, is just to be calm. Take a breath. When you're shooting, just  
355 sit there and (takes a breath). Bang! You got him. You get all excited, but you just  
keep your eyes on him like you're staring each other down. When he sits there and  
he starts going back like that, you just stay calm. Especially if they're spooked.  
You see him, and he sees you, don't take your eyes off of him, watch where he  
runs. Most of the time they come on the side of the cliff, like there's a cliff right  
360 here, and you're here. Most of the time he's going to run to the cliff. Then he'll run  
down, and then he'll cut in and for some reason they feel safe on the side of a cliff.  
What you do is you just sit there, and you don't try to run behind them, you just cut  
straight down. At least maybe 50 yards, at least and then just sit there. Sure enough  
you'll see them coming. When they cut in, they're not running, they're going like  
365 this (hand gestures). You just sit there and there it is.

I never hunt for trophy. I didn't like killing deer. I used to sit up there in the  
back of the woods here. There are a lot of deer there. I never, ever sat there and  
thought about how I was proud of a rack. I've always buried it. I just sat there and  
thought I have to do this, you know. I had to provide. I wasn't just sleeping at  
370 somebody's house for nothing. My auntie and uncle they had like twelve kids  
themselves. They took me in, they didn't want to, but they didn't want to put me  
out on the street. But then I learned from my Uncle Archie and my Uncle Wayne.  
They're not really my uncles. I just call them that because they just took me over,

they said I could stay there. I'll never forget, when my auntie, I use to climb up on  
375 the rope, upstairs where the boys slept at, and every morning she'd yell, " Jack,  
Archie, come on it's time for breakfast!" I'd sit there and lay around and wait for  
them to get all done. Everybody goes to school and she was working for the head  
start. As soon as she would leave, then I would be out. One morning she called out,  
" Jack, Archie, and you too Sam...I know you've been climbing up there, just come  
380 on down for breakfast now." That's when I was welcomed into the family.

Well it was always there. but the old *koo.eex*' used to last for days when I was just  
a little kid, the shark house, the wolf house. The shark house used to be up where  
the pull tab place is, just up the street, right across from the high school shop just a  
little further up is where the shark house is. When, I really got into it was with Mrs.  
385 Joe White she was one of the ladies that were, if she wasn't a lady she would have  
been one of the leaders she was really strong. People listened to her. I worked for  
her for awhile she got into teaching me and stuff I was pretty much her worker and  
I couldn't do anything unless she said. what she said. and when I sit there and I was  
leaving my mom and she would sit there and tell me and say, You don't do  
390 anything until I say so and then my mom would try and tell me what to do and I'd  
say well You have to ask Mrs. Joe white. And my mom didn't even question it. She  
would walk right over and ask Mrs. Joe white. Can he go up and get deer meat  
when we were having parties. It was just like I was her personal assistant. And it  
was just like, Wow. It was an honor for me. Their whole family, what I heard was  
395 that they were coming down from the mountain, I better get this story straight first

before I say it, well they were coming either from Lituya Bay, or one of them by the glaciers and she lost almost her whole family, She was the only survivor and she ended up in Hoonah and she married one of the big shots, Joe white. And she was real keen on Eagles marrying Ravens and she was just a real special person. As  
400 far as starting to be involved when I first danced, I kind of just had the spirit in me. I was excited about parties and when I was a kid I was just there to play. And I never, I grew up without going to parties most of my teen years because I never had, my parents never made me go or I never had anybody to tell me to do anything. Most of all my generation they went because their parents made them go.  
405 I never listened to nobody. So, it was kind of late when I got into it. I was becoming more interested about where I'm from how we got her. Our belief as, were L'uknax.ádi. We're from Copper River and we were by this glacier and they wanted to move so what they did was, there was water going thru this glacier. And it was just like a river so they sat there they threw a floating thing and it would  
410 disappear and it wouldn't come back. And what it does, it was coming down through there is a glacier by it. That's how it ended up and finally they sent a man in a boat and he didn't come back so everybody got on and they all went down underneath that glacier and they came out by Lituya Bay and that's how we came out from Copper River. Copper River is up in the interior. That's what I was told  
415 from my uncle and that's where we came from. Then we moved down from Sitka. That's where the original Coho's are from. Coho's are known to give the best parties and put up the most foods. But that's just one of the things we pride in. One

of the things I feel too is I really don't like money. Money is taking over our traditions and because people fight over it and there is thousands of dollars over there. And I just wish it would go back to the old way it were, we exchanged food. 420 It's making the ugly side come out. You know how greed makes people ugly. Oh, this person should have got this much, oh this person should have got that much. I don't really see. I can see out of respect for the elders and their name but you sit there and have a person come in who hardly ever did anything for the other person 425 and he sits there. I believe that you should earn, you should earn that respect, not because your grandpa, or whatever was a 'big shot'. He earned it. But when you sit there and go behind the big name and you don't even go to parties, and then they say hey you better show up, you're going to get 'big bucks' and they show up and then that's the last time they see them. Money is just destroying, even with my 430 family, my sister. I wish it would just go back with the old ways where you could just trade foods, trade wives...[laughs]. But that's my opinion. I sat there and where I got a lot of my respect for the elders was from the parties. Yeah, you respect your elders. Parties is where it really shows. When you listen to them. But I'm glad that I'm alive, still growing. When I sit there and I see myself, and I 435 already told my family too, when I pass who I want recognized are the people that bury me, the people, the pall bears, I want them, the people that cook and everything, and I want them recognized big time and I want them to be taken care of. them we can sit there and talk about the other people, the elders. They should be first, but a lot of times, the cooks cook four or five meals at a party and they aren't

440 recognized. I've seen it many, many times. They sit there and they forget about  
these people. And they come to work about three, four o'clock in the morning and  
they cook all the way until 4 o'clock the next morning. You know they are giving  
meal after meal. And when it comes time and the people are sitting in the party,  
when they are passing out money, whatever, gifts. They don't get it because they  
445 aren't there. It's not because they don't want to be there, they are serving us. and  
it's always the opposite tribe who are cooking. Like when we are having a party we  
usually elect some Eagles to cook. When we had a party we found out that they  
only gave them something like fifty bucks apiece and I told Jr., "Hey that's wrong."  
We have to have a meeting and start giving up some money because I really feel  
450 those people worked hard, even the pallbearers. And I said, "We have to tell Uncle  
Jake to come and talk about this." We are going to hurt somebody if we just pull  
money out of our pockets now. Because that's where the money came from  
anyway, from us. And we have to treat these people right. So it went really good. It  
ended up There was five of them. And we got almost three hundred dollar a piece  
455 for each of them, from all the Cohos because they all thought it was the way to go.  
But, you have to be really careful when you are doing stuff that too because you  
could offend someone. And our belief is that when you are having a party, we have  
to see eye-to-eye, if we don't see eye-to-eye, our belief is that we are going to go  
out to get them and we are going to bring them in from the ocean but if the water is  
460 rough we can't go get them and then somebody is gong to be left behind, or  
somebody else is going to pass away real soon, if we don't see eye-to-eye. But we

have to make it calm, we have to make the waters calm so that we can sit there and bring them in and let them be able to go to the spirit world. So it's real important that tribes make sure that it is o.k. and as far as that goes its real hard because of the money nowadays. It is. That is why I just wish it would go back to the old days. I  
465 don't remember them but I heard that it used to last three days. You just used to eat for three days, everybody giving deer meat and giving fish and stuff like that to each other. I remember we used to get cases and cases of blueberries, tons of them, truckloads, strawberries, nagoon berries. We used to go out on the boat to get ready  
470 for the parties, to go berry picking. My dad used to take three families and we used to go to Mud Bay, Dundas Bay and pick nagoon and strawberries. We used to have gallons of it. They whole back deck used to be filled with berries. But then you had close to thirty, forty people. They used to have point men, about five guys with guns. they used to warn bears off. They used to be all around us. We'd see  
475 something and they'd start shooting to just scare the bears. I always wanted to be one [pointman] but I was too young. Later on I learned I would have shot myself, I ended up taking kids out. I appointed the oldest kids to be point, to keep an eye on the kids, we were up by Garteeni fishing for dry fish. That was funny, about thirty kids. well, when I first started taking them out, Little Charlie, Florence and J. J.  
480 Let's go for a little picnic.

I said, you guys show up at 8 o'clock and we'll start making potato salad. 8 o'clock comes around and there is another little guy there. and I said you better go home and tell your mom where you're going to go and so he takes off and here

comes two more. and I say ok I think I'd better put a few more potatoes in that.  
485 when I was done there was almost thirty kids. And then the donations start coming.  
Then they start sending money. Our first one we ended up with thirty kids. And  
then we'd have another picnic a week, a week and a half later. and then donations  
start coming and it was all right. First it was just potato salad and hot dogs. Then  
we started getting hamburgers and going to the cannery. It was a lot of fun. And  
490 then I couldn't work for a year.

That bullet ended up splattering me. I got drunk and ended up, I was sober  
for two and a half months, my girlfriend, my daughters mother ended up getting  
drunk on me and I snapped for some reason, I was pissed off she was at the bar,  
and I went down there and drank five double shots, it was happy hour, those are big  
495 glasses filled to the top, whiskey. If I drank the sixth one I never would have made  
it, but I don't remember, I was really shocked that I did . I really don't remember,  
when I took those shots I was completely sober. I was sober for two and a half  
months and then I went, boom, boom, boom. I remember I spilt the sixth one. It  
was happy hour and if you buy one you get one free. I bought six shots. I think if I  
500 drank that last one I probably would have passed out. All of a sudden I was in  
Harbor View. They said they lost me once in Juneau. Because my kidneys stopped  
working. I started to swell up and I ended up with cardiac arrest and they had to zap  
me to get my heart going again. I don't know anything about that. and you look at  
yourself and your hands are puffed up. You're all puffed and your whole face is  
505 like a balloon because your water isn't coming out. I ended up in dialysis. It was a



dramatic thing. I used to have calluses on my hands and when it puffed up so much and when it went down the calluses were like a glove and peeled off my hands. But parties are pretty much a part of my life.

I go to parries in other towns when the Coho's are giving them, they invite  
510 you. The Coho's, my cousins son, he ended up dying, he overdosed. There is  
nothing they could have said. She used her son for an example when we had a  
forty-day party. This is what's going to happen to you when you do coke, when you  
do that drug, coke. You guys better remember this. there was nothing we could say,  
she was right. It seemed like that should have been left alone, but it made sense.  
515 Nobody really griped about it, god she shouldn't say that. Nobody said, god did  
you hear her what did she do to her son there was no talk about that I was really  
surprised everybody just sat there and looked at her. It was a good place to do it too  
because there were a lot of kids all over the place. I don't know if it made any  
difference but she did it.

520 Forty day parties, I found out too this isn't a Tlingit tradition. It's a Russian  
Orthodox, and its not even just Russian Orthodox, and if you look in the Bible they  
said its in the Bible too. It's for all religions.

Mostly, when you shoot a deer, you cut the head off and you put it under a  
stump out of the respect for the other deer, who don't see it. when you kill  
525 something you try to use the whole thing. I never learned how to do tanning. I  
pretty much respected it quite a bit because I really didn't like to shoot deer. I did  
because I had to, just to eat and help the other families, the family I was with. Fish

was just like, well I did very little smoking fish in high school, I did mostly after I turned around 18 when I finally started talking to my mom again. She was starting  
530 to take me through the ropes, getting the fish, salting them and getting them ready to dry. And I learned a lot from Mrs. Joe White and then Jenny, Jenny Lindoff, I learned quite a bit from her. She didn't really know I was watching. But I was keeping a close eye on her because she made the best dry fish. It's called newspaper. You don't need to freeze it or anything after you dry it out completely  
535 you just throw it a paper tub, they used to have cardboard tubs. Like a fifty-gallon drum, you used to just throw it in there. It used to stay in there for years and it wouldn't mold or anything. And when you want it you just take it out and put it in the oven. It will get juicy. It is really tasty. We have some here. We did it with sockeye. But the food, I never knew how important it was until later on. When I  
540 was growing up, I would think of it as work, it wasn't as much as tradition. This is what I'm supposed to be doing for my culture. I sat there, "I have to get up I have to go get a deer." I didn't want to because I used to watch them I never shot them I used to watch them in the woods. I told you about that perfect circle. I used to go up there. I used to see all kinds of wildlife: wild dogs. There was this one time there  
545 was a whole pack. Just wild dogs just running through the woods full speed. As soon as they seen me they took off about twenty of them. I don't know what happened. Nobody ever shot them. One time they sighted them out by the cannery, the last point. So I knew I wasn't going crazy because someone else saw them too. But there is some dogs too that used to disappear a long time ago. We used to go

550 down to the cannery and my parents used to dry fish down there. There was a whole bunch of smokehouses out there where that salmon bake is now, from there all the way up the point towards where they have that little pit there when you come from the house by the two big trees. From that house to there, there used to be smokehouses there that whole beach used to be owned by everybody. We used  
555 to have big holes, big pits. Like this would be the smokehouse, this whole part would be the big pit and we used to site around and stay there all night. And the old-timers used to go up the cricks and cut the alder woods with their skiffs and drag them to the beach, fall them in the crick at high-water and bring them across. We used to get them over by humpy crick. There was a whole bunch of it. It used  
560 to be the easiest way to get the alders. And drag them on over to the cannery; It is right across about twenty minutes. They used small motors and came real slow with them. I even remember a couple of times they were singing when they were getting the trees. They were singing when they took off. I should have paid a little more attention. That was called Fish Camp.

565 In Sitka there used to be a big one. We used to own land up there. We used to have at least forty people, go up there, make up camp and dry fish, put up fish. One of our beliefs too is stink heads. Our belief is it purifies the body. When you first eat it you will end up with the runs; that's cleansing your body. Its getting all the bad stuff out. You eat it a few more times then your body goes to normal; that  
570 means you are cleansed. Like if you haven't had it for a long time. Like a couple of times when I was in Anchorage, I hadn't ate it for almost two years and I finally

got some, I had the runs for awhile. Then after a couple more times, you're normal. It is fermented heads. We made our own heads up in Anchorage. We just had them send the heads. I know how to make that stuff. When you make fish heads you use  
575 half fresh water and half salt water. You throw the guts and leave the gills inside the fish and the guts everything inside the fish and you just ferment it. It gives it a sweet taste. It stinks. Once you get past the stink it is o.k. A lot of people don't believe me. Nobody nowadays even makes it. I never made it this year. I kept telling them, you need to go see if they have some heads. The best kind to get is  
580 Dogs heads. Coho heads, they are real big heads, but the brain is not. They have a big hook on their nose. But the dog heads, they have an alligator snout, real sharp teeth. but it has all kinds of brain tissue up and that's the best part. The eyeball is ok too, pretty good. You use a five-gallon plastic bucket. They say you aren't supposed to do that but we did that for years. We used to put them inside wooden  
585 barrels, the ones that had rings around them like a wooden barrel. We used to put them in that. But there are none of those around anymore. I've never tried... I heard the old timers used to wrap the heads with Skunk Cabbage and dig a hole in the beach and let the tide do it. And it would be all wrapped up, down there by the cannery. I've never seen it done. But they used to throw the heads in there with  
590 Skunk Cabbage, cover it, bury it and just leave it there. And when they would think its time they would go dig it up and it would be ready. I think maybe I will try it sometime, maybe even better. A lot of it is salt, when the salt is just right it tastes good. In the bucket, it takes ten or twelve days. Just like when the eyes turn red.

But you have to be real careful in the summer. Fall time is a real good time to make  
595 then because you don't have a heat issue and it ferments more evenly. Some people  
get sick. Man those people up in the Kuskowim, holy cow, eeee, they bury theirs  
like the old way. They leave it there until it turns into a gooey substance, the head,  
the bones and everything ferment. They scoop it out and eat it like that. They just  
scoop it likes its glue.

600 I wanted to come back for my family. A lot of my family wanted me to  
come back. For me, I felt too I was losing a lot of my culture. A lot of my culture  
was being loss because I wasn't fully in tuned. A lot of stuff goes on not just  
parties. It's preparing, making decisions, and I wanted to sit there, I wasn't a part of  
it. They would have a party and I wouldn't be here to sit there and watch them, how  
605 they do these things. Like I said, when I first started to learn Tlingit parties, I was  
just starting to get into it when Mrs. Joe White, I was already seven years into it.  
Mrs. Joe White passed away. Then I broke my neck and I ended up there, then I  
came back. That hurts a little bit about the greed. I need to learn how to do this. I  
want to try to say something about it. I talk to my elders, about the parties, about  
610 the greed. That's why I can't just go right out and say it. I have to go through the  
right channels if I can say something like that or if I could say it at all. That is a part  
of leaning, all the decisions to make about the parties. Whose going to be the  
speakers. So you don't step on any feet, that's the whole thing. You have to watch  
what you say; if you offend somebody it throws off the party. I've never seen it  
615 done but there is some people that have walked out. And If you have someone that

walks out of your party its... You have to sit there and really, like they turned my dad away. That was...at our party, at our party they turned my dad away. They, that lady turned my dad away. Are you invited? I don't see you on the list. Those are our grandfathers, the Chookaneidís. I mean they come when they please. I sat  
 620 there...ohhh. I almost left but then my step brother says, "I'll fix it don't worry about it." Sure enough, we had a meeting. We gathered all kinds of money up again, my dad came out of there with almost fifteen hundred bucks. After the party, in the middle of the party, they found out but nobody went to get him. But he still, but the party came up with fifteen hundred and went to him and asked for his  
 625 forgiveness. Couldn't belief it happened, she thought she was doing right. The *naa kaanís* would go out there and invite him.

When it is a Raven party the Eagles are the guests, the Raven's are serving the Eagles. When it is an Eagle party, the Eagles serve the Ravens. Like at a party, the Rave's were serving what they will do is hire the Eagles for the cooking. Or if  
 630 the cooks or if some cooks are in desperate need they will get Eagles. The way it is these years the Eagles are cooking. My uncles got too old to do all the cooking. There's another thing too with food. Not very many people eat seal meat anymore. Like cockles and stuff like that none of the kids...ooohhhh. It kind of bugs me...clams, you don't' see any of the kids really interested in eating clams.  
 635 Gumboots, there are a few of kids who like that; all the good stuff that live on the beach. I was shocked about that, my ex old lady, my son's mother came to Seattle and she had smoked cockles from Metlakatla. I never heard of that before and I

didn't want to try it because she made it and she didn't like to cook. I gave some to my uncle when my uncle came to see me, "Here I'll try them." then after he took it home a couple of jars of them. "It was real good." Are you still alive? One of my favorite snacks is oysters, big oysters with cheese in them, cheese pineapples, olives. Cheddar cheese, olives and pineapple chunks, you put it on a toothpick like an horsdevores. You take the whole thing and chew it that way. It's real good. It's a lot of different tastes. My sister I don't know where she got it from. She got it years ago and it became a traditions, for Thanksgiving, for snacks. I never thought of it too, try it with smoke cockles. I just thought of it now. It's too bad, you can see all the cancer and stuff coming along. Back in the 70s and 60s you hardly ever heard of cancer. Now its just like a household thing, somebody in the family's got cancer, how it kills people. Then we have to sit there and look at the people that are obese.

[We talk about Nina, a friend with cancer] They were high school sweethearts. I remember when he jumped off the dock for her. She jumped off alkains dock and he jumped in for her. I seen that guy pick up a guy and put him in the garbage can. you know a fifty gallon drum. He slapped her... and he took him outside and put him inside the garbage can. We were just standing on the street. A big ole white guy. Chops was real tough in his day. He just likes to have fun. His dad was a blast. Always kidding around, always laughing, him and Coldcuts Shakley. And there was one time when I was lifting up the boat and it had all kinds of gear in there. We were fixing up the boat taking the halibut gear off, getting ready for seining and Coldcuts was making me laugh. and I was using the hoist, an aluminum skiff full of

660 gear. I kept looking at Coldcuts laughing and my finger was on the button. It went all the way up and it snapped all the cables and the whole skiff fell right on the deck, about thirty feet. It just went pow, pow!! Coldcuts walked away, "It's my fault buddy, ah jeeze." I just looked at the boat, Anybody under there? No one was under there. Coldcuts came back, "I'm sorry buddy it was my fault.

665 I said, "ah its all right. Twelve hundred bucks I paid for that skiff and took it out of my pocket. I had a bill. It was a good thing I just got done halibut fishing; a brand new skiff 18 foot, smashed it right on the guard rails. Almost broke it right in half. a Whole bunch of stuff fell overboard, fishing stuff. How are you going to pay for it. I don't know. They don't pay me for this. I unload it for free. Oh we  
670 always had to overhaul the gear. So I got paid less, twelve hundred dollars less. I got a full share. When I was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, I hate to say it but I got paid twenty two days. I got fifty cents from each crew member and I washed dishes for twenty two days. I woke up with the cook, start prepping, start doing all this stuff. After awhile I thought it was a rip-off so I started sleeping more. I'm not going to get up  
675 for fifty cents. They were walking off with thousands of dollars and I got eight dollars in my pocket. It wasn't enough for me but after I turned eleven when I left the house and I ended up with my uncle Archie just before I turned twelve. That summer I ended up with him for maybe about a month, until fishing was over and I got full share. He said if I worked like a man I'd get paid a full share. He used to  
680 say, "Do you want draw money?" I look at him, "It's your money." Twelve years old and walk around with two hundred dollars in my pocket. Walk around



downtown Ketchikan. Even made a run. Twelve years old, I got into the liquor store. I had four cases of beer, this is the honest to god truth, packing it out, opened the door for me. The second time they carded me. Figured man he is having a tough  
685 time, all my buddies were sitting there waiting and its tough when they all grabbed it off of me. We were crazy though. It was a blast the whole time. I wouldn't change it. I had a lot of fun and I had a lot of heartache. I think the heartache made me tougher. I grew up sticking up for women. I think I left home at the right time. I didn't stick around. I swore I'd stick up for women. The first time I did though it  
690 was in Juneau. My brother said, "Do you want to go to Juneau to go to school." He just got out of the army.

So I went and I was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Yeah I'll try it. There was this girl who was getting beat up on the street by the liquor store downtown. And I said, "come on come on try me. I was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and he was probably twenty years old. I  
695 got a lucky punch it. She was all beat up. And I hit him: Bam and knocked him out. And I told that girl run, run! And she took off and I turned around and he was standing there and I thought, oh-oh. I got beat up. I went home and my brother came and he looked at me and I had a pretty good shiner, big lips. Took me downtown to go and try and find this guy, looked all over and we couldn't find  
700 him, looked in the bars. This was one of the first times I really stick up for a woman. It was just natural. I felt it wasn't right. I hit one woman in my life and I was real sorry for that. My next door neighbor, my daughter's mother, she used to beat me up all the time when she was drunk. She slapped me and hit me all the

time. This time she hit me in the groin, dropped me, I was puking. I told her to run.  
705 But I got up and hit her. I felt bad. She threw a half rack on my head and beat me  
up while I was sleeping but I still loved her...laughs...

I just wish a few of my buddies would come up and talk about old times.  
Like it used to be. I came back because of my buddies but I don't see them .I keep  
inviting them to dinner but nobody bites. When I was in Anchorage when I was  
710 having a dinner party, everybody used to show up, I mean everybody. Never even  
had to cook. I would just say I'm having a party and girls would show up and help  
cook and guys and everything. But here nobody goes and eats dinner at anybodies  
house. This is like unsocial, really unsociable. You have dinner parties. Our family  
cooks. we like to cook and it's a good time to be around each other. Now kids  
715 don't' even eat when they are supposed to. Sit around for dinner, the whole family  
sits for dinner. Now they just eat what they want. Like I said, some kids..yuuuk.  
You don't say that around me. Just like grandson, I wished he would have stayed.  
Because tries to eat what he wants, like chips and stuff like that. I had a bowl of  
oatmeal and a toast and a boiled egg. I said, "You're going to sit there until you are  
720 done with it."

"No!"

"Yes you are."

And he starts screaming at me, "No I don't like you."

"But I'm your grandpa, I like you."

725 "I don't want to talk to you."

“You don’t have to just eat.”

“I hate you!”

“Where did you learn that word from? You don’t talk to your grandpa like that.” And then he starts screaming [and I said,] “Louder I can’t hear you.” He did  
730 this about twenty minutes.

And then he finally says, “I want to go to bed.”

“Go ahead and go to bed but that’s going to be here when you get up”

And he just looked, “No!”

“You don’t have to yell at me. Go to bed.”

735 An hour and a half later he got up came out of the bedroom, “Grandpa, I’m hungry.” He sat down and ate the egg, all the oatmeal, and said, “I want some more.” He was three years old.

I sat there and I just looked at him, “Now how hard was that? I knew you would like that.”

740 And he goes, “It is good Grandpa.”

“What are you fighting so hard for? You need to eat good food so you can have chips. Maybe we’ll think about chips later.”

“I’m too full now Grandpa.”

“O.K. Maybe later then.”

## APPENDIX B

*Lingít X'éínáx, Tlingit Yooxatangi: Lingít Language, Tlingit Thinking*

In this chapter, I present four related narratives from the voice of a young Tlingit woman, Vivian Mork, *Yéilk'*, who is a Lingít language instructor, tutor, and cultural specialist. She is also an artist, poet and a college student. Vivian was among the first handful of Tlingit students enrolled in the University of Alaska's Lingít language program. She has taught at Dzantiki Heeni Middle school in Juneau, plus at immersion, language retreats around Southeast Alaska. She works to develop Lingít language materials and curriculum and is a consultant on the Lingít language and culture. She also serves on the Kaayaaní Commission, organized by Sitka Tribes of Alaska to assist with preservation and the protection and the traditional use of local plants.

I conducted the following interviews over a period of several years. The first narrative presents Vivian's experiences with education, identity, and racism and the conflicts she faced while attending college. The second narrative describes her interests in learning the Lingít language and how exploring her culture, led to a sense of Tlingit identity. The third narrative describes the transgenerational trauma of boarding schools and her experience teaching in the public schools. The fourth narrative derives from my inquiry into well-being and identity as a Tlingit person, the focus of this study. The last section is a selection of poetry. In the oral tradition, Vivian's poetry is a historical account of the contemporary struggles with being Tlingit in a society dominated by a worldview that is contradictory to her own. The poems also reflect her struggles with

Tlingit identity. Figure 6: *Teaching method TPR in Hoonah, Alaska*, depicts teaching during Sealaska Heritage Institute's Tlingit Immersion Retreat in Hoonah, 2003.



Figure 6: *Teaching method TPR in Hoonah, Alaska*. Note. Left to right: Instructor Vivian Mork-Yéilk, Sophia Henry, Karoline Henry, Harlena Sanders, Rachel White, Donnita White, Chauncey White and Louie White. Photo courtesy of Daphne Wright. Resourced from *Sharing our Pathways*, 10(2), p. 13-15.

*Vivian Mork: Educational experiences in a non-traditional setting*

My first experience with overt racism, I was in high school. The principal had taken me out of class and into his office to talk to me about my desire to graduate early. He told me that I was never going to make it in society because I  
5 came from a large alcoholic Native family. And so I yelled at him a lot and then my parents were called and came in. I had never been discriminated against for being Native. Or rather, I had never before thought that it was *why* I was being discriminated against. It was kind of strange. I was 16-yrs-old. I was trying to go off to college and graduate a year early from high school. Well, my response to  
10 him, the principal, was that if he was what represented the frame of society, he was right, I wasn't going to fit in. And I was just going to bust out of it. And so I it made me want to try even harder to graduate early.

And even though I did graduate early and went to college, a school for Natives. I learned that lower 48- Natives were sometimes prejudiced against Alaska  
15 Natives. Some were under the impression that we have a lot of money. And we are not "Indian" like them.

Before I went to college there, I heard about a Tlingit girl at another Native based college, somewhere either in Arizona or New Mexico. And she was beaten up for being Alaska Native. I believed it actually happened in the cafeteria where a  
20 bunch of people were around and no one helped her. I don't remember where she was from, either Juneau or Ketchikan, one of the bigger communities.

I only stayed at Fort Lewis College for a year and then worked. I worked for 8 years in the health care field and the fishing industry. Then I came to Hoonah to visit. It was strange because I had preconceived notions about what Hoonah was like because growing up I had heard things about Hoonah. It was the place you made fun of. I heard terms used in derogatory ways like 'Hoonah Honey's' and heard people making fun of the village residents for not being 'smart' in the ways of the people in bigger communities in SE Alaska. They made fun of people for being more of a 'village' person with a more traditional lifestyle. I had never considered that those people were people like me...Tlingit.

When I went to Hoonah, I realized that the pace of life there was a lot slower and I was able to see the culture. Growing up in Wrangell I believed the Tlingit culture was dead, it was gone, and to find it alive in Hoonah was just amazing: Hoonah is an amazing place. I started hearing the language and seeing the young people learning the language, and my mom learning the language; it helped to see the idea of who I was. I started thinking about who I was, who I am, because there I was in Hoonah, the land where my family had been for centuries and I had never even thought about it before.

I think the experience in Hoonah helped me decide what classes I wanted to take in college. I immediately knew that I was going to study the Lingit language. And of course carving. I took a carving class in Hoonah. Now I am in love with carving.

But there were obstacles in college. I'm not very good at showing up on time and that can be an obstacle. And as far as difference in learning styles goes, TPR [Total  
45 Physical Response] teaching has been the best way to learn since the Tlingit language is phonetic and it needs to be alive rather than just read from a book.

Well, if you're an instructor while you are saying, "*Gamu*". you are motioning for someone to sit down. You motion with your hands and body and you also do it until the student sits down. They you say, "*Yak ei*", which means good.  
50 Then you can tell the students, "*Giddan*" as you stand. TPR is using whatever is around you in order to convey the sounds and words that you are trying to get across to the student. TPR is different than learning from a textbook. It's not just memorization. It helps to put the language into more than one slot in your head. It helps you to actually retain the words.

55 One year, I took a condensed English 211 class in the summer. I started getting my papers back and they didn't have the grades on them that I thought they should have. So I went to the instructor and was told that I was "illogical" and that my thoughts were not set up on a logical way. Eventually, I found out the instructor wanted my paper set out in a very linear order that didn't make sense to me every  
60 time I sat down to write.

I went to try to talk to the instructor again and had a lot of resistance, so much so that the instructor wrote to the head of the English department in order to basically "tell on me" about having opposing viewpoint about how things should be written. This was because I told the instructor that I could convey the same



65 messages in a completely logical manner in a circular paper and it didn't have to be linear.

I eventually got a decent grade, but not the "A" I was hoping for. I got a B. I had to write how the instructor wanted me to. I had to take my paper apart. Someone told me once that Dr. Walter Soboleff, while he was going to school, had  
70 the same problem. After he wrote a paper, he would have to look at it and actually strip it apart and put it in the order they wanted. So I did that and turned it in. Then I got a decent grade on it.

In the other classes like anthropology, I went back to the way I wanted to write and no one said anything. My anthropology teacher didn't see anything  
75 wrong with my papers, but probably because he has spent the last 20 years with Tlingit people. The English teacher didn't have any experience with Native people.

I've had another problem with another instructor because my ideas and the way I wrote my papers weren't up to the academic 'Harvard' style of writing that the instructor was used to writing. But I couldn't understand that style of writing  
80 and it wasn't just me; pretty much everyone in the class could not understand the instructors writing either.

In my second year at UAS I am somewhat satisfied with my education. I like the fact that the Lingit language and carving are taught here, whereas in Durango at Fort Lewis College I didn't know any culturally aware Native people  
85 and here I can be a part of that. Yet here at the University they'd like to think they are culturally aware. Yes, they are friendly and respectful but they still have a long

ways to go. The Native club on campus, Wooch Een is helpful. Because we have something here. I recently met another young Native girl at Wooch Een who is having trouble in her English classes. She has had to retake English 111 four  
90 times...four times. I think this reflects something wrong in the universities' system. This is a common occurrence when students come from smaller communities to a bigger college. This week, I found out that every single Native person in my Lingít language class has struggled in UAS's English classes and has had to be tutored. Some even had to retake the class.

95 I think the schools in the small towns should focus, early on, that there is a different kind of thinking going on when learning English and try to teach what they need to teach in a way that Native students can understand it. But I honestly think that the solution is for universities to become more aware of the Native peoples around them and their ways of thinking: their worldviews are different.  
100 Because despite the fact that assimilation has been going on for along time, many Euro-Americans think that we are just like them. Whether people like it or not there is something to that, there are differences. There is something about growing up in a village or a Native community within the larger community that makes you 'not' just like everyone else around you.

105 I've actually gone to the head of the English department here at UAS and discussed another Native student that I am tutoring. The Professor was very understanding but really, I think the problem is that some Professor's are so academic that they don't see the differences.

We've identified a problem, now we just need to have the University admit  
110 there is a problem and come up with a solution. Well, in my mind it's differing  
worldviews, which include ways of knowing and seeing the world. I think it would  
be beneficial for colleges to have workshops and have Native people come in and  
educate them on the differences in styles of learning and knowing.

In fact, I think sometimes even the Native students who are in those classes  
115 and struggling aren't even aware of what's happening. They think they are just  
'stupid' or 'dumb' when it comes to English or they can't write. Yet ironically, a  
lot of those students that I know who have those same struggles with English are  
poets: they can write.

College has helped me learn about my culture and a sense of identity  
120 though. Learning the language has helped a whole group of us Tlingit students. It  
has helped us find a stronger sense of self that isn't singular. The sense of self we  
have belongs to something bigger than ourselves. It belongs to the culture, the  
Tlingit people, and knowing that we are doing something not only for ourselves but  
also for generations to come.

125 The concept of identity is different from the way most Euro-Americans  
view identity: viewed from the singular self. In the Tlingit culture this isn't  
necessarily so. It is the realization that everything we do affects the people around  
us and the children who haven't been born yet. It's quite the undertaking knowing  
you have that responsibility. Yes, it's a little scary.

*Strengthening our spirits: Perspectives from a Lingít language instructor*

*Lingít x'éináx Yéilk' yóo xat duwasáakw. Dleit káa x'éináx Vivian Mork  
yóo xat duwasáakw. Yéil naax xat sitee. T'akdeintaan áyá xat. Tax' hit dax.*

*Teikweidi yadi áyá xat. Kaagwaantaan dachxán áyá xat. Saami ka Irish áyá xat.*

135 *Hawaiian ka Norwegian yadi áyá xat. Kachxana.aakw kuxdzitee ku.aa Xunaa  
kaawu dax.*

In the Lingít language my name is *Yéilk'*, Little Raven. In the English language my name is Vivian Mork. I am Raven. I am T'akdeintaan. I am from the Snail House. My father's people are Teikweidi. I am a grandchild of the

140 Kaagwaantaan. I am Sáami and Irish, and Norwegian and Hawaiian. I was born in Wrangell and I am from Hoonah.

I decided to learn the Lingít language when I was living in Washington State. My mother called and asked me when I was going to return to Alaska to go to college. My mother was living in Hoonah and learning the Lingít language with  
145 local high school teacher Duffy Wright. She was excited about it. My mother would call me and tell me something in Lingít. She was persuasive, so I decide to come back home. I realized I wanted to be a part of the revitalization effort.

Growing up, I was told that the language is dead. When I found out the language wasn't dead and that you could learn it, I was amazed because I come from a

150 family of non-speakers.

In the beginning [learning the language] was important because I knew that people weren't learning [it]. No one in my family spoke Lingít fluently despite the fact my

grandfather heard Lingít when he was younger. When you come from a family with no fluent speakers, you really don't have too many choices about where to go in order to learn. I soon found out that they were teaching the Lingít language at the University of Alaska in Juneau. I decided to incorporate learning the Lingít language into my studies. And after a couple of years of learning the language, it has taken on a whole new life. A lot of us new speakers feel that when we speak, we are waking up the ancestors by using the language, giving them respect and calling on them. When we introduce ourselves, we are telling someone in the room who we are and calling our ancestors to stand with us.

It wasn't an easy transition to go from a learner to an instructor of the Lingít language. As college students, several students and I got better at speaking the language, and suddenly we started to get job offers. We learned that the school system has a difficult time hiring Elders because often an Elder doesn't have a degree or the skills to teach in a public school. As students we had the credentials to offer the school, so we paired ourselves with Elders and entered the system in that way. I've taught 6th, 7th and 8th grades, 4 and 5-year-olds, and college students, as well as at the community level, including Elders. It's scary to teach.

As a learner-teacher you are aware that you don't know everything. You know you make mistakes, you pronounce things wrong, and that sometimes you are going to be judged and criticized for it. But it is important so you do it anyway. You take the criticism and the judgment; you take it with a grain of salt and keep going. Fortunately, when pairing a student-teacher with an Elder to teach the

175 language to others, we find that we learn along with the children. In fact, we learn a  
lot quicker. We learn to have conversations and we understand learning is more  
than memorization and commands: it is communication flows in that environment  
and spills into other areas of life. Everything becomes a teaching environment: the  
home, the street and grocery store — it isn't limited to the school system.

180 For example, at the grocery store when the cashier hands you your change,  
you say "*Gunalcheésh*." If they want to know what you said, you tell them that  
means "thank you" in Lingít. In fact, I was once at the Fred Meyer in Juneau when  
I said "*Gunalcheésh*" to a cashier and she said, "*Yaa xaay yatee*," which translates  
loosely to mean, "You're welcome." She was blond-haired, blue-eyed and white-  
185 skinned. I never would have guessed she was Tlingit, but it made me smile all day  
long. This illustrates that you can make any experience a learning one. Most of my  
teaching and learning experiences, although they have been challenging, have been  
rewarding.

When I taught at the middle school I had 33 kids and 90 percent of them  
190 were boys. In the beginning, they were rambunctious and disrespectful. But the one  
thing that comes with teaching the language is the culture [is that] you can't teach  
the language without teaching the culture, if you want it to stick. In teaching the  
Lingít language you teach people about respect. It wasn't long before my class  
became well-behaved and even some of the most difficult kids started being  
195 respectful. We taught the children introductions, about their clans and the clan  
system, how all the Ravens and Eagles are brothers and sisters, and the proper way

to interact with one another. I had a student who is a Teikwiedí, a brown bear. Because the Teikwiedí is my grandmother's people I had to address her as my grandmother, which would make her giggle and, more importantly, it made her  
200 interested. She listened and a level of respect emerged between us. This young girl was 13-years-old. Later in the summer, at [Juneau's] Celebration, a teacher asked this young girl what her best experience in school was. All she talked about was the language program. She said that learning the language is important because she felt keeping the language alive depended on her and her fellow students. At a young  
205 age, this girl knows the value of learning the language. She knows who she is and her place in the web of life. I'm proud she is one of my students.

The pride in learning your Native language is a big change from past generations. We've come a long way from the boarding-school generation who were forbidden to speak their languages. American boarding schools were a main  
210 contributor to the loss of language, not just in Alaska, but also for Native cultures throughout the United States. When you look through old government documents regarding the boarding schools' progress, you find references that the government knew that in order to get rid of the "Nativity" in Native people, they had to remove children from their homes, out of the culture, out of the influences, and take  
215 away their customs and their language. Because language and culture are intertwined, the government schools had to take it away to assimilate them. It was almost successful.

Unfortunately, because of past policies, there is a huge loss of the language and the knowledge that comes with the language. It wasn't just the boarding-school experiences that created the loss; it began with epidemics such as small pox and tuberculosis. These diseases wiped out entire villages including their traditional knowledge and language. In no time at all, whole dialects disappeared with no possible way of getting them back. Each Elder, being a life-long library, was gone in an instant.

225           There is another reason for language loss. There were entire generations of people who decided that the language was dead and let it go. This came after the push to assimilate Natives into mainstream American society. There were reasons why people went to the schools and reasons why people sent their family members to get educated. Native peoples knew there was a lot of change coming. They 230 needed to be ready and one way was to educate leaders within the Western system. But it didn't have to be done in such a traumatic way. If only the American government would have known how much better off they would have been if they allowed Native people to keep their culture. You have groups of people living around each other whose entire life is about taking care of each other and they use a 235 language system that had been indigenous to the land for thousands of years. There is so much knowledge within the system, and it is ridiculous to just throw it away. Intruding cultures could have learned so much about this land, about the people. It could have made Alaska a better place.



But we still have hope. Now though, when we look at old videos and  
240 recordings, we hear the Elders speak and note the differences in the language. We  
realize that people who learn languages today in a university setting differ in dialect  
and pronunciation from the language learned in the villages, which is the difference  
between a natural acquisition and a rather “fake” acquisition. Despite those  
differences, however, it is all right to pronounce words incorrectly when you are  
245 first learning. You have to think of each language learner as a “child of the  
language.” When they are six months into learning the language, they are six-  
months-old.

Although the process of re-learning the language is difficult, you notice that  
through learning, the students, both young and old, have been changed. There are  
250 people who have decided to dedicate their lives to learning the Lingít language and  
have devoted themselves to making sure it will never die. It has changed how we  
language-learners relate with one another. Knowing we are going to interact with  
each other for the rest of our lives, we treat each other with respect.

When you learn the language, you begin with a basic introduction. You  
255 learn what moiety and clan you are, what house you are from, and who your  
grandparents are. When you give that introduction in a room full of speakers, every  
Elder in that room knows who you are without having met you. This introduction  
can be basic and take a few minutes to recite, but a real Tlingit introduction can be  
from 10 to 20 minutes long. This is an important aspect of the Tlingit culture.  
260 When we teach children the basic introduction, we are teaching them who they are,

who their ancestors are and how their names and clans connect them to this land and to each other. We teach children that they have a bigger family than the typical nuclear American family and that we have a larger family and a responsibility to the people around us.

265           Despite the lack of natural settings to teach the Lingít language, teaching in the school system is important. It instills a sense of pride for Native students, especially in Juneau, since we experience cases of racism. When children start to learn the language, they realize where their pride can come from. We tell them daily that they've been here since time immemorial and this land is theirs—they  
270 belong to it. Another thing occurs. People in the classroom who are not Tlingit start to ask questions about their own ethnicity. We've had Yup'ik and Aleut students in the classroom. Even a kid with Norwegian heritage was excited about looking into his history.

          We teach them they are genetically half of their parents, and part of their  
275 grand parents and great-grandparents. This way, children learn that inside of them, they are literally their ancestors. By speaking the language and by introducing themselves in Lingít, they are respecting their ancestors by respecting themselves. The idea of respect is something a lot of Native children don't have today. Gangs, media, television and music have a profound influence on them. They are reaching  
280 out and searching for something; they are lost. When you can teach children in their language, however, they start to find out who they are. When they really know who they are in the language, no one can take that away from them. This is amazing to

hold on to. It lifts their spirit and it makes them happy and excited to come to class. They usually like the language classes more than their mainstream classes. It makes  
285 their spirits stronger. (Originally published in *Sharing our Pathways* 10(2), p.13-15.)

*The language is ours: Examining the Lingít language revitalization*

Before the arrival of White men, Tlingit children learned their language  
290 beside Grandmother when she was drying fish, beside Grandfather when he was carving a spoon, beside uncle when he was baiting his halibut hooks. Children learned concepts, ideas, lessons, and values, in their own language. They learned by listening, then by doing, and by participating in cultural activities. Our survival depends on the education of children in the traditional manner and in their  
295 traditional languages.

The boarding school generation had an effect on the decline of the Lingít language. There are less than 300 fluent speakers so our revitalization is challenging. There is also a difference between the Western culture and the Tlingit culture and many concepts in the Tlingit culture can only be taught in a traditional  
300 context. Education is often left to the public school system. Sometimes, aunts, uncles, and grandparents live far away so kids feel a loss of identity when it comes to their loss of language and other cultural traditions.

Supporting Tlingit culture and language programs within the public school system is important. We need to create new tribal schools and immersion schools

305 where our culture is not separated from the curriculum. The well-being of Tlingit youth depends upon many things like the ability to learn how to pick and harvest traditional foods, practice traditional arts, dancing and singing, drumming, and ceremonial duties. I always encourage families, and elders, to get involved. Many Tlingit elders were punished for speaking their language in the classroom, 310 but now we encourage them to participate. You can see how this causes some difficulty for elders who used to be punished for speaking Lingít. So for many of us it is hard to learn and to teach our own language. I am a student of the language. I haven't had any flack over that but among ourselves—the teachers of the language. We wonder what we are doing here. Who are we to be here teaching the language 315 when we don't know everything. When it comes down to it, we see it as we are teaching when we are learning because we don't have enough time—this generation of elders, when they are gone, the language is going to go with it. If people don't start learning now it's going to be gone.

We need the Lingít language for the survival of our culture, so many Tlingit 320 people feel that the language needs to be taught in the school system by elders and language specialists. Most people I know think we shouldn't have to have a teaching certificate in order to properly teach the language, but we should have proper training with teaching methods that work because not all people are natural teachers. But we can learn to become teachers in different areas of our culture.

325 It is my belief that Indigenous languages taught in the public school system have the power to free Indigenous minds from the Western worldview. But there is

resistance. Politics resists us. Schools resist us. Parents resist us. This resistance to teaching from the Tlingit point of view reveals prejudices against Tlingit language and culture. Some people think anything that has to do with the Tlingit culture, is  
330 'evil.' Even our language is evil. And if our educational system were to change to empower Tlingit children to become leaders, then power would shift.

Still schools offer only surface solutions by hiring Alaska Natives to say that they have them on staff. It's our self-determination that's at the center of controversy over the Lingit language being taught in the classroom. Language and  
335 power and language instruction is very political. We have always been political. We know the power of our language. This is why we are preserving our language. This is one reason why I wanted to learn. Sealaska Heritage has discovered a technique I used for teaching languages called Total Physical Response. James Asher developed Total Physical Response (TPR) in the 1970s. I've taken classes on  
340 how to teach using TPR so that I can teach others the language. So far so good but it's challenging sometimes. It can be hard.

TPR is a type of teaching that helps to puts language and words into one more than one slot in your head. It helps to visualize words and use that language. Through use of a language is how people learn it. From the idea of teaching a  
345 newborn baby how to speak and from how they learn languages. They listen for a really long time and then they make sounds and noises and mimicking. When you are teaching a baby, when you are washing their hands you let them know by

saying it, that you are washing their hands, washing their hair, and that's how they learn the names for their body parts; its through action and use that people learn.

350           The best setting for the TPR method is not in the classroom but in everyday settings like the role of an apprentice. But in a public school I have the opportunity to encourage young people to become interested in learning the Lingít language. When kids and other Tlingit people are given the opportunity to learn the Lingit language, it opens up a new way to understand the world. The whole world opens  
355 up to them. Their natural environment becomes alive with stories, traditions, songs, and dances.

          But the Lingít language is such a hard language to learn. I don't think it could possibly be learned by just sitting in a room and repeating everything a person in front of you says or reading it from a chalk board. The Tlingit language is  
360 such an elaborate language that it needs to be lived. It is a living language. All languages are easier to learn outside the classroom; and TPR gets my students and us teachers together so we can learn in a non-threatening, holistic setting.

          Learning seems hard to us at first because we don't understand the elaborateness of the Lingít language but once you hear it several times, you hear  
365 the differences. You eventually hear the differences in the relations to objects. *Xat Toondataani* is my Tlingit thinking. You learn how to say things, like *Ax Jeet ti*, which means having something. It has to do with the object, flat or full of something. The word can change according to those differences and you have to listen for those differences. At first it would seem impossible to remember all those

370 differences, but if you listen and see it being used it helps you to learn faster rather than just memorizing the various ways to use the word *Jeet*. It then goes into all the other slots in your head and by seeing other people use it, you remember it. So when you think about that motion connected to it, those words come back.

If our revitalization is going to be successful, teachers need to be flexible.  
375 That's why I use new techniques with traditional ways of teaching. Now that we are successful with this new teaching methods in the schools, when a proposal for a Lingít language immersion school and or tribal school is introduced there is going to be evidence that our children can learn in a holistic Lingít language environment. Even though the Western classroom setting is artificial, it can awaken an interest  
380 within the children and their parents. Most programs that include the language include classes in Northwest coast art, carving and beading. In my classrooms, children are supposed to participate in cultural activities like dancing and singing at ceremonial gatherings like the *koo.éex'*. This Tlingit learning style incorporates the whole person, including their mind and their spirit, never separating the Tlingit  
385 child from their identity. Leaving cultural identity out of the public school system allows the monocultural attitude to thrive. If we encourage Lingít language children will view their ways of knowing, as something they can use outside of the classroom, validating their culture and identity.

This kind of class isn't the answer, obviously, to saving the language but  
390 it's a beginning towards working towards the preservation of the language. I hope it sparks interest in the youth about learning the language. They need to know who

they are. They need to know who they are, where they come from because along with teaching the language we are teaching the culture. A lot of the children that are in the class don't know much about who they are. They don't know much about the  
395 Tlingit culture or even any other ethnicities that they might be.

Traditional Tlingit knowledge used in the public school curriculum reinforces cultural knowledge and identity. In my classroom children learn to identify themselves as Tlingit by memorizing their formal introductions, which is very important in our ceremonial life.

400 I think the Western classroom is not the perfect setting for learning about much of our Tlingit knowledge. Like *at.óow* which is one of the most important concepts in our culture. It is a difficult concept to teach in the classroom. A lot of my students have experienced the ceremonial power of *at.óow*, yet they might not understand the multi-layered meanings. I can't teach them that in the classroom.

405 Language is something that is meant to be used and *at.óow* is a word in our language that is difficult to explain in English. And TPR is a tool and if used in the right situation can be easy to use. Through TPR you are learning through the actions of your body and you are using it. I can use TPR to show the students what *at.óow* is. I encourage them to participate in ceremonies. There they can learn the  
410 protocols about *at.óow*, how to respect and recognize *at.óow*.

I guess I don't just participate in revitalizing the language, but in perpetuating the Tlingit culture. If I introduce the children to the language, it offers them a sense of connection. The whole assimilation, being separated-being in two



worlds, and how when you start to learn the language, you start to find out about  
415 who you are. And then you start learning that the Tlingit people have been here 10-  
thousand years at least. That kind of sense of connection to everything around you  
it helps you have that sense of belonging. You know who you are you know who  
your ancestors are you know where you came from. You have that and no one can  
ever take that away from you. I think there is a lot of youth out there today that  
420 could really benefit from learning the language. They feel so lost and feeling  
connected and having a sense of self and know that you are connected to other  
people. I think that there was something lost in assimilation. A lot of people say the  
culture is dying but really it isn't. It's changing and we can keep the good and get  
rid of the bad of any of the cultures we come in contact with today.

425 I know that we as Tlingit people live in an ever-changing society. I like to  
creating a classroom that isn't separate from what my students experience outside  
the classroom. One of the difficulties I come across is the grading system. Students  
are used to receiving a grade and at first and they have difficulty with the idea that  
they are not being graded in a Western way. The way they are used to being graded.  
430 I think that in a Western-style classroom, the teacher is separate from you. TPR is  
about communicating and you don't just communicate with your words or your  
voice you communicate with your whole body.

The TPR method I use is like our Tlingit traditional teaching methods: We  
watch and learn and then we act based on what we observed. And we try and we  
435 are not punished for trying. We try when we are ready. We do the task at hand

when you feel like you are ready. Also I see that there is a difference in communication styles. In the [Western-style] classroom, it's ok to question the teacher or to raise your hand and ask a question. And kids can interrupt and ask a question. But in the Tlingit culture, this is considered rude: a taboo. We learned  
440 early on at ceremonies and social events, where young Tlingit people encounter the importance of the oral traditions...the importance of a speaker.

It's hard for some students. In the Tlingit culture, children are supposed to just listen but TPR you can learn faster. The natural setting is better. Even if someone came from a completely different culture and [they have] never heard of  
445 or seen something like 'doing the dishes,' they could still learn it through the actions, a foreign concept or idea. TPR in the classroom is a natural manner of learning language.

Another hurdle for my students is all the different sounds found in the Lingít language. There are over fifty letters in the Lingít language. The Lingít  
450 language is such a hard language to learn. I don't think it could possibly be learned by just sitting in a room and repeating everything a person in front of you says or reading it from a chalk board. The Lingít language is such an elaborate language that it needs to be lived, it is a living language.

There are a few books on Lingít language available, yes, but TPR is  
455 important. In the classroom, I teach them in the language using the motions to get the children to catch on to what is going on. The kids think it's a new way of learning when really it's not new. You learn how to speak English the same way

not in a fake environment—you learned through TPR because it's a natural way of learning a language. Sometimes I hear criticism that TPR isn't the way to teach or  
460 how someone doesn't believe in it. Yet this is the way they learned their own first languages, either Lingít or English or whatever language. This is the way your parents taught you, your neighborhood, your relatives.

Sometimes I have to use the chalkboard to show the students how the language is written because it will help kids to learn the difficult letters. Also I  
465 want the kids to learn to read the language. I'm going to have to try writing on the board so they can see it. I was torn about whether to do it or not. The students are from a generation who are learning to write and speak at the same time. Most of our fluent Lingít speakers do not write the language. These kids are going to be the ones to learn the new way the linguistically spelling the language. Then they can  
470 see where the high tones are, where the underline is. Then I can show them with the letters—an underline, pinched k or x [ k, x ]. They can see the difference then maybe hear the difference.

We are changing from an oral language to an oral and written one. We are becoming a new generation of fluent speakers. Because of our orthography literacy  
475 has increased. Yet even through our revitalization effort schools still have 'cultural day', 'culture week', or Native American month. They think they are validating us when they do this. It is a token gesture that doesn't meet most needs of our Native communities. The problem lies with the interpretation of the word 'culture.' To us the word 'culture' includes our beliefs, our values, our expressions, our language

480 and our shared knowledge about the world. Our Lingít language goes beyond the  
classroom.

We need to be creative in order to maintain and revitalize parts of our  
culture. The Lingít language instruction is one way. We can promote and build the  
community connections. We can create language programs. We can create  
485 apprentice programs. Sealaska has a Master apprentice program. It is the idea, in  
order to save an endangered language, like the Lingít languages, communities are  
organizing these apprenticeships, especially with very elaborate and intricate  
languages. They team up people, a speaker of the language or a younger person, or  
a beginning language learner, who goes into the speaker's home and gets to do  
490 everyday living situations in order to learn the language. The student helps the  
elder out, helps clean house and you both are getting something out of it.

This helps the language and the cultural instruction connect with our  
community, with our elders. We connect the younger learners with the elders. It is a  
way we teach 'identity.' Our elders show us who we are. The apprenticeship  
495 relationship is a one-on-one relationship with one elder or experienced person to  
one student. But it could be one elder and several students.

It's important to learn in a natural setting. You remember things better that  
way. By putting holistic knowledge, that students apply to their own world, into  
more than one place in their brain, reinforces learning, and probably later, the  
500 student can recall what they learned.

For myself, learning the Lingít language connect me to my community.

We all feel [that] we come from generation X and a lot of people today are lost. For me, and a lot of us learners at the college, it literally changed our lives because of the people we have met and all of our love and drive for learning the language. I  
505 have always thought the loss of language was what caused the Tlingit people from my region, to have this sense of loss, which manifests in many social problems among the Tlingits. It is the loss of a sense of relationships to other people, to nature, to everything. Our Elders went through tremendous change, from being fluent in their language to being punished for speaking it. They were told  
510 everything about themselves was wrong, the way they dressed, what they eat, and even what they thought. This is cultural washing. It leads to a serious identity crisis, which would cause anyone to reach for alcohol, drugs, or other self-destructive and self-medicated behavior just to try to heal themselves. The revitalization effort rebuilds our community relationships and re-establishing what has been lost.

515 In a school setting, many Tlingit students, who if put on the spot, will not want to answer the teacher, but when I take those same students and introduce them to knowledge in their own environment, with Elders, and shown how to apply that knowledge, they show me a more complete understanding of the new knowledge. The Lingít language as a living language. It is meant to be lived with the whole  
520 being. I show the students how the language lives on the beach, in the carvings, in ceremonies and inside of each Tlingit person. I teach the students what it is to 'be' a Tlingit person and view the world as a Tlingit person. It isn't only language instruction, it's reinforcing the students identity at an important part in their

physical, social, and cultural development. If you know who you are and where you  
 525 come from matters to the school and to your community, then you are more likely  
 to flourish in your learning environment, even if it's is a tribal school or a public  
 school. Tlingit people need to design our own curriculum, and take control over  
 how the next generation sees itself. It is our self-determination. Through language  
 learning my Tlingit students' identity is validated.

530 We are a living culture and our education should reflect this. The root of the  
 Lingít language revitalization is because many of us young people are searching for  
 identity. Our elders too want us to understand and keep our culture alive in today's  
 world. The only way to do that is to have The Lingít language living on through  
 communities and families. Because really, our classrooms flow out into the world,  
 535 and we take the language with us... we take it everywhere. We live it. The  
 language is ours.

*Haa Shagoon: Knowing who we are*

*Lingít x'éináx Yéilk' yóo xat duwasáakw. Dleit káa x'éináx Vivian Mork*  
 540 *yóo xat duwasáakw. Yéil naax xat sitee. T'akdeintaan áyá xat. Tax' hít dax.*  
*Teikweidí yadí áyá xat. Kaagwaantaan dachxán áyá xat. Saami ka Irish áyá xat.*  
*Hawaiian ka Norwegian yadí áyá xat. Kachxana.aakw kuxdzitee ku.aa Xunaa*  
*kaawu dax.*

My Tlingit name is Yéilk', or Little Raven. My English name is Vivian  
 545 Mork. I am of the Raven moiety. I am a member of the T'akdeintaan clan (black-

legged kittiwake). I am from the Snail house. I am a child of the Teikweidí (brown bear). I am a grandchild of the Kaagwaantaan (wolf). I am Sáami and Irish. I am a child of the Hawaiian and Norwegian. I was born and raised in Wrangell, but my *kwáan* comes from Hoonah.

550 I have been taught to introduce myself this way by my Elders that have taught me to speak and teach the Lingít language. They have told me that when I introduce myself this way, I call upon my ancestors and they are standing with me. They have taught me that when I know myself through the Tlingit way, through my lineage, then I truly know myself, and no one in the world can take that away from  
555 me. The Elders taught me that when I introduce myself this way in front of Tlingit people it as if they can see my entire family. This is the kind of knowledge that the elders have given me that I give to my students when I am teaching them the Lingít language.

I have taught the Lingít language for three years at Dzantik'i heení Middle  
560 School. After I expose them to the Lingít language through the TPR [Total Physical Response] approach, I teach them how to do their formal introduction. This is not an easy process. Due to the traditional knowledge gap associated with the multi-generational affects of trauma, many of my Tlingit students do not have a Tlingit name let alone know their lineage. When I teach Lingít I am often teaching more  
565 than just how to communicate in another language. I am showing my students another way to look at the world.

One of the Tlingit values that are very important to the Tlingit worldview is to respect your family and ancestors. Part of this value means to know who you are because when we learn about our family and our own personal ancestral history, the more we learn about ourselves. This is a wonderful value to instill in young people before they go through a common process in their teens of feeling alone and alienated. Learning about where they come from can help to prepare a young person to begin to understand where they will go in life. This concept is often stressed in many ways by the Elders I work with.

In my class we spend a lot of time talking about *Haa Shagoon*. *Haa Shagoon* cannot be directly translated into English. *Haa Shagoon* is a concept of understanding who we were before, who we are now, and who we must become all at the same time. We are the living representations of those that came before us and made it possible to exist in this world. And learning this history helps us to understand who we are now in relation to our family. When we begin to understand who we are in our family, we learn who we are in relation to the community our families live in or are ancestrally connected to. When we learn more about our community in Alaska, we begin to learn more about our state and its history with Alaska Native people. When learn more about the history of our state, we learn more about the interaction of the United States and the creation of Alaska. When we learn more about the United States and Alaska, the more we learn about the world around us. When we learn more about the world around us, we learn more about where our paths will go in life.



This concept began to evolve to include other non-native ethnicities, and  
590 other lands as Tlingit people began to become families with other groups of people.  
The idea of respecting one's ancestors has not disappeared with the introduction of  
other cultures, but it has begun to grow. Our elders want all children to learn to  
respect themselves, their families, and their communities. Many of my students  
struggle between their many cultural backgrounds as well as their diverse  
595 upbringings. When I teach them these beginning steps I also teach them that for  
many people, this is a life long search that evolves as we change through out our  
lives and learn more about the world around us. The concept of who we are is not  
concrete. Native people are not stuck in time. We have the right to change and still  
be ourselves just like every other culture in the world.

600 Tlingit children go through many changes, especially when they begin to  
learn about who they are. I have watched students begin to physically change the  
way they hold themselves. I have watched them hold their head up a bit more, talk  
a little louder, communicate more, and even change the way they communicate  
with others. My students know they must be respectful in my class. Often in my  
605 class I can hear one child tell another child to be respectful when necessary. I have  
brought elders into my classroom and watched my normally rambunctious middle  
school students go absolutely silent. When a student stands up in my class to give a  
formal introduction, students will remind each other to be quiet and be respectful  
when someone else is talking. The end of a semester in my class looks nothing like  
610 the beginning.

Another important result that happens in my class is that non-Tlingit children also begin to understand themselves through the Tlingit way. Having all my students learn a formal Tlingit introduction helps to create cross cultural communication. My Tlingit students get to learn about other cultures and other places in the world. Non-Native children get to learn about the history of their immigrant family members and some learn about their ancestral connections to other places in the world. My non-Tlingit Native students get to learn about the similarities between them and Tlingit people. My Tlingit students that are mixed of many different cultures get to learn about their complex histories and share them with others.

My students all learn about their similarities, and differences, which often brings up conversation about racism. I then assist them in respectful dialogue about their similarities and differences. My students are often very insightful about how to overcome racism and deal with each other on a more human level. In this society, my students know a lot more than I did about the world's pain when I was their age. They experience things that I can hardly even imagine having to deal with at the middle school age. There are many things that are even hard for adults to deal with. Some days I leave school very drained, but my students' stories make every moment worth it. I am so thankful that the Elders that have taught me to speak the Lingit language have given me knowledge that can give my students that they can take with them the rest of their lives. It is an idea of a sense of self that is

connected to those around them, and no matter how many times they fall off their paths in life, they can return because they know who they are.

635 *Expressing contemporary Tlingit identity through poetry*

*Kooxéedaa*

I use a Lingít pencil when I write  
because we are adaptable natives  
and my ancestors traded their way of life

640 for my education.

My ancestors, my grandparents,  
lived in American boarding schools  
that churned out American Indians  
at an alarming rate

645 and they were cooked in with the recipe for assimilation.

My ancestors unlearned their ancestors' ways  
in order to make a place for me in an American world  
and now I go to a white establishment  
in order to find the voice of my ancestors in their language

650 and to find the hands of my ancestors using carving tools  
made by white American hands.

Sometimes I show up to class late  
so that I can turn the white time into Indian time.

Sometimes I show up early because my ancestors  
655 won't let me sleep.  
Their voice comes through my hands  
when I find their faces in the wood.  
Their hands come through my voice  
when I use their language  
660 and it touches one person in the crowd.  
Now that I am finding their voice,  
where do I find their thoughts?

*Lingít Warrior*

665 One lone Lingít man  
sways steadfast  
at the fork in the road  
arms open wide  
with piercing dark eyes  
670 staring down every stranger  
who questions his drunken stance.  
For a moment the cheap whiskey  
made him forget his saggy wet jeans  
made him forget to pick up his unemployment check  
675 made him forget he was ¼ Norwegian

made him remember he was a Lingít warrior

made him remember there was a battle to fight

made him remember he wore a Raven crest.

For a moment he was intoxicated

680 with the strength of his ancestors

and he challenged every white stare

for being there

and challenged every brother and sister

for just being there.

685 One lone Lingít man

sways steadfast

at the fork in the road

arms wide open

with piercing dark eyes.

690

*Dleit Káa*

Civilized Lingíts still fight

the Dleit Káa invasion.

The Dleit Káa come in

695 on ships

bigger than the Haida war canoes.

They scour our towns

in buses  
bigger than the war canoes  
700 and stop  
to shoot us  
with their cameras.  
They shoot at us  
with questions.  
705 Some even shoot at us with  
“Where are all the real Native Americans?”  
because you know they gotta be politically correct,  
and if we told them we were Lingít  
they would respond with  
710 “A Kling-what?”  
But we are intelligent Kling-whats  
and have learned to use their language as a weapon  
because language is a tool  
and every tool is a weapon if you hold it right.  
715 And we hide by wearing Dleit Káa camouflage  
Nike shoes  
or Adidas jackets.  
And when they see through our camouflage  
they shoot at us

720 with questions  
about our land  
about our home  
as they look out on the ocean  
and shoot at us with  
725 “What elevation are we at?”  
But stupidity is a wasted battle  
and we choose to walk away instead.

*Civilized Indian*

730 I am a Tlingit Indian  
whose own tongue sits like a foreign object  
in my mouth.  
I cannot make the sounds of my ancestors.  
Even if I could,  
735 I know not the words.  
I cannot say I love you  
with my native tongue.  
I do not even have a Tlingit name.  
I can only say eeshaan and gunalchéesh.  
740 Eeshaan...  
Tlingit for poor.

Gunalchéesh...

Tlingit for thank you.

Eeshaan ancestors...

745 Eeshaan Tlingits...

Eeshaan me...

I AM the next generation!

Gunalchéesh Russia!

Gunalchéesh Norway!

750 Gunalchéesh America!

*Haa Shagóon*

I want to write the words

That will make all the wrongs right.

755 Tonight,

I want to say the words

that plant the seeds

of visions.

The kind of visions

760 That inspire people,

but as I look around

I can't seem to find the right words

to even inspire myself.



Who does my brother turn to  
765 when his uncles  
are too drunk  
to teach him  
Lingit ways  
that are only  
770 vague memories  
of sacred ghosts?  
Who does my sister turn to  
when her aunties  
are crazy from  
775 broken hearts...  
broken bones?  
Who do I turn to  
when my grandparents  
can only tell me  
780 what they learned  
from boarding schools?  
Who do we turn to  
when our clans  
don't even know  
785 who we are?

## APPENDIX C

## The Contemporary Tlingit Artist and the Ancestral Relationship to the Landscape

I present here the personal narratives from two Tlingit women: Teri Rofkar and Clarissa Hudson. Both are T'akdeintaan, a clan who is renowned for weaving robes and baskets. According to Teri "We were weavers in our particular clan group and that is what we did" (Lines 78-79, p. 5). The first narrative from Raven's Tail and basket weaver Teri Rofkar, *Cháas' Kaawoo Tláa*. Her narrative explains the techniques related to gathering roots, to her relationship to the land, which includes contemporary and traditional stories. However, the stories that are closest to her personally seem to be the ones that happened within her lifetime. In 2004, she was a recipient of Alaska's Governors Award for the Arts and in 2006 a United States Artists Fellowship. Her work can be found in many places around Alaska and the places in the contiguous United States including the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage, the Denver Art Museum, the University of Pennsylvania Museum, the University of British Columbia Museum.

*Teri Rofkar: Journeying with the ancestor's knowledge*

I am a mother of three. I have been married about, it will be 33 years, this year. And so I have three Raven's: one girl and two boys. I knew David [your children's father] very well while I was growing up. There was always so many  
 5 cousins that we hung out with and [cousins] David and Elmer were some of the favorites that my sister Shelly and I would hang out with. And I have one sibling, my sister Shelly; she's a Chilkat weaver. And I am a basket weaver. I do the spruce root basketry, and the Raven's tail, which is actually same technique as basketry, but you're using wool. Grandma did, dish out some names when we were younger,  
 10 My father is not native, but mom is. She is the baby of the family. The oldest was Uncle Bill in Pelican; he is still alive. Next in line was Auntie Anna, Anna Breezeman and she has passed away. She drowned on the Alsek River.

I actually have her Tlingit name that my grandmother gave me. I didn't realize until quit a few years later that it was the same name as my auntie Anna.  
 15 Anna was the oldest girl, and I believe it was uncle Elmer, and then uncle Ray, and then my auntie Axie and my auntie Betty, and then my mom. Mom was the baby: Marie Mork. We are Raven, T'akdeintaan. The clan house, I have never been to it, but it is in Hoonah and we're from the snail house.

And according to my grandmother, she would baby-sit us. My mom and  
 20 dad would commercial fish when we were really young in Pelican. My grandmother Eliza and her husband Nels had a gold mine in Lisianski. Just over by Lisianski Straits. And Pelican was built when my mom was two. So they had all

been there prior to the cold storage getting built, and the town coming about. They had a fox farm right there on one of the little islands, and as many families  
25 did, mining and fox farming.

My grandmother would go into Hoonah to have babies a lot of the times. My dad had a telephone job. So when we were kids, at the age I was, we were going to school in the 60's. There wasn't a high school per say in Pelican at the time. And dad had a really good job up in Anchorage, so we would spend our  
30 summers in Pelican and our winters up in Anchorage: My sister and I and my mom and dad. That would allow mom and dad the possibility to go commercial fishing, but mom would leave us with grandma. Hence, the closer relationship with my grandma, a little bit, not that it was intentional. I think it just happened. I lucked out there. Grandma's [house] was one were you could just walk in. I will never forget,  
35 and I don't know why I remembered it, but I think one of my aunties had counted [the grandkids]. It was dead silent when she walked in the door, and she saw over twenty grand kids there. And you couldn't hear a thing. Well, grandma always had two cookie jars, two candy jars, and stacks of comics as high as my knees in every room. So you know we were all flaked out with our piles of cookies and candy, and  
40 reading comic books all day. Grandma Eliza was sewing and listening to her hymns: life was good. If it was a nice day she would boot us all out; but yeah grandma's was the favorite place to go. And she wasn't very pushy about showing us how to do things. Although, if we did really make a commitment to something,

us saying “oh come on, we really want to do this,” she would always tell us  
45 that we needed to finish what we start.

And many times as a kid, I wouldn't realize how much time was going to  
go into that pair of moccasins; or how much time that little tiny pair of Eskimo  
yoyos was going to take and that it would cut my fingers. So yeah, my grandmother  
was really great about letting us do whatever we wanted, but she made sure we  
50 followed through with it. I did get exposed to the weaving at that time. I think  
probably the biggest impact of where I am at today, is just the pure joy of it. Her  
and May Moy would get together and half of it would be in Lingit and half of it in  
English. But they would laugh so hard that tears would run down their cheeks.  
They had so much fun doing what they were doing. And it was always fun, always.  
55 And I do remember that. I got to do a little bit of it. Finally when I realized it, it  
was probably the late 80s.

Grandma died in 1976. By then, my husband and I had kind of made the  
decision [where to live] a couple years after I had gotten married. We were living  
up outside of Anchorage. We check out Wrangell, we checked out Juneau. We  
60 checked out all these little towns in Southeast because Anchorage is way too big  
and Sitka was so beautiful. And I'll be honest, I kind of picked it because I didn't  
have too many relatives here. So as it turns out I have relatives all over Southeast.  
So we've been here ever since. Unfortunately, that was the year grandma died so I  
didn't get to pursue any more learning with her. [One day I] sat my husband down,  
65 it was probably about 1988, or '86, somewhere in the late eighties and said,

“Honey, I know what I’m going to be when I grow up: I am a weaver.” I hadn’t a clue how it was going to go, but I knew that this was my journey and it still is: I learn something new just about every day. Today it was Kindergarteners in here with their questions and my interaction with them. You always learn  
70 something new with them. Yeah it’s the materials: the mountain goat wool, the spruce root, the ferns or the grass. The materials themselves have taken me on a good journey, so I really enjoy that.

I am T’akdeintaan, a Raven from the snail house. And when Grandma Eliza and May Moy primarily, more times than not, that’s when I got more feedback as  
75 far as the cultural contents of things; Because they would talk about things that were on a different level than all the rest of us grandkids. Usually, it was grandma with a gazillion grandkids around. So one of the things that came up was that we were weavers in our particular clan group and that is what we did. And I don’t know if it has to do with the skills we have in that direction, but the artwork is so  
80 time consuming. I am again, still learning. But there are so many levels of understanding and the nuances and it’s about that preparation of the raw materials or maybe it’s something you did in the spin that creates a much more quality, just incredible piece of finished work. I think some of that goes into it.

I also had to come to the realization that at one point I was weaving, and I  
85 think this happened more often on the “Earthquake” robe. I was working on a robe that had the symbols to help recognize and remember the 1964 earthquake. We were in Anchorage at the time when that hit. It was a 9.2 and it was on Good Friday

afternoon. But more importantly I was a kid; I was only eight when it hit. But the earthquake was five minutes long: we couldn't hold our breath that long. It

90 sounded like the end of the world. My mom and dad had that conversation about the end of the world. It was just a powerful thing that I felt when I started on that robe, that there are some events that have happened in our time today that are of legendary proportion. They need recognized equally as some of the robes and the totems and the things that have happened in the past. If I am going to be true to

95 myself and here is where the 'who I am' and 'what I do' comes to a mix. If I want this to be alive, it needs to be alive today. So that those younger people that I'm teaching, maybe they are in their 20s or 30s, can take ownership. It's not something that's an abstract past, but it's like, "Oh my gosh, my older brother knows Sonny and they fished together..." And you know it's still somewhat alive in their lives,

100 the tsunami.

And I am also very aware that I think in our Western visualization of work and people, many times are who we are, work becomes what we do. And I am very meshed in what I do: it's a part of who I am. It allows me the adventure that I require as a person and it allows me the challenges. I may have found it in

105 something else, but probably not to the extent that I have here.

And I guess in reference to place, the spruce roots, you know when you pick up one of those beautiful baskets, you know that every one of those baskets has within it, one of those incredibly beautiful days on the outside beaches, out on the sand, and a fire, under the tress. I could almost close my eyes and smell the

110 spruce that's coming to life in the spring. It's that moisture that's coming out  
of the ground and those fresh, clean, new spruce roots that have been growing all  
winter; those are in that basket. That basket may be one hundred years old, sitting  
in a museum on the East Coast, but the landscape is still in there. I guess that  
relationship is so many times captured in it's...it's an entity that is not only a way  
115 for myself to have an example, but it's always a way that I can share my  
relationships with others, and for me I think that's part of art is all about.

I did a robe about Lituya Bay. Lituya Bay has powerful, strong, incredible  
images with huge legendary events. The robe had to be equally that. It's a beautiful  
place when the waters come and the sun is out, it's so peaceful and simple and  
120 serene. It' has that simple beauty, but it also has little elements that tell the story of  
it.

I just, I completely go away and transcend when I'm weaving and it takes  
an incredible amount of time. When I was working on the Earthquake robe  
everybody said, "Oh, so do these tell stories?" and I said well, " I don't know if  
125 they did..." These particular styles of weaving, for 200 hundred years I have no  
elders to ask. So these robes they always told stories, I don't know. I had to do  
some soul searching. I had of gotten asked that literally hundreds of times, working  
in a public venue like I do. What I can say is that weaving one robe, if I'm going to  
spin the materials, it's just somewhere between six miles and seven miles of wool  
130 that I have to spin and ply. It's just too much time and too much math in my mind  
to come up with all those numbers. But then if I do a weaving, it's going to take me



about a year. The weaving itself takes anywhere between 700-1000 hours to do. And you know what, I may have a drawing, but it's sketch, and as I weave that robe that has that much time to evolve and if it didn't have a story when I started, 135 by the time I got to the end of that year, it would have a story. And that part I can be very honest about. I'm not sure if it worked that way in the old days, but for me, yes. And my relationship to place and the art form: they have stories. I don't think I could spend that much time on just a pretty face.

I didn't figure the [Raven's Tail Weaving] out. I actually a little tool bag 140 that is about a five inch by seven inch weaving with some sea otter on the top. And in 1989 a gal by the name Cheryl Samuels came up. She's not native, but she had written a book called, "Raven's Tail." This was the first time that she had come up to the coast. It's not the first time she had been on the coast, but it was the first time she came up to teach. She taught a two-week class in Sitka in 1989. I had been 145 doing basketry, so when I heard that there was going to be a class. I'll be honest, it was a little tongue and cheek. I had thought, "You know, we were weavers, why didn't Grandma even mention this kind of weaving?" She said nothing about Raven's Tail. I had never heard of it, so I went to the class. Oh my gosh, it is not done on a loom, it hangs loose, it's twined, the design elements are the same. We 150 even know the meaning of them because they continued in basketry. It is in basketry and wool. It was the same knots. It was the same weave.

There were things that I absolutely had learned from grandma that we are in this kind of weaving. This is what we do. After that two-week class, and my little

dance bag that I got, I did a set of leggings and started weaving robes, right  
155 away. It was just in there. I found it interesting that I can weave the Raven's Tail  
weaving and switch to the basketry and vice versa and I don't lose any time. My  
speed is getting better all the time.

There were a few fragments in the anthropological information it was  
called, "Northern Geometric." It was recognized as a Tlingit style weaving, but it  
160 was only found as far south as Sitka, and Juneau. So it was very much in that  
northern area. Then Chilkat weavings showed up and now this is where it kind of  
gets a little bit muddy and we have to guess, unfortunately. I'm hoping that we can  
get some carbon dating and maybe do a little less guessing, we have a little more  
tools now than we use to. Not one Raven's Tail robe has ever been carbon dated.  
165 There are about, there are seven intact old ones, maybe six intact. I think we  
consider that there were eleven robes. A couple of them were just drawings of  
robes, and I think some of those were duplicates. So there really was just only a  
hand full. I know that one of the robes that was repatriated and was buried, and to  
me that was just appalling. Just, not only for the exposure, but for the intellectual  
170 information that it might have held. I think that reburying things is a good idea, but  
to allow that, even with a person who has passed on, there is a time of visitation, a  
time to make closure. And I'm feeling that loss.

But that said, I think the basketry really helps lead us back into and as I  
move with this use of mountain goat wool, and with the Chilkat that uses cedar.  
175 They are quite different techniques, my sister does the Chilkat and they are a very

different beast. I tend to think, that there was a paper that was put out on the American Indian magazine, it might have been in the early 90's, I think it was written by Kathy Pasco before she passed away. She was a well-known Chilkat weaver and she did reconstruction work for museums and she wrote the article. I  
180 liked her conclusion in it; probably the Raven's Tail and the Chilkat weavings encountered each other as a fully developed art form. And I think there are few pieces that you find elements of Chilkat and elements of Raven's Tail, but they were very much already established; And I kind of like that thinking because they seem to be a fairly mature exploration between the two. And I don't know that I see  
185 one evolving to the other. ...but, it's really fun to be able to explore and help keep the art form going. So I'm just now at home, starting my 10<sup>th</sup> robe. I'm going to do a series of children's robes.

With my baskets, I tend to think more function. With the Raven's Tail robes, because of the textile and the boldness of the colors that you can use, I tend  
190 to be able to explore designs with a little more freedom. With the baskets function and form and the symmetry that finished pieces, it is more involved. Although for me, I don't differentiate between the two. I think the Raven's Tail robes, they are just big baskets out of wool and they hold people. Most of my robes, I think the one that is most noticeable, the piece, I call it my PhD. My doctoral was the Gathering  
195 of Traditions Robe. It's a robe that's at the Alaska Native Heritage Center, in Anchorage. The commission that I got was to do a robe that incorporated design elements from all of the eleven recognized tribes of Alaska. When I went to, when I

got the commission, I flew to Anchorage and I met with every single group. The Eyaks, the Tsimpsian, the Yupik, Chupik, and the Inupiaqs. They gave me the patterns that were most important to them. We all have geometric in our  
200 background, and so then I had those design elements and I put them together into the robe. That was really a challenge....when you see it three dimensional it absolutely makes sense, but when it's flat, it's lovely and it looks like a map, but it doesn't have the same spirit.

205           When I wove it, it was for a Native Cultural Center and their assurance, I told them, " You know, you really should take it off the wall once a year. Check it, it's got fur, it's got feathers: it's got things that need looked for. If there are bugs, or take off to display it, to take it out of the light for a little while. And I said, "Oh, and dance it."

210           They said, "Oh yes, we could take it off and dance it at the end of the year part, every year!" The enthusiasm and the excitement.

          You know when I was finishing it up and it was getting ready to be mounted. I tell you, it happened maybe five or I don't know how many times; but it was a whole bunch of times, I'd turn around and the robe was gone. I was working  
215 with some contractors to build the case for it. It was gone. I'd look around and it was gone. I would literally have to find the robe. It had walked off on somebody's back during the time that it was sitting there. And it was like, "This one is mine!!" I recognized the people that the patterns came from. They recognized their own patterns. They knew what it meant, they knew who they were. They didn't know

220 what any of the other ones were, but they knew theirs. And they totally took  
ownership: it was so exciting. But unfortunately it's been in the case for way too  
long.

My daughter does weave. There were....well, there probably still are some  
political complications with Raven's Tail and just it's journey as it comes along. So  
225 she's not interested in doing the Raven's Tail weaving at all. The wool weaving.  
She also sees all the work that goes into spinning and she's really kind of more of a  
purest. And that relationship with place, she realizes that if we keep using  
commercial wool....we don't necessarily have a relationship with sheep, there  
aren't sheep here, we have mountain goat. And with respect for the animal and  
230 what it has to offer we would want to use the wool, we eat the meat, we use the  
horns, and you know to use everything: that's a lot of work. But she's excellent at  
digging the spruce roots. My daughter has taught it up at Cordova. She taught it in  
Yakutat and she does an excellent job. She probably has more of an intimate  
relationship with the trees than I do. You know that age group, the twenties and  
235 thirties, are coming from a mind-set of recycling and being much more  
environmentally conscience than you. When I was a little kid and grandma said,  
"Take the garbage out." It meant take it down to the river and throw it in and it  
went out into the ocean. This generation recycles and they are very careful about  
reusing things and not wasting: It's wonderful. It's probably more like it was many  
240 years ago just by virtue, why waste something when you can use it.

But yeah, she does do a lot of the basketry. She's got a little one now, so she hasn't been doing a lot of beading lately. Violet is one [year old]. I have a lovely picture of Violet working on spruce roots. She got a hold of some of my basketry and I'll be honest I was working on baskets myself and I got wrapped up in it and  
245 then I realized oh gosh I have the baby. And she was being so quiet and there were spruce roots everywhere. She even had them in her mouth and pulling them. She knew she had to do something with them there, she just wasn't sure what. So, it was great! She will be weaving. I did a spruce root rattle for her, so that she could get that smell and taste of the spruce root right away. She puts it in her mouth and  
250 plays with it all the time.

I do spend time with younger people. Again, I think that my age group unfortunately with basketry, well even with the wool weaving, there's so much time involved, that many times the heart is there and they really have a desire, my own age group, to learn it and do it. But you know the question that always comes  
255 up, "Oh yeah, and how long is this going to take?" And we are so much product oriented, or what's the end goal. And with the weaving you can't say, "let's go out to the woods, let's take two days, and we will have this many spruce roots and you will make this size basket." It kind of isn't that way. It's more like we'll go out to the woods and we may come home with a pocket full of chocolate lily bulbs  
260 because there weren't good roots that day. It's more of a journey: and the art work reflects that journey. And I think even to the extent that I allow it, that journey you can see in my rougher baskets, that it's in there. And I think that it will be in the

baskets made by the younger people. They aren't so much looking to maybe make an income from it, which they eventually will be able to; but they get to  
265 spend time out in the woods. They are out there anyway, riding their four-wheelers, camping and surfing. They are in those same beautiful places that I am. So I think it will be a reflection of their relationship with place and allowing them to take that ownership consciously and I'm really lucky I get to see that.

I can go out in the early spring and that said you want to look for a natural  
270 indicator that gives you that time-frame. I use to keep track of the temperature, the rainfall, the snow quantity, because I knew that there was a system to at what point it was just the right time to go get spruce roots. The bears are digging roots in the same area as I am. And they are getting Lupine roots, chocolate lily bulbs, those kinds of things. They are out there checking all the time. We don't always see  
275 them, but when we start hearing people in the grocery store saying, "Oh I heard there was a bear out Starrigavan" or, "I heard someone saw a bear out at Kruzof" My light bulb goes off and it's time to get spruce roots. They know in that particular fringe of the forest: it is the perfect spot. The spring bear habitat and spruce root habitat is the same. So when the bears come out of their den in the  
280 spring we'll go out, it's just as the snow is melted off and you're going to want to take runner roots. They're like a strawberry runner root, is the analogy. They're kind of long and straight, you're going to go to an area where there's gravel or sand and it's usually sandy. My daughter usually describes it as a you know a place where there's been a disaster or you know some really major thing happened like

285 glacial rebounding is good, those coastline beaches are excellent, where rivers  
changed course, the head of the bay, those kind of areas are just great.

You're looking for younger trees because they're the ones that are sending  
off the runner roots. Big, old, established trees, not only no longer need to establish  
their root systems, in this case look for less water instead of more water. But also  
290 because they are more mature, have developed just by virtue because of their own  
shed and shelter for other organisms down there, but there's more organics. So  
you're really not going to have those nice long, straight roots, because well why  
would you run if there's good eats there? You might as well just stay right where  
you're at. So once you dig your spruce roots, if I take gals out, we usually dig in the  
295 morning. And at lunch-time we'll usually build a huge bonfire, preferably on the  
beach because it's just so beautiful. You build your bonfire and you're going to  
roast your roots on an extremely hot fire. They are on fire, when you take them out.  
Pull them through a forked stick to take the bark off. And then you can cool them  
in some water, fresh water if you want or just cool them off best you can, sort of  
300 like putting a vegetable in cold water, so you can take the heat out of it. Keep them  
moist and then split everything that you've done within four days. It's pretty time  
consuming, no one goes to bed before 11 o'clock. Even if you're face down on the  
table, you're not going to bed until 11 o'clock. Because at some point if I'm taking  
gals out, they're just not going to be able to keep up. Then they're going to have to  
305 quit.



But whatever you dig that spring is all you're going to have all year. So it's kind of important that you get as much as you can at that time. I usually put them aside and do my salmon and everything, and do more in the winter if I can. With that said, I think that might have been more of the cycle of things, but to be honest,

310 I remember with my grandma we would be working on stuff, and we go to go to bed whenever we wanted, that was awesome. She'd be working on things, whether she was weaving or sewing moccasins, and we'd go to bed whenever we wanted and then get up when ever we wanted and there she was still working on whatever it was. It was like, "Grandma, did you stay up all night?"

315 She'd laugh, "No." She would just get up a little earlier than us kids and she worked on things all the time. I find that I am working on something all the time and I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing, it's just what I have to do. There's just such an urgency, and actually I get true pleasure in what I'm doing.

My teacup story and I need to make a children's book about it. It really

320 would be a good one. In fact, someone read about my teacup story, and she wrote me and asked me if I could give her permission to write that into a children's book. And I said, "well no, I would really actually like to do it." Grandma was born here in Sitka in the 1800s, so when she was a little kid, she remembers when this big stockade was where were the Whites lived and the natives lived. But she

325 remembered there was a spot behind the smoke house where they could climb up, I think there was barrels or something back there, so they'd peak over the top, they'd look over to the other side and this little white girl had these gorgeous teacups and

little tea saucers. And they would have tea parties: it was awesome. She'd go home and she told her mom about it and her grandma about it. They'd cry themselves to sleep, just thinking about those little teacups and saucers. Her grandmother was watching her and it was her grandmother that taught her how to weave. Her grandmother sat down with her and they made little teacups and saucers. You know, of course the spruce root is water tight. So when they got done, those little Indian girls could have tea parties just like the little girls on the other side made out of spruce roots. It was too cool. But for me it was just that relationship from generation to generation. And I know it's true for myself as an adult and my daughter is an adult, I don't always recognize the need, but when it comes to a grandchild, it's all I can do not to try to make things okay for her. So there is that relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. ...that's how the story came up. I was a very precocious little girl, I must have been ten or eleven, my grandmother was weaving teacups and saucers. I literally just chewed her out. I said, "Grandma that is gross..." I don't know if used the word gross or not, but I thought it was appalling that she would create such a disgusting thing to sell to tourists, it was so tacky.

My grandma just said, "Oh I love my teacups and saucers, and here's why..." And she made me sit through that story and even as a precocious, snotty nosed little kid, I knew that I had overstepped my bounds; and from that time on, I have loved those little teacups and saucers.

But I had no idea about the context behind them... Because you could see, oh  
350 man I was just a tiny thing with big glasses. “Grandma, you have to quit weaving  
those things! That’s just tacky!”

And with the Native culture everything had a spirit, they were relationships,  
just like we have relationships with people. I spend a lot of time in the trees. I  
spend a lot of time with their young ones. Those trees are young ones that I work  
355 with. And it’s just to understand their health and what’s going on. Unfortunately, I  
don’t have a lot of knowledge, but as far as what their protocols were, when you  
went out to harvest spruce roots and actually when you took down a tree there was  
a regular protocol in thanking the tree people. Explaining what you’re going to use  
that entire tree for because, boy, it was the tree people who allowed us our homes  
360 and those kinds of things.

So there was a huge respect for them and what they made possible for us.  
Part of what I’ve done it touch base with some of the elders. Nelly Lord in Yakutat  
has been really helpful there and not necessarily in recreating or absolutely  
verbatim saying what needed to be said, but explaining you know, to the younger  
365 people and just acknowledge that you are going to be impacting their lives. With  
respect so that they continue to have healthy lives and you’re going to cover  
everything up after you’re going to dig roots, that kind of thing. You would make  
the apology right away before you even start. The discomfort you’re going to cause  
and that it’s not going to be for very long and that you’re going to try to put  
370 everything back.

I like that thinking, of really being aware of where you walk and what you do before you even do it so that you have that sense of respect going in. I try to bring that along with, but sometimes I forget. I do leave tobacco as offerings, that was one of the things that one of the elders had asked me, he said, “Well, did you  
375 bring tobacco?” and I said no, I don’t smoke. He said, “Well they like tobacco, you got to leave an offering.” I heard you could always leave hair, well if that’s the case, then goodness those trees have been helping themselves to my hair for years, when I’m underneath of the trees.... I guess tree people, is just an easier way sometimes for people to understand that it’s just some other living beings that we  
380 are somewhat related to, even to recognize them as that.

But with the maidenhair ferns, they are so fragile existence, with these little rock cracks that I can not bare to put tobacco up in there. I usually have a pocket full of fertilizer that I haul up into those little rocks for the ferns when I leave an offering when I’ve taken some maidenhair ferns.

385 Yellow cedar was what we used around here. Now the further north you go, when you get up towards Icy Straits way, there’s less and less cedar bark. You’ve got your areas that have got cedar, but then further up around the corner by Yakutat you haven’t got too much at all. And what I find is there have been people here for thousands of years. I usually harvest quite a ways up the mountain and I’ll look for  
390 a tree that usually has very straight bark. There are some areas that I particularly like, that are really good, but I can usually see a really nice yellow cedar, a good size one from really far away if I’m hiking up the mountain. When you get to the

upper side of the tree on the up hillside, the trees are usually growing their branches out, and they reach away from the hillside, to reach out toward that  
395 sunlight. So what happens on the uphill side is you've got, in Tlingit there's a word and I do not speak the language, but the word means *that belly of the tree*. And you have that whole tree with no branches on it. So I have hiked up to some trees, and in fact there's a nice image that I have of some place and I'm putting my hand in the scar, but there was an old scar there, the forester that I showed it to said that it  
400 was probably about a hundred and fifty years old at least. Where the tree had been pulled, the bark had been pulled and it had healed over, but it never grows bark over that spot again. It will heal over to a certain extent, but it always leaves a tremendous scar. You will maybe eventually get some rot in there. Usually for me, the rule of thumb is one quarter, but it still leaves a real impact. So I still have a real  
405 difficult time with that. My relationship has changed a little with the cedar bark because I've moved more into using the spruce root. With that said, I still use cedar bark when I make neck rings, and I use it for some other things. But I am much more conscience of it. I'm also very sad, that as a side of a byproduct of logging, there's no reason that we, especially our Native corporations couldn't go in an  
410 harvest cedar bark off of trees that are going to be logged. It's just what it would do for the art form to have that raw material, in good quantity is tremendous.

Lituya Bay is as far back as I can trace my lineage. The T'akdeintaan, and the Coho family, were the same: it was the same clan group. And I think that, that is about where we split off. I've heard a couple of different things, but I know that it

415 had to do with Lituya Bay. I don't know that there was conflict in it. I think  
that it was just that T'akdeintaan were pretty mobile. They had different skills and  
that had certain things that they specialized in. The way that Grandma described it  
was that, when you encounter Cohos or the L'uknax.ádi those are your folks, they  
are your family, they are related. You are the same family; you are just a different  
420 group of that family. The T'akdeintaan, it was Lituya Bay, our territory was from  
dry bay, on down. I think that Glacier Bay was Chookaneidí, Wooshkeetaan, and  
Kaagwaantaan. Anyway, we weren't up in the Glacier Bay, we were up Icy  
Straights, Lisianski area.

It's interesting that, that was where my gram had her hunts and she knew  
425 about. I always thought that, that's were my grandpa, my Norwegian grandfather  
had been a fisherman on the Alsek River, Dry Bay area. I didn't not know, until  
Uncle Pete, his brother had told me some history about my gram and him. He said,  
"oh yeah, I was real close with..." my great grandfather. He said, "We were good  
friends, because I didn't marry his daughter." But grandma had missed out on an  
430 opportunity to go out on the Alsek and trade with them. She always called them  
Stick Indians. They had a trade route up the Alsek, and they would trade with the  
interior Indians. That was the trade route for my family. Gram didn't get to go, she  
found out she was expecting Uncle Bill. She had talked him into taking her on that  
trip, and she was going to go and find out what that was all about. When she found  
435 out she was expecting Uncle Bill, her first baby, he said no. It was too treacherous  
and it was too hard of a journey, so she didn't get to go.

But Lituya Bay was always a spot for the family, and then Uncle Howie having that encounter there with the earthquake. I guess what was fun for me and doing that piece was and with respect and it being a very historic and a very  
440 powerful place, the images that I put in the robe, like fault lines and breakers. We always called it the Monster-that-lived-deep-in-the-crevasses: the man of Lituya. Or if you take the western spin on it, that's were two plates come together there, plate tectonics. So whether you call it the Monster-that-lives-deep-in-the-crevasses of Lituya or plate tectonics: it's the same legend, they are both abstract. Kind of fun  
445 that way. [Figure 7: *Lituya Bay Raven's Tail Robe*].

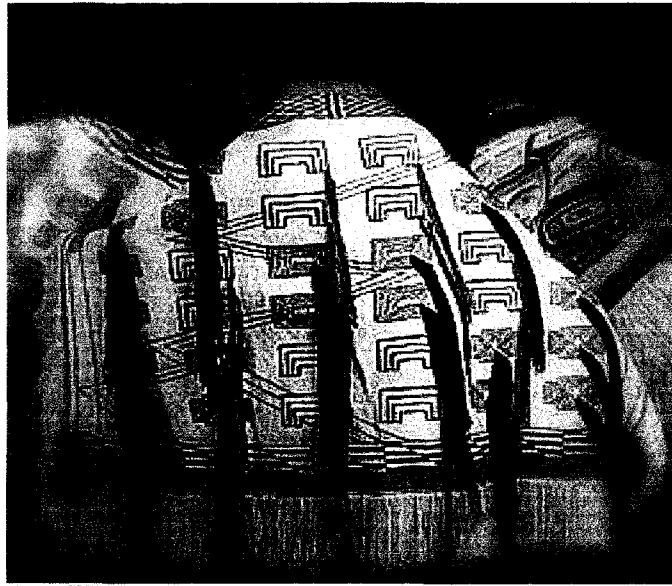


Figure 7: *Lituya Bay Raven's Tail Robe*. Note. Photo courtesy of Teri Rofkar, Lituya Bay Robe.

450

There's a fault line that goes through it. ...that [fault]line there. Yes, the other  
455 thing is, on the robe when you wear it three dimensionally the side boarders, if  
those were both sides of the mountains of Lituya Bay, I did it to scale. If those were  
the mountains, then I left the design elements completely blank on the sides. That's  
how far that wave in 1958 washed off everything but bedrock. So when you have  
robe on and you pull it around front and you see that imagery it's absolutely to  
460 scale and it helps tell that story of the wave. And I guess for me what's really  
powerful there, there's also imagery. There's some boats on there, the longboats,  
La Perouse was in there. In the late 1700s he lost 21 of his sailors. These are the  
breakers here in the middle, this is the tides pattern, the blue that goes around the  
breakers....the blue [color on the robe] goes around the breakers and back down  
465 again

These are bear tracks down at the bottom. That monster at the mouth of  
Lituya Bay, would actually turn those who drowned....when you drowned,  
sometimes it's just your spirit that drowns. It's a little different than if you were  
killed in another manner. He would turn those people who died into slaves as bears.  
470 And the bears that walk Lituya Bay would keep a look out for someone coming in.  
Lituya I think is almost like a lake within, I think that's almost what the Tlingit  
word is. So it was the bears that are there.

There is a lovely piece that's in the national museum of American Indian,  
and it's the monster on one side and the bears on the other. And it would grab the



475 top of the water and shake it, it was like a stiff seal hide and cause those  
canoes to over turn. So that's why there are bear tracks along the bottom.

Those are all family stories. In 1958, that wasn't so long ago, and that was  
huge. I mean I think the Discovery Channel had a show. But again, it's my thinking  
that these are things of legendary proportion. We need to recognize them and we  
480 need to create those pieces of traditional regalia that really perpetuate those stories.  
And again, which comes first, the chicken or the egg? Does the story get  
perpetuated, or does the art form get perpetuated? It's win, either way. And it's a  
journey.

It's so timeless. Those [designs] are based on a lot of natural things, yeah. I  
485 was to use one of my patterns here, this one is called *Fireweed*. And it's sort of just  
like a parallelogram right? In the firm. And it doesn't necessarily, it continued in  
the basketry. But I'm not sure that I've done this one in the exact same count as  
wool weaving. Wool weaving isn't quit as square as the basketry. It has a longer  
horizontal and a shorter vertical. So when you take this and you turn it this way,  
490 *Fireweed* is the design. It is those long, thin fireweed leaves. That's what you're  
looking at. It's so abstract looking, but it's so geometric. It is based on a form of  
nature.

This one is the same way, it's like a....it's called *Tides*. But what it is, it's  
kind of a line that goes around these small, little pieces. And I've heard it described  
495 in both tides or waves. And the tides are sometimes like lines of black seaweed  
along the beaches as the tide come in and goes out. There's usually two of them in

a twenty-four hour period, especially in the winter time. Like right now you can go out and see if it's not too stormy, you can see those two lines of seaweed. And it's that imagery. And the other thing is that with waves and the essence of  
500 movement isn't necessarily literal so if you've ever been on a swell, when there's a chunk of wood that floating, you kind of go down into the trough and you don't see it and you come up and you see it and then you go back down and you don't see it. But it doesn't mean that it isn't there, you just are not seeing it. So tides includes essence, the bear tracks are that way too, and the butterfly pattern.

505 Even on Chichagof where they've walked for so many thousands of years that they've worn tracks into the stone. The point of Kruzof has the same thing. Many spots along the coast. The bears have been here longer than us. They've really worn some tracks. They always walk on the same tracks, I don't know why that is. Even in the mud, there's a couple of spots around here where I will go get  
510 spruce roots. There's one particular spot where I have taken some gals, and we got dropped off. The boat was picking us up at four, so we went in on to the estuary. And I didn't realize that most of these were younger gals and none of them had actually been in the woods without a man and a gun. I said, well we've got a gun, we don't need a man. There was a sow with cubs there, and you could just see the  
515 evidence of it everywhere. You could smell them and you could just hear them in the woods. They were so sweet, they moved off so that we could dig our spruce roots.

But at one point one of the gals got a little bit further away than the rest and she said, "I think I saw something!"

520 And I said "Oh you did!"

And she said "No I really did."

And I responded, "Oh I know that you did." And I said, "They are here, they are just waiting for us to get done."

The gal was like, "No."

525 And I told her yes, that it was okay because we weren't going to be here long. A couple of the gals have a good demand on the language and they just broke into song. It was one of their relatives. They were Kaagwaantaan so they sang to their relatives and it was great. We didn't stay much longer than that. Once that awareness was there and you start building on that fear, it was so precious. But  
530 what I was getting to was, that every area was an area that was muddy. All the bears must have gone in single file, they had stepped in the exact same tracks, they were just worn quit deep. And I know they are heavier than us, but it was obvious that several of them had chosen that same path. And they had just stayed together in that same line the whole time, so it's just something they do.

*Clarissa Hudson: Weaving into a state of grace*

This second narrative is from artist Clarissa Hudson. Hudson is Tlingit, Raven T'akdeintaan, from the Snail House in Hoonah, AK. She was born and raised in Juneau, Alaska. Her parents are Irene Sarabia Lampe, Tlingit, originally from the village of Hoonah and her father, William, is Filipino American originally from the Phillipines, with Japanese, Chinese, German Jew and Finnish ancestry. Her Maternal Grandmother & Grandfather: Mary Wilson Sarabia & Juan Sarabia. Paternal Grandmother & Grandfather: Patricia Rizal Lampe & Fred Lampe, Sr. Clarissa Hudson and her husband, Bill, have three grown children: Kahlil, Lily and Ursala.

Clarissa is a world-renowned weaver and artist. Her creations are in various private, corporate, public art collections nationwide and internationally. Her artwork is inspired by her Tlingit heritage as she blends both traditional and contemporary techniques. She has created 50 robes, including Chilkat, Ravenstail and Button Blanket robes as well as numerous traditionally-inspired carvings, paintings, small weavings, and collages. Clarissa attended Ft. Lewis College, majoring in art with a minor in languages. Her apprenticeships reflect her varied interests and creativity: metalsmithing, fashion design, creative writing, glass-casting, and painting and collage. She also worked with the Naa Kahidi Native Theater, as costume & set designer, tour manager, stage manager, actress and singer/musician, touring the U.S., Canada, and Europe. In 2004, she also attended Glacier Bay Tlingit Language Immersion Camp. She apprenticed to master Chilkat weaver Jennie Thlunaut in 1986, and subsequently began teaching Chilkat weaving to Native women from Alaska and Canada.

Some people may misunderstand me when I say the intent of me choosing to live, in using green power sources, not just the so called 'save the planet'. To save my own human spirit, my own, and other peoples. And all things are intertwined so you naturally would so called, 'save the planet'. There wouldn't be a phrase called saving the planet it would be just maintaining the general welfare of our environment. Which at the same time maintains the general welfare of our psyche or spirit of our soul. When you live like that, when you live in connection to your water and your food and your shelter and your clothing, when you take responsibility for all those things. Not in this abstract way where it is all piped in, and you flip a switch and the electrical stuff is there; and you pay an electrical bill and you don't know where the electricity comes from. You don't even know how it is generated you don't even know how the wires are put in your house. And nobody cares to know and nobody wants to know because you too busy finding entertainment. To entertain oneself instead of learning the realness about us.

And you know when people think, "oh my god the whales are becoming extinct. Oh my god, 300 hundred species of animals every day are disappearing off the face of the earth." Well guess what folks? We are not immune. If you think that we cannot extinguish ourselves well there is that possibility: anything is possible. And the term I use is 'holistic' but even that that sounds like a new age term and it really isn't it is an ancient, ancient way of living. We knew where our things came from. Even my clothing, but I don't know where my clothing comes from. It could come from Taiwan or made in China, or over in India, but I don't know who those

people are who made it. They're not my relatives, sure they are other human beings but I don't know who they are, where they live, what they are paid, nothing, 25 I am totally disconnected. The only thing that connects me to them is that there is a label that says it's a county way over on the other side of the world. Or even if its here in America, I don't know who made these things. It's so different from when you have a piece of garment that you know somebody made it for you or you made it for yourself. I used to do that for my kids clothing, I made all my kids clothing 30 when they were young, for my kids, myself: I made them all. No, I didn't weave the fabric but I made the clothing. From hats and scarves down to coats, pants, shirts, and dresses. And I am so far removed from that and that is the way I've wanted to live.

My relationship to place, it's a good thing and a not so good thing. The 35 negative thing about my relationship to place is that I am related to everyone when I am home. I am related to everyone, meaning that there is this underlying thing, not just blood relations, but people I grew up with. They grew up with me, no matter what the age is. The older ones they grew up with me in the sense that they watched me grow up. The ones that are my age, "Oh yeah we grew up together." 40 the ones that are a little younger than me, they look up to me...when you have all these 'relations' there is no time to be by yourself. Everybody, especially when I am a wide open person like I tend to be when I am home there is...I didn't know how, I was young, I didn't know how to say no. I went crazy. I needed quite time, I needed to have my time by myself with my own work, with my family, with my

45 kids, with my husband. You know 24/7 we always had people over at the  
house; there were always projects to do. Every week there was something going on.  
And then on the weekends three or four major things were going on. We didn't  
have time, not only to be alone, as a family like dinner-time, which I stressed: We  
didn't have time to be alone as a couple. People would see us walking on the street  
50 together, or work together, side by side or whatever, playing music together, but it  
was always in a social setting, even at home. So it was friends and family: it was  
constant, constant. You know people coming over at midnight playing music. We  
could chit chat, hang out, we'd talk about the death of a relative or someone  
cheating on them. Oh my god, I was attending to them left and right, left and right.  
55 I had to leave and part of the reason I had to leave was my sense of place, the place,  
the weather, the darkness, the gray, the consistent gray. My personality changed,  
like night and day when I moved here [Colorado]. There I got to a place where I  
didn't know who the hell I was. I was depressed, angry, bent, just bent, badly bent.  
And when I came here I was able to breathe, to be in the warm sunshine, to  
60 experience the stars like I had never seen them. I've always had a connection to  
them. I had never before in my life, except on a clear, clear winter night. I was able  
to find out who I was. I was able to focus on my family, myself, now that I have  
learned about myself. And what my roles are, nowadays what my needs are and my  
boundaries, I'm going back home. Now that my kids are grown up, I'm going back  
65 home, but I can only do it part time. And as much as I love it there, and truly miss  
it, that's the best that I have...I have been disconnected, yet connected by way of

art and spirituality, disconnected from the land, from my food source, very important. I was telling Hudson a while ago, that one of the things that is very pleasurable about ...a friend of ours gave us a jar of pickles that she had jarred  
70 from her garden and one of the things that happens when you break into a jar of pickles, months later, days later, or anything that you have put up for winter, you're not only enjoying the flavor of it all. You're also savoring the time that you actually picked those things in the garden, or out there fishing and the way the water plays against the boat, or the light on the water. You are experiencing all  
75 those senses again; it is not just your taste. It is the light, the smell, the total experience. So your food is that much more nourishing.

Translating that to my art, It is total physical spiritual emotional experience for me I can tap it, As long as I have my memory I can tap into most of what I was going through at that time in my life, or what I was projecting or what I was. I  
80 wanted to have a biography of Jenny on my website to give people information about her life, where she lived,

It's important to make my way back home and it's the long term intentions of living that kind of lifestyle, one where I know where my water comes from, one where I am a part of the water in the sense of how it comes to me in a very real way  
85 not an abstract way where its piped in from. They say it's from the mountains here well, I don't know where the pipes are or what they put in the water source, or if the city puts additives in the water. I want some control of that. I want to experience it holistically. Every summer, from the end of February to the end of



August or beginning of September. Fall and winter here is absolutely  
90 astounding. Human beings used to be like that nomadic and go somewhere for the  
weather or food source. So or me I love the warm weather down here. There are  
four seasons and the fall time is beautiful. And that is the worse time up in  
southeast Alaska. Here there is an Indian summer and the colors are astounding and  
it is going on into November.

95 I am working on something now and I am preparing my warp. My yarn, I  
am spinning my yarn, with the wool with the bark. It can take a long time: a month,  
a couple months part time, like I do because I do many things at once. I am  
weaving the Katlian robe, the 1804 Battle with the Russians. I look forward to the  
book, because the robe will be finished by then. I will be finished by June if I start  
100 in March. It is a combination robe, Chilkat and Raven's tail. What I am doing is, I  
am just taking....the robe is like the historical document of the event. Rather than  
having it being written down like it wouldn't have been in 1804, someone would  
have carved something or woven something or something that had to do with the  
battle it would have been depicted in the art piece. I don't know of any art piece  
105 that is crated in reference to that historical battle. Whether or not it was, the  
Dauenhauer's and Sealaska wanted me to design the book cover. They all agreed  
on water, ocean, no sign of battle, no weapons, one wanted the ships in there the  
other didn't. One wanted the people preparing for battle in the water, physically  
emotionally, mentally and the other said, "no way." You're not talking about  
110 preparing for the battle nowhere in the book does it say that. How am I going to

decide without offending the other? And the answer came. The Chilkat robe you will see the picture, Katlian is standing over by what is now the cultural center in the little bay there. His whole body I facing one way and his head is turned around facing the reader. Because apparently that was a significant place for the native people. On that painting, you will see the Russian ships on the robe. The Chilkat faces are the representations of the warriors. The native men sitting presently in the water, with the boats off in the distance preparing for battle, the bathing thing where they prepare.

One group wanted certain things and the other wanted different things. What I did was symbolically putting the men and the ships in there. Along with the mountains, the ocean and the fort separate from that and the painting in the background. What it looks like is that he [Katlian] is standing there by himself, but he is not. He is standing there before his men on the shore. All his men are behind him and he is looking at them: We have come a long way to this very moment, to the battle we have prepared ourselves we may not come home safely, we may be wounded, or die, but we have prepared ourselves emotionally, physically, spiritually. Our family members know this. We are here to defend our culture, our people: our survival.

And as he is standing there looking back there is warriors and his intentions, his clarity of mind, also crossing time and space because he is on the book cover he's looking at you. The person who is holding the book. Across time and space into the future. The person holding the book is crossing time and space because we

may be descendents we may be related by marriage. They wanted some kind of symbolism to cross time and space, to take the past to the present that is Katlian turning his head to look right past the viewer, looking at the present day people: he is making eye contact.

When I painted that painting, his face, I had never done a painting like this before in my life. Kaltians painting is about 14 inches wide and 22 something like that. I have to start the robe; I have another month of wool. And I didn't have any pictures of Katlian except in that one in the robe he was wearing in that robe twenty years after the battle. When he was an older man, he was standing there by a women near a tree, and facing the person who was sketching. [It was] painted by a Russian. I didn't know how I was supposed to do it, so I started painting him: my god. I would take a week, paint some, then take a day and then come back to him and pick up my brush again. All of a sudden it was like I was there standing right there on the beach with the person. I just burst into tears. I burst into tears and I thought, "All your relatives died." And I just started crying: I wailed. All my pieces are like that, not one piece goes by without something amazing happening, something that I didn't get out of it. I never know what to expect I just go into it.

Ok well, someone asks me to do something, here is the information. I never know but there is one robe that I wove, and the completely entire time I was weaving the robe, I was singing songs. Sure, some songs I knew them but some I was always having to sing. I didn't even know the songs, most of the songs I made up. Another robe that I made, that one, thank god it was a button blanket robe, because if it were

155 a Chilkat I would have huge bags under my eyes, because all I did was cry.

Every time I was working on the robe, I would just cry. I couldn't touch the robe. It just happened.

I am doing a presentation on several robes of Jenny's that I saw in the museum. I'm going to talk about museums. I went to ANMI and a presentation on  
160 several robes: Jenny wove about fifty robes. I knew her signature and I also knew her work, the way she weaves. There is one weaver in the 1700s and I know her weaving technique. She's my idol as far as her weaving technique. Some people don't know you can put a signature on your robes. I will demonstrate at the clan conference. I will show people how that is done. I also learned some very  
165 interesting information. I am doing a demonstration class on spinning your one wool. When other weavers come and look at the robes, you can tell them. Some people don't know a signature: What's that? And I show how it's done. I also learned some interesting information some tricks of the trade, on spinning your own yarn.

170 I wondered, "How come? How come the robes two hundred years ago are not falling apart and the recent ones are falling apart?" The white is unraveling, but not the color part: the black, the blue, and the yellow, the ones that were made less than a hundred years ago. You would think that the older ones would have fallen apart. And I asked them how come and the answer came oh my god of course and I  
175 had to write and tell the other curators. I told them to write it down and when other weavers come and look at the robes and you can tell them why.

I am moving a bunch of stuff back. I had sewn Jenny a couple of dresses. I brought my sewing machine wherever I went. I didn't go there with the intention of sewing her a bunch of dresses. I brought my sewing machine and  
180 supplies. At one point, I gave them to her at the end of the class and she wore them, one in particular. Jenny wore that dress when she was last photographed with her last robe, a book that she was in a baby pink dress with salmon colored flowers all over it. I made my baby a bonnet out of it, myself a skirt out of it, my other daughter a blouse: the same fabric.

185           When I left Haines in 1985, that class it was in March. I swore that I had to learn how to weave from Jenny and no one else. Although I told myself, two years prior to that, that I would never weave in my life. The women are crazy. Look at that it's in their eyes: these are crazy women. What I did, was I told myself, "I will learn how to weave from her." At that same time, Anna Elhers was taking a class  
190 and wanted me to be her assistant but I didn't want to, I wanted to learn from Jenny. So Anna would teach me how to spin. Her sister was my friend; she died about 10-15 yrs ago. She knew me through her twin sister. So Anna came to my house for an hour and taught me to spin wool. She wanted me to spin warp for her. So she taught me how to finish a project, a backpack.

195           And I went to Haines with a lots of yards of warp. I asked Jenny if she would teach me how to weave and she just looked at me: She didn't' answer me, "Yeah right." She looked at my weaving and said, "Eh, pretty good." What

happened was almost exactly a year later and she called me one day and said,  
“I’m going to teach you how to weave.”

200 I said “what” to myself, “I can’t do this.” I hesitated...I couldn’t just drop  
everything, I had to run it by my husband, and I had kids and two businesses.

Her daughter asked me, “When will you know? Because she is coming  
tomorrow on the ferry.”

I told her “I will call you back tomorrow.” So I talked to my husband and  
205 told him about it and said I didn’t think I could do it.

And he said, “What! It’s Jenny Thlunaut. Do you think she’s going to be  
around very much longer this is what you’ve been waiting for? The landscaping  
business can wait. I’ll take care of the kids, the car, the business. You’re crazy to  
say no. This is Jenny Thlunaut: the last of the Chilkat weavers.”

210 I said, “ok.”

He said, “I can’t believe you had to ask me that you were going to say no.”

I said, “ok, fine.”

This is what happened with Agnes, her daughter... Here it is years later:  
2005, November. And Agnes is sick and has to go down to San Diego to begin to  
215 rid herself of cancer. Two days before she is scheduled to fly down. I get this phone  
call from Trish her daughter who told me, “I can’t go down with her and there is no  
one here who can go and we can pay your way.”

“It is Friday and Sunday is two days away. I have so much work to do. Can  
anyone else can go?”

220            “No, no one else. There is no one in Juneau.”

              “You’re going to pay for ticket that costs two grand?” They ended up doing  
it.

              I said, “I have to talk to Bill about this and I call you back.” I go to Hudson  
and tell him that Trish can’t go and they need me to go.

225            Hudson looks at me and says, “You’re going right.”

              And I say, “No.”

              And he says, “What? What?”

              Only twice in his life and he has ever behaved like this, once when Jenny’s  
family called, and once now when her granddaughter called.

230            A couple of times Agnes almost died on me at that strange place at the  
detox. Her bed was next to mine a foot apart. Yeah, I have this connection to that  
family: it is almost like a fight. Both times if it wasn’t for him, my husbands  
support, I wouldn’t be where I am at today, with my weaving. He was the one who  
demanded that I learn from Jenny. I paid a lot of time and money to learn from her  
235 and when the time arose, he said, “I will take care of everything.”

              When I wrote the Chilkat weaving handbook, in the foreword I made  
statement about how had no idea why Jenny would choose me over all the people  
she knows, all the people in the workshop, and all her blood relatives. I’m only  
related to her by marriage and she only found that out right before she died at the  
240 very end. She said it was meant to be. I wrote in the foreword that I didn’t  
understand why she chose me above all these people. I leaned how to weave at

Agnes' house, Jenny was her mother. But one night when I was with Agnes at the detox center, and the ANB hall was having their dinner while we were in the center. They called us by phone and I just sat at the table and hid my face and cried  
245 because I didn't want Agnes to know. She pulled me aside and said, "I have to tell you something about your book. It's pretty good. But, I have something to say about it before you put it out in the world, before you give it to your student. I wanted to say it face it face with you. And now I have my chance to tell you. I didn't want to tell you on the phone. Do you know why my mother chose you out of  
250 all the people that she knew? Why did she choose you?"

"I really don't know Agnes I really don't know," I said.

"It is because you listened. You were the only one out of that whole class, that's all she he only wanted one person before she could say that her work was finished she wanted one person and then she could go home."

255 And I looked at her and I said, "I listened?"

"Sit down by me," she said. "You were the only one who when she showed you something you did it her way, you didn't go back to doing it some other way, your way or someone else's way; and she watched you and paid attention to you. Because she saw, you were someone who cared about it. She didn't want someone  
260 to say, 'Oh yeah I'm a Chilkat weaver', someone who will make a name for themselves. Then my mother told me something in Lingit and laughed and she said that when you were sitting there in a class at my house. When you were getting



ready to leave after class. Every time you would leave the house, or get ready to leave mom would say in Lingit, 'Do you think her head has gotten any bigger yet.'

And I would just look at them, "ok sooo, I don't' know what they are saying."

Agnes told me how they were laughing, " 'Has her head gotten any bigger yet' and we were saying it in Lingit, but we just kept it to ourselves."

A lot of the other artists, when I say this, are going to think 'oh yeah she is really big headed.' I don't know how to put it into words, but I will do my best. There are some things, or couple of things in very culture, in every Indigenous culture; there are people who live closest to the land, the Indigenous people, the Indigenous people, who are close to the land. They say that the ones who live closest to the land are closest to God. Those who live and work closest to the land: you are close to God. In every Indigenous culture, there is physical path, a so-called art form that holds information, the essence of that landscape. It holds specific knowledge and information that is unexplainable yet explicable and put it into words, its not about words it another level of intellect: it's an energy. It's a veil between the worlds where information travels back and forth by way of an art form, an object, by way of a movement, so with that in mind it is in every culture and every landscape. Why is that? Well, the veil between the worlds is very hidden and information that needs to that needs to be retained that it's not proper for it to come in certain times in that cultures' history, remains maintained and protected in a

285 sense until that culture is ready to receive it. In every culture, in every  
Indigenous culture there is this movement. Or art form, or this song, you know a  
sound, a song, an art form, a movement: tangible things and intangible things and  
yet its physical experience is heard. Chilkat Weaving, all the art forms on the  
Northwest coast, Chilkat weaving is one of those things that hold the information, a  
290 go between, between the worlds, it is a veil between the worlds, a spiritual veil.  
And the person who makes the robes has to be in line with that every day. Which is  
why there are strict rules as to who learns how to weave or when they wove, or  
how they wove. They passed it on to relative, certain relatives because they knew  
those people; they knew the character of that person some relatives. No, you could  
295 not teach them, the women weavers giving away that information. Like Jenny  
Thlunaut, she isn't going to teach it to just anybody. And like she told me, like  
when she pulled me aside and said, "You're it. This doesn't belong to everybody  
only specific people; and if you don't know them you watch them like I watched  
you."

300 That's what she did for a year, she watched me for a year. I thought she  
didn't like me. She talked to everyone else but never talked to me, the whole year  
until the day when she told me in my class. So in teaching people how to weave,  
why I want to do that. I've asked my guide help me to help me determine which  
ones will weave, which ones will come through my door, come to me to weave. I  
305 don't know these people. Traditions have changed, all traditions change.  
Eventually, they go along with whatever comes into their culture. So why don't I

teach just anybody, and why would I be open to showing people the tricks of the trade. Well, because I'm not really teaching them. I'm just showing them the tricks of the trade: they are on their own journey; and I am not responsible for them  
 310 as a leader.

I am responsible for those that taught me, yes, I am. And they are all watching me. I have dreams about them. They have been telling me things like, "We are counting on you." Maria Miller in Haines and Jenny Thlunaut are there standing side-by-side in front of whole new ideas: weavings I have never seen  
 315 before in my life; they were all Chilkat weavings. One moment they are all there, weavers sitting there, fifty or sixty of them.

The other moment they are standing right before me and I'm looking at them going "aaahhhh."

And how Maria Miller says to me, "Clarissa we are counting on you we  
 320 don't want you to five up."

"Don't worry about it I am taking a break. I have to do other things in my life. Don't worry about it."

"Clarissa, we are counting on you." Jenny is standing there next to her and looking right at me and nodding... "Mmmhmmm, don't worry about it now girl,  
 325 I'm with you now. I'm with you now."

And I woke up and, "Oh my god. Who the hell are those women? Oh my god."

How important is it in my life. The importance is this: there are many, many hundreds of people who would love to have a robe, and they know, they feel  
 330 the power of the robe. And quite so, they are quite powerful. And many say they want to learn how to weave, and out of those maybe out of twenty women, you'll get one. And out of that twenty, which ones have the correct character? Well you have to pray about it. I ask for assistance to help weed out the ones that don't belong and keep the ones that do. This is how it works. Now some people, say,  
 335 "No, no, no Clarissa is big headed about it." But I've been trained. I've been trained. I've been in training for a long time. And just because she is dead and gone doesn't mean she is dead and gone. She is not dead and gone. That woman is powerful and she knows how to travel between the worlds. In my experience, some call me crazy, big ego. I don't really care what people think of me, it is their  
 340 business. But what I think of me is my business.

I encourage my students to come to their loom clean every morning. Every time they go to the loom first thing in the morning, they go clean. They have not eaten anything. Jenny said that you go to your loom the first thing in the morning, when you wake up early. And I laugh at her because I never got out of bed before  
 345 nine. I get out of bed 10 o'clock, sometimes noon. So she said that to me. I laughed, "Right, yeah right."

"You have to understand I've known you since you 29 yrs. old."

When you go to your loom, go clean. You can drink juice have water the first thing in the morning, but no eating. First, you pray. You say a prayer; you give

350 thanks: that is your prayer for what you have. You don't need to ask for  
anything. It is all before you: your gift has been given. The fact you've been  
chosen, or the fact you have the talent to do this, the fact that people have chosen  
you to do this, to carry on a certain tradition. In this day and age, I don't encourage  
my students to fast for three days like they used to, but I do encourage them to pray  
355 and in their own manner with their own words; whatever fashion they would do.  
And they go to their loom and weave for a while, whether it's an hour, three hours,  
or four hours before they actually eat. Let me tell you, I used to wake up and sure  
have breakfast. That's what I would do. Well, no not any more I don't eat breakfast  
until 11 or 12. I drink lots of water, tea. My fasting is in the morning all night long  
360 from dinnertime, it's like a fifteen hour fast. And I wake up early. I wake up four  
o'clock, though not always to do Chilkat weaving, but to work maybe regalia, or  
taxes, reports, proposals or drawings; whatever, because it all feeds each other. It  
feeds one another: my work is all the same

Shaaksani Seek Weavers Circle print. That's about the time that I dreamt it.  
365 Anyway, that print, the way that works, the way we transposed it is we took one  
image and put it with another. We took the photograph of Jenny that Larry McNeil  
had done in front of the Raven House, in front of the smoke house on the beach in  
Haines. We took that photograph of the face and he [Hudson] put it in place of the  
man who was actually in that picture. That man was a relative of hers from the  
370 Wolf House in Klukwan, a photograph taken by Winter and Pond. Anyway what  
we did was we took that photograph of that man and put it together with the

photograph of Jenny: it's her face. And then the tunic, what we did was, we took the faces of various Chilkat weavers: Nora Dauenhauer, Ernestine Hanlon, Anne Smith. You know these people are from all over: Louie White from Prince  
375 Rupert; Anne Smith from Whitehorse; Donna Kranlen from Alert Bay, British Columbia, around that area; Suzie Williams from Klawock; myself; and Ernestine Hanlon from Hoonah. It was seven years ago and I put them in place of the Chilkat faces that were on that tunic. This tunic was woven probably by one of Jenny's relatives because they were all related. That tunic, that famous tunic; that is the  
380 ultimate tunic, and there is nothing like it. That tunic represents a piece woven by one of Jenny's aunties or grandmothers. And it's Jenny Thlunaut, then there is that next generation of weavers. And some of them are my students. They are carrying on their traditions. You have these generations going on in that picture.

Nora and Richard Dauenhauer thought that it was ingenious and they both  
385 loved it. Nora is in there. Nora Dauenhauer and her family are originally from Haines. Yeah, I only made forty copies of that. I gave one to all of the weavers. Some of them rejected it. One person just threw it in the garbage. Another was mad about it [name withheld]. She thought I was making 'big bucks' off it. People think I make 'big bucks.' She was upset about because she said that she refused to have  
390 an image of herself for sale on such an item.

"What's the problem?" I asked.

She said, "Because that image is of me and your selling me."

And I said, “How is that any different you being on the cover of a magazine and people you don’t even know buy the magazine.

395           And she said, “Welllll.....I don’t like it.”

          “Ok,” I said, “that’s too bad.” And the funny thing is, is that most people don’t recognize who those people are. What difference does it make? It’s not the point. The point-of-the-matter is that it is just *representing* people carrying on a tradition: It’s all it is. Because, oh baby, three of those worked with me for seven  
400   years... I’m not marketing them. This is the first time I’ve put the prints on my website. I have two of them shrink wrapped and the other prints I gave away; I made them as gifts not as a money-making thing.

          [The print] is crossing time and generations. It is something that its is always there. It’s always there and that’s what that print is all about. I tell you if she  
405   [Jenny Thlunaut] saw that print... there are so many times that I wish she... Well, lets put it this way, if it wasn’t the right thing it wouldn’t have happened. It’s not like I am not guided: I am guided all the time. It’s not like I am not guided. It’s not just me. It’s not just me coming up with these ideas. Oh no they are waiting in the eves: They are waiting in the rafters. Timing is everything.

410           When I take my weaving with me it can affect the weaving if I allow it to. You kind of have to be in the right place in order to do it. Let me tell you something that happened when I was in Washington DC in November demonstrating Chilkat Weaving. I’m weaving the robe called, Jenny Weaves an Apprentice. It’s a Chilkat Robe within a Chilkat robe. I designed a robe with that

415 same concept, the Chilkat robe within a Chilkat robe. I designed it a couple of  
years ago for my friend Darlene See. The robe is based on what happened to her  
clan sometime back: A very powerful robe. Anyway, hers is a robe within a robe  
and I based her robe concept on this one, which I designed twenty years ago  
directly after Jenny died. And I was never satisfied with it and although I made a  
420 couple of versions of that in design and the one into a print. There was still that...  
anyway, I still wasn't satisfied with it until this past September. I finally, twenty  
years later, I started weaving the robe. I've spun the warp and everything and I  
started weaving and it's a robe that will fit me. It's not a big one because I'm not a  
big person. It's a document of my apprenticeship with Jenny. And not just that, it's  
425 also a document of me teaching my students by way of Jenny, and also my students  
continuing on and teaching others as well. And I brought that robe with me to  
demonstrate on it and it had Jenny, her face on it. And I just finished the crown and  
her face is in the center of the robe. And there I was demonstrating the weaving and  
there at the museum, the NMAMI museum, the Smithsonian museum. And there  
430 was this exhibit of Northwest Coast native art and I even didn't get a chance to see  
it because I was working. I didn't have time. And this Korean family walks up: a  
mother, a sister, daughter. There was one who could not speak, the mother, and she  
could only do sign language and noises. She saw the weaving and she saw how I  
was weaving. She saw when I was demonstrating to the kids. So I was  
435 demonstrating and apparently in Korea hundreds of years ago, they used to weave:  
they were weavers and they spun some kind of bark with the wool. I kid you not.



This woman was so excited. She was hitting on her thigh, clapping her hands on her thigh and she was speaking her language. Her translator, which was the daughter was about my age, was telling me, “I see a face that many hundreds of  
440 years ago, in Korea, we had the same kind of weaving. No one does it anymore. They would spin the bark of the tree with the wool of the sheep. We have a certain kind of sheep.”

I didn't know what it was. And I looked at her and I looked at the woman who was standing, the one who was deaf and dumb, and she was so excited, oh my  
445 god she was jumping up and down. And she was pointing to it and slapping her hands on her thigh. She walks over to the weaving and she is doing the fingering in the air. And she says it's no longer done: It's been lost. It's no longer done. Pretty amazing huh?

So when I weave, when I bring my piece out, I have to do a protective  
450 prayer and all I do is energize it: I have to protect myself. And I kind of put up a barrier around me and the robe. It's very important. One of the things you do when you are weaving, if you're weaving an eye and you know your about to weave the circle of an eye, or the circle of anything, whether it's a circle in a box or an eye, it doesn't matter, because anytime you weave an eye or a circle you have to make  
455 sure that you have the time set aside to finish the closure of that circle, the bottom part of the circle. You do not leave that circle open.

Another thing is you do not weave human hands in Chilkat Weaving. You can put three fingers and a thumb. You can put a claw, but you cannot put four

fingers and a thumb: not allowed. Don't ask me why. I begged her [Jenny] for  
460 a whole week, and so did everyone in that class. She told us, "No human hands. No  
human hands! No human hands! No human hands!"

Boy was I embarrassed. I didn't ask her to repeat it after that. I didn't talk to  
her for a week. And then George Lewis the carver there in Haines married to  
Matilda Lewis. George, he brought his weaving loom. He brought his warp. He  
465 brought his pattern. He got it all ready to go for most of the class that first day. And  
he asked Jenny, "I want to learn how to weave can you please take me as one of  
your students." And she looks at him continuing on and she's ignoring him. Then  
she goes and gets her cup of coffee and doesn't say anything. And he is standing  
there waiting. He's waiting all day long. The next day he comes to class and he's  
470 helping her move chairs around and he's getting her a cup of coffee: he's just  
bowing down to her, "Teach me how to weave, you know me, you know my  
family, please teach me."

She's mumbling, "No, no, no."

And there we were all lined up at our looms. And I'm thinking, "What's  
475 wrong with that?" And mind you at that time I didn't know there are politics and  
customs in Chilkat Weaving. So I kind of looked over my loom to see what's going  
on...hmmm.

She just keeps ignoring him and walking away from him. she doesn't look  
at him or nothing and I wonder what's going on. He said, "You know me I'm going  
480 to be a good weaver, come on."

Finally, one day she says to him really loud, “Men don’t weave! Men don’t weave! Men don’t weave!” Oh my god. He left and he didn’t come back. I never saw him again. So when people ask me how come I don’t teach just anybody? Some Native women I won’t even teach. And don’t they dare approach  
485 me. You know how come? I don’t teach White people. How come? I don’t teach even some Native people. What’s the problem? What is the matter with that? Well, number one, White people, they have a different energy about them [that is] not in line with Chilkat weaving. There might be an exception. There might be an exception if that person is born on the Northwest Coast. There might an exception  
490 be if she is born on the Northwest Coast and her energy is line with it. And if I ask and the answer is yes, so far it hasn’t been. I don’t know why? Yeah, I don’t.

Number two: I don’t teach men. How come? Because I was taught not to; And if you want to really respect an elder and their traditional ways, you need to hear what the elders says, what they are adamant about. Even in the case of public  
495 face, even in embarrassing the man like that, even for myself. I wanted to weave a human hand holding a flower. A flower sure, but I just couldn’t put a human hand on the weaving. When people say they are carrying on the traditions, yet they are a man and they use any justification, “I am going to pass it on down to my relatives.” Well, you can just go ahead and pass it on down to your relatives, of course. And  
500 then you can have your relatives take over then. No way, the man’s ego is very, it’s not inline. It is not in line. It is far from the truth, the truth, the essence, his harmony. It is his romantic tongue: a man’s ego gets in the way. There is a

distortion. You know I have never spoken like this with this clarity. I don't talk about it over the website because it's left too wide open for misinterpretation and criticism. And that's why I don't talk about it in public or write about it. If somebody asks me one-on-one then I'll tell them and this is the explanation I give. Interesting, I just had an apprentice from Teslin and I was telling her some thing's and I was showing her some things and she says to me, "How come these things aren't written in your handbook?"

And I looked at her, "Because there are some things that I cannot write and should not ever be written except conveyed energy one-on-one, eye-to-eye, heart-to-heart, not thru a book, not through a computer screen, and not thru a video tape. Uh uh, because that is once removed, and there are some things that cannot be misconstrued, information that should not be interpreted wrongly or haphazardly." And so I looked her straight in the eye, "Uh huh," and I said, "You will understand this the more you weave. The more you devote to it, you will pick up on the other things and you will know it. Right now you are just a beginner and wondering how come? How come this and how come that? And that is ok. There are many times where she just broke down. And I told her, "You are following a path. You are in a toddler stage and you are clumsy. You have to allow yourself to be clumsy, because you are just weaving into a state of grace—Chose the grace. Why? Because some day your hands will just fly, your spirit will just soar, and you'll go to places you never even knew were there before."

And you know, some people when thinking about Western culture and yet  
525 they think they can take anything and everything from anywhere and make it their  
own. And there is nothing wrong with it and to a certain extent there isn't. And  
that's the beauty of the Western culture: they bring their stuff to our Western doors,  
foods and customs from other countries, bringing them to our markets. They send  
them to our catalogs, then to our children in schools by way of videos, books and  
530 products. Well, the weavings, they belong to us. There are some things in every  
culture that belong to it. It's the being, a longing to be in the Western culture. It's  
the being; it's the earth, sky, wind, the essence of locality, and the essence of the  
landscape. They are in the world but not of it. The essence, it comes from another  
whole time and place. And it comes from the NW coast and it's important that the  
535 person who does that kind of weaving, knows that kind of weaving, and is either  
born to that land or is born to that culture. It's DNA, cultural patterning, a way of  
thinking, a way of doing things. There are some Westerners who understand that,  
that's why they won't even approach it. They can admire it and respect it. They  
know it: it's something that doesn't belong to them. Not ownership, but the  
540 longingness of being, the being, continuing in a pure form without being disturbed.

*Creating at.óow*

Her four grandchildren stood beside their Grandmother as she spoke: "You  
see these button robes and headbands I made for my grandchildren? It took me a  
545 long time. I made a robe for each of my grandchildren because I wanted to make

sure that each of them knew where they came from and who their relatives are.” The Grandmother’s voice faltered, “I have cancer. I can go any day, never know, could be any time. I wanted each of my grandchildren to have something I made for them so they can remember me. And when they have children they can  
550 tell their children what their Grandmother did for them...”

This story is one of thousands among our people along the Northwest Coast, where our regalia depicts our clan identity, documents historical events and transitions, and reflects our clan status. Yet it is also our ‘medicine.’ Many of us feel that these objects are our relatives. When we acknowledge our relatives, we are  
555 providing a medicine, a spiritual nourishment that feeds the present-day clan members, all the while nourishing our ancestors. It is no wonder there has been a resurgence of our culture in recent years: we have been “starving” for a long time.

As a regalia designer and maker, I have been witness to the power of our regalia, and how these ‘relatives’ hold up our people, and in turn, we hold them up.  
560 Our Northwest Coast Native art once belonged exclusively to us in this small part of the world. At some point, we began trading our beautiful regalia items with foreigners, for furs and trade items from other regions. Now our art is collected by museums and private individuals all over the world. This leads to an interesting position for Northwest Coast artists. Many of us create our works just for our  
565 family and clan members, for special ceremonies and clan celebrations, our *koo.éex*. Others create just for the marketplace, for tourists and collectors. Many of us create works for both the collectors market and for our own clan members. With

the resurgence of the songs and dances of the many Northwest Coast tribes has come the production of new ceremonial objects, including dance rattles, drums, jewelry, leggings, aprons, masks, button robes, Chilkat and Ravenstail robes. This  
570 new clan regalia joins our older ‘relatives,’ our *at.óow*.

Without even realizing it, perhaps, artists sometimes find themselves in a leadership position. They are a “voice” in the breath of any culture, breathing forth new life and new ways of looking at the world, while acknowledging where they  
575 come from. In our traditional culture, there were many laws we had to adhere to, and within the context of our present-day bi-cultural existence, we find many questions posed to us. Who has the right to design and create regalia? Masks? Robes? Weavings? Bead work? Drums? Rattles? How many among us know the traditions, the stories and songs that traditionally accompany a regalia item? I  
580 myself only recently realized that stories and songs were once an integral part of our regalia objects. Does the holding of these traditions still serve a purpose today? If so, how can these traditions be preserved, or revived?

Our ancestors had specific ways of transferring the clan regalia, cherished  
*at.óow*, which belongs not to a single individual but to the whole clan. A few  
585 families and clans hold true to these traditions. In our present-day society, with its distractions of technology and entertainment, we have not kept up with the clan laws and procedures. In the recent past, some cherished clan regalia was sold or given away. Now we wonder how to re-establish rules for the transference of clan possessions and property that reflects the true value of these, our “relatives.”

590       Adaptation to change is the essential ingredient for the survival of any  
culture. Since time immemorial we have adapted to many changes: changes in the  
environment; changes when war broke out amongst neighboring tribes; changes  
when the Asians came across; changes when the Westerners arrived and stayed,  
installing new laws and boundary lines. Change is constant. We are still here  
595 because we have been able to adapt and become part of a bi-cultural society.

When I look back on the clan relationships that my grandparents grew up  
with, I sense that I do not experience close kinship with my clan people. I was not  
raised with this value or tradition. I was raised in a tri-cultural family; my mother, a  
Tlingit from Hoonah, and my father, a Filipino from Manila, spoke English in our  
600 home, as their second language, and that was the only language I learned as a child.  
I recognize my immediate cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces, yet we are not united as a  
clan entity. We no longer live together in clan house, nor even in the same town.

Still, we call ourselves *T'akdeintaan*. I am told we have a large clan; that  
our people were known for their songs and many were respected artists. We no  
605 longer conduct ourselves in the manner of clans, however; we have begun to view  
ourselves instead as “shareholders” of tribal corporations. Many of us do not know  
the traditional ways of our people. Can we gather ourselves back together and be,  
once again, a clan, a society, a people?

In any tribal relationship, there must be agreements among the people  
610 involved to identify the values and traditions and make the commitment to actively  
maintain these things. A growing number of individuals, families and clans are



making the effort to identify themselves and re-group, do the research of our traditions and find new ways to blend the past and present, then re-establish, maintain and share many of the ways of Native being and doing.

615           When our culture was nearly “lost” during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some elders felt that, through song and dance, a revival could happen, possibly saving some of the cultural remnants they were holding on to. Back in the early 60s, a few dance troupes were formed; they revived the old songs and dances, and created a few new ones. Through the traditional songs and dances, the revival of our culture began to  
620 sprout. People began learning, and eventually teaching, the old arts: carving, basket weaving, beadwork, metal smithing, button-robe making, Chilkat and Ravenstail weaving, subsistence hunting and fishing techniques. Now some are working to revive our language, which my generation never learned, growing up. As with any language in the world, our language is the sound and voice of our land in union  
625 with the human heart and mind.

A Biblical passage says: “In the beginning was the Word.” Some say this passage refers to how the universe was first created: with sound. All of creation came with sound, and continues to do so. Begin with song, and the ceremony follows. Do the ceremony and the dance follows. Do the dance and the regalia  
630 follows. Make the regalia, witness and experience creation. Create, and the sense of well-being follows. When we have a sense of well-being, we “lift up ourselves and lift up our communities” and the songs continue.

## APPENDIX D

## Contemporary Tlingit Identity and the Ancestral Landscape

In this chapter, I provide three narratives that reflect contemporary Tlingit identity and the relationship to the ancestral landscape. The first is from Owen James. Owen grew up in Kake, Alaska and now lives in the village of Hoonah. Owen is considered one of the foremost *atxaayí* providers in Hoonah and Kake.

Mitch Mork is a 25-year-old college student who will complete his Civil Engineering degree through the University of Alaska Anchorage in the spring of 2008. Mitch spends most of his leisurely time in the out-of-doors. He was born and raised in Southeast Alaska mostly in Wrangell and Sitka. His family lived on subsistence foods and spent a lot of time on the water both commercial fishing and for recreation.

Elizabeth Martin, age 93, lives in Juneau, Alaska. She is one of the last remaining residents of Killisnoo, a cannery village near Angoon that was destroyed by fire in the early 1900s. Her father was a Japanese immigrant who came to the U.S. to work in the canneries and her mother was a Tlingit woman from Angoon. Elizabeth's narrative is filled with traditional knowledge as well as touches upon the changes in technology and life today.

*Owen James: Haa atxaayi, Our food is our lifestyle*

I grew up in Kake, Alaska and started hunting at a young age—around 8 years old. I used to run off with my father's single shot 22. I got go deer, grouse, and duck hunting. [As a young boy] I wanted to go with my father, but since he  
5 was hunting for food for the family, he did not let me go hunting with him until I was 12 yrs old. One day he asked if I was ready to go deer hunting.

I had three older brothers who, when they turned 12-yrs-old, he had taken them out hunting. This time he wanted to show me how to call a deer. We started walking in the woods and he asked us kids how many deer we wanted to shoot.  
10 Then he would blow his deer call and tell us which way the deer were going to come from. At first, I couldn't believe it. We could not figure that out, but soon he was blowing his deer call and calling up the deer and we would take turns shooting our deer. Then he would tell me that he was going to call another deer and again he would tell us what direction the deer would come from. And we would say, "No  
15 way." But then the deer would come again. I had asked him to call up four deer for me and I was able to shoot them. My father told me to clean the deer and said that when I was finished with them to take them down to the boat.

I was confused because I didn't know I had to clean all four of my deer. My father would walk off from us and stand a distance away and watch us skin the  
20 deer. My other brothers knew better than to have him call up more than one deer because he had done the same thing to them their first hunting trip. Now when he asked how many they wanted to shoot they said only one. However, I was only 12-

yrs-old so I did not know any better. After he walked off, my bothers would clean their one deer apiece and take them down to the boat, and then they would walk off  
25 by themselves and go hunting. By the time, I had my deer skinned, my father had four or five deer already down at the boat. After he shot the first one, he came back to check on me and asked what I was doing. I said, "I don't know how to clean a deer."

He said, "So, do you have a knife?" I brought my knife out and tried to  
30 hand it to him and he said, "No you shot it so now you have to clean it. I'll show you how to clean the first one and the rest you will have to do yourself."

So I cleaned the first deer and then he showed me how to make a pack out of it. I had to carry all four deer out myself. By the time, I got the last one down to the boat, my father and brothers had been sitting there for three hours already  
35 waiting for me. There is a lesson to learn in that one I'll tell you. The next time I went hunting and my father asked how many deer that I wanted to shoot. I told him "One."

My father taught me how to call deer and how to track them. I had to learn everything about the deer, their habitat and where they went to certain times of the  
40 year. One year, in Hoonah, I was hunting with Mike See. Mike informed me that the Fish and Game were considering closing deer hunting early that year because the deer were declining in numbers. They had surveyed a place and noted only eight deer at the most, maybe six. Mike wanted to know where the deer were so I took him to where I knew the deer were hanging out. At this place we quit counting

45 at 98 deer; probably over a hundred deer were where we were. Mike wanted to know if he could relay this to the Fish and Game but I told him, "No." There are certain places the deer go. The deer are like we are, but they are a lot smarter than we think they are. They know where to go certain times of the year. Finally, we agreed to tell the Fish and Game about how many deer we saw but not where.

50 Eventually, the government agreed to keep the season open another month and a half longer.

I learned how to call deer from my father and how to call a brown bear down to me if I want to. My father taught me to use the deer-call in order to call deer, bear, or wolves. Today, I do not use a deer-call I use my mouth. On my own,

55 I learned how to call a deer by listening to the sound they make and then imitating them. Once I was sitting on a stump about 12-feet off the ground and as I sat there I heard deer come up to me. The deer kept making a noise and I thought it was another deer-call, but it turned out to be the noise they make so I started answering it back. The deer came right underneath me. After a while he walked off and when

60 he got 15-yards from me I called him right back. To make a call, I use a piece of wood about four or five inches long. I split it in half and groove it out. The same part that I carve out I use for the center. I make it as thin as possible which gives it a good tone. However, I only use this deer-call once and then toss it.

I also listened to my father call seals, but my call is different. I figured out

65 where the seals are hanging out on the rocks and I go among them with my boat. I sit up on top between the rocks where they cannot see me. I listened to them and

then I started to copy their sounds. I would listen to the bull and how he would make his sounds. I would listen to the female, the ways she was calling her young ones. I would practice the same tone as the seal. I would listen to the young ones, 70 the two or three-year-olds. I didn't learn it in a month or two: It took me years. I would just go among them and listen to them.

One year, a friend of mine in Kake and myself went out to get seal. When we were out hunting, I asked him if he awaited a small seal, a big one, or medium one. He said a medium one. I called a medium seal up to us and we shot it. I was 75 cleaning it and I asked him what size he wanted to shoot next, and he told me that he would like to shoot a bull. So I called up a big bull and he shot it and together we pulled it up to the beach. I asked him again which he wanted and this time he asked for small seal so I called two two-year-olds up and we shot them. After that, he was so excited that he started laughing. He wanted to take home the big seal 80 thinking that bigger was better. But, I chose the small ones. Later he called me to tell me that his seal was tough. He came to my house and tried the seal adobo I was cooking. He commented about how tender it was. He wanted to know how long I cooked it to get it so tender. I told him that I cooked it as long as his, but my seal was tender because I took the small seal. This is how he learned.

85 I moved to Hoonah in 1979. I met my wife at a Salvation Army Congress that was being held there, so I stayed. The first two years I lived in Hoonah we struggled. We had two kids to support. When I went hunting with him, my father-in-law, he would tell me which way to go, and unknowingly I would chase the deer

to him and he would get to shoot the deer. So the next time I went with him and he  
90 told me which way to go I went the other way. Still, my family was having a tough  
time. My father-in-law would only share the smallest pieces of meat with my  
family and me: only the bone with about a quarter inches of meat. I would boil the  
meat and give it to my kids and I would eat just the rice and the broth. This went on  
for about a year. After that, I told myself that I was going to learn Hoonah so well  
95 that people will come to me and ask where to go hunting and fishing.

Therefore, I started going out to get clams and gumboots and bringing them  
home to the Elders. The Elders would tell me where to go hunting and fishing. I  
would get my information from people that other people wouldn't even look at. By  
that I mean the drunks. I would invite them into my house but they would not come  
100 in; so I would offer them coffee on the porch and we would sit there just talking.  
Eventually, they would come inside the house. Sometimes this would be 4:00 am in  
the morning. I would have the coffee on, and they would come in. They would tell  
me about all the hot spots for hunting and fishing, where the reefs and sand bars  
were, and where to go around the reefs at certain tides. Because of the information  
105 that they shared with me, every time I saw them I give them some of my catch. In a  
years time I learned where to go hunting and fishing—all of the hot spots. So now  
people come to me and ask where to go hunting and fishing.

I taught my son to hunt and fish from the time he was three or four years  
old. His first gun was a BB gun. I taught him how to use a rifle. I got a bunch of  
110 cardboard boxes together, about four feet by four feet. I drew a circle in the middle

of the box about the size of a quarter, and when he could hit that dead center three times in a row, I would move the box another five feet further away. The first time he tired his BB gun he was only five feet away from the target. I did this inside my house. After a year was up, he was shooting the length of the house, so I opened up  
115 the back door and set the box further out, about 25 yards and he hit it dead center. [Then] it was time to go out and try it outside, so I took him out in the boat and let him shoot a can. He was to shoot it until he couldn't see the can, which meant that it was full of his shots and had sunk. When he accomplished this, I told him that he was ready for a real rifle: a 22 with a clip on it. He was so excited that I took him  
120 out seal hunting for the first time. And by the time he was six-years-old he shot eight seal. He shot four deer with that 22. I told him where to shoot his game because the gun was such a small caliber that you have to know where to shoot the animal. I told him to pay attention and listen to what I am saying. *If* you do not, the deer will suffer. So when the deer is looking right at you, do not shoot it. Wait until  
125 he turns his head, broad side to you, then shoot him right in the ear. You take the shot right behind the ear. He shot his first deer on the flats on a sandbar. We were with his uncle. There was a buck and a doe. My brother in law said he was going to shoot the big doe that was standing up. I asked if he was sure that he didn't want to shoot the buck, but he thought it was too small so he chose the doe. When he shot  
130 the doe, the buck stood up and the buck was two times bigger than the doe. I had known it was big and that it was lying inside a hold, so it appeared smaller.



Therefore, my son was able to shoot the buck and he shot it right behind the ear. It went down and stood back up. He shot it again and it went down and then stood back up again. At this time, I asked my son if he was shooting it behind the ear and he told me that he was. The deer jumped in the water and we chased it back to the beach. My son wanted to finish shooting it, so it dropped after I told him to shoot it in the eye. It took all three of us to get him into the boat. That's how big the deer was.

I raised my whole family on subsistence foods. And I learned that there are seasons for everything. I start off picking seaweed and gumboots. Gumboots are available certain times of the season at certain places. After I gather the beach food then I go seal hunting. Then I pick seaweed again because there are six growths of seaweed. Not many people know about this. I learned this a long time ago and I have shared this knowledge with others because they did not know about it, even some who are older than I am. They were wondering how I knew. I learned that from my father. Everything comes around, like the knowledge of salmon; I know where they are at the mouth of the river even before they get there. I learned that from my father too.

One man asked me how I know when to go out and pick seaweed and he admitted that he only knew because he always watched me. As far as halibut is concerned, you can fish year round but in the winter, you have to go deeper to the 100 or 200 fathom hole. At certain times of the year, the halibut will come up into the shallows to mate. And another thing that is good to know is that when you are

filleting the big ones, if you cut them wrong for smoking or drying, they can  
155 become tough. You have to cut them a certain way. I was watching my mother cut  
halibut one day; we had a couple of 200-pounders, and I was watching the way she  
cut it. So I cut it in the length she wanted it: a 2 to 2 ½ foot long filet. Then I asked  
her how come she didn't cut it the other way and she didn't know what I was  
talking about. So I told her to cut it another way. I cut mine faster and the kind that  
160 I cut was real soft and easier to chew. The fish she had cut was like dental floss  
after it had been processed. After this she told me that she realized that she wasn't  
too old to learn something new.

I learned to process fish and deer by going around and helping the older  
folks. That is how I learned the different ways of cutting, drying, and smoking fish.  
165 I helped them cut the seal and the deer—I didn't ask for payment; I would just do  
it. There were different styles. They would ask me how my father did it but I would  
just smile. I would tell them that I did not know. However, I would help them and  
they would always give me some: This is how I learned.

After I pick seaweed, I go out and catch salmon. I get my limit and then  
170 come home. I learned where the feed is, what time of day and tide. Today, the laws  
have changed and you have to keep track of it. When I was a kid, all my parents  
had to get was a hunting license. They didn't have to get tags. Back in the 50s or  
60s you had to start getting deer tags. The government would switch it to six deer  
per person, or sometimes the regulations would say that you were allotted three  
175 deer in this place, or three in that place. You have to know where the federal land is

and where the state land is. Like Hoonah, they changed it to where you can get four deer from here and two from the mainland. Now they are talking about changing it yet again. You have to keep up with it. It is the same with the salmon fisheries. My father said he used to be able to hunt year round. The Tlingit people could get the deer whenever they needed it. When he had enough for one or two meals left, he would go out and get another deer and bring it in, hang it, and let it season for a few days, cut it up and put it away. Now you can only get deer at certain times of the year. We used to can it all: deer, seal, clams, and cockles, and bear.

My son has learned from me. He knows the areas of Hoonah and Kake. I still go back to Kake and go seal hunting. One man in Kake told me that he couldn't find any deer. I told him that I would come to Kake and get a deer. So I did. He couldn't believe it. He said he had heard about me but it was my father who taught me how and where to hunt and fish in Kake.

Now we have culture camps that teach kids who do not have anyone available to teach them. If Hoonah Indian Association creates a culture camp here in Hoonah, I will enjoy teaching the kids. I taught at a culture camp in Kake. It taught them survival too. I would go out with the kids and teach them to survive with only what they carried in their pockets. Many of the kids figured it out and began to wear pants with lots of pockets and vests with pockets because they did not know when I was going to take them out. When the kids go out with me, they learn where to go and what tide is good for harvesting the variety of beach foods. We search for clams, cockles, gumboots, sea urchins, Chinese caps, and then I

show the kids how to prepare them. Also, it is very interesting what you can eat out of the woods. This time of year you can eat salmon berry spouts, thimbleberry  
200 spouts. I show the kids how to find salmonberries, huckleberries, blueberries, and Jacob berries. I show them how to set snares for ptarmigan or squirrels. There is a lot I do know, but I am willing to show people who are interested and I find that others might be interested in something else. So I will teach what that person wants to know.

205           To me a subsistence life means that I will have a good year. If I do not harvest the food, now then I will not have it later on. It will be gone. It would mean that I'd find to go find someone to barter with. This is what subsistence means to me.

210           *Owen James, reflecting a traditional worldview*

My clan is Kiksadi frog clan from Wrangell. My father is Sik'naxadi. I'm Brown Bear, Killer Whale. Back in 1917, they moved from Wrangell to Kake. They lived there until about four years ago when my father passed on. My parents moved from Wrangell back in 1917, and my father used to tell me stories when he  
215 lived I Wrangell back in the 1800s until recently. And my grandfather told him stories back in the 1800s. And so I learned a lot about our generations, our culture from that, the changes that Kake has gone through since he lived there 1917 until he passed one. Then I get a chance to share with my kids from the 1900s.

When I was growing up Kake we didn't have TV until I was in High  
220 School. Then they got TV. A interesting part about that I can say, I told my  
nephew that whenever that TV starts coming on, I'll never get them to go hunting.  
Television changed how people related to the land. When TV came to Kake. Like I  
said, I told my nephew that whenever TV came out I'll never get them to go out  
hunting anymore. And they looked at me they and laughed. When TV started  
225 coming in the 70s, it is interesting because my nephews, I was getting ready to go  
hunting, so I told them a couple of days ahead of time when I was going to go out.  
And I told them what time I was going to go out. And when that day came, time for  
us to go out hunting and fishing and gathering for winter. I went by to pick them up  
and he said, "No I'll go tomorrow. There's a good program coming on I want to  
230 watch it. A good movie."

So ok I went out hunting, came back and I had seal, halibut and what not.  
And while I was out there I set crab pots, shrimp pots, and put my jig line in. And  
so the following day I asked him, "Are you ready to go out again."

"I can't go today there is another good movie I want to see. I don't want to  
235 miss it" he told me.

I kept on trying to tell him that it would be back on again, but he wouldn't  
listen to me. So I went out again. When I went out, I came back in again and I had  
halibut, some salmon, some crab, shrimp. I think the third time he asked for some,  
the third time I went out, the third day. I looked at him and said, "Well, I'll tell you  
240 what the TV program probably tastes better than my crab and halibut."

He looked at me. On the fifth day, he asked me “Are you going out again?”

I said, “No.” I kept telling him, “No.” I wanted to see what he’d say. For about four days I kept on telling him No.

He finally says, “How come?”

245 I said, “Well, I just want to teach you a lesson, that you probably won’t forget.” And so through that he learned. When its time to go out. You go out or you don’t get what you like, what you like to eat. I wouldn’t give him any. He asked for some. I told him, “No eat your TV programs,” I said. He was sad and heartbroken and upset with me for awhile then he looked at me and I said, “Do you want to go  
250 out?”

He said, “Yes.” Before I could even say anything else he said, “Yes.” So we ended up going out again. This is interesting, I can say because we went out together in August. It was August sometime and we went out getting deer and seal, Dungeness crab and whatever else we could get our hands on, which is berries,  
255 gumboots and what not. And he looked at me, he told me, he said, “Well there is a good movie on tonight, but I miss all this fresh food.”

It was a lesson to be learned for him. Well, when I left home it was good to see him carrying on that, he is still gathering food giving them to his family; even as old as he is now he goes out and gathers food.

260 And I feel good about it: that he learned. And a lot of times I can say that when I used to run around, I used to go out hunting and fishing for one thing. One day my uncle brought this question up to me: Why do you go out to get only one

thing? It costs money to get fuel. Back then it wasn't much. But then the money  
you made too; well wasn't much but you could buy a lot with what you had then  
265 compared to now. Twenty dollars won't last long, and you have to have something.  
You have to buy fuel. Back then you could buy a lot of fuel. But it was a lot of  
money then because twenty dollars would buy a lot of things. And the things was,  
when my nephews and I would get ready to go out and my uncle told me about  
getting more than one thing. He said, "When you go out, when you go after seal,  
270 when you see a deer why don't you try getting it? Get halibut while you are out  
there, troll and get some King Salmon, some gumboots."

Sometimes when I first started hunting, I'd go after one thing, and just go  
out and get that and come back. Then the next time I'd get some money together  
I'd go out again. Like the first time I'd go after seal and get that and bring it back  
275 in. But after a while I'd start to learn that if I get a little bit of everything I'm that  
far ahead. That's what I was teaching my nephews when I was growing up too. I  
had three nephews that I always liked to run around with, go hunting, to go out and  
gather food. I had a lot of fun with them. To see them still going out now I feel  
good about it. They love hunting and fishing too.

280 When I say hunting, I used to go out after everything that's possible to get  
my hands on: grouse, ptarmigan, wintertime and anytime like now, fall time  
grouse, and also geese and mallards. Back when I first started growing up, when I  
was growing up, I'd use my father's rifle: single shot 22. I used to use that a lot. I  
can say I was getting good at it, a single shot rifle. I would go hunting for

285 everything I could think of, everything I know of. I'd hunt it if I could bring it  
down. When I learned that, when I started grouse hunting back then they didn't  
have a deal like they do now: they have to be rim fired to go hunting. You could  
hunt with a 22. It's a big caliber compared to a 22. You look at the biggest gun it  
was a 32-20 and you could use that.

290 When I was running around with my father fishing, I had a chance back  
then, when I was a child. We didn't have much roads and we either hiked or took  
the boat and went out. For me going hunting on the boat I used to go with my  
father. I used to go all over with him; he showed me the places to go. When I  
started running around my myself, for me to learn how to go from place to place, I  
295 had to learn how to row a boat first. And the boat I learned on was a fourteen foot  
plywood boat and two sets of oars; and it had them old oar locks and if you paddled  
wrong they would pop out. I don't know how many times I would get frustrated  
and upset with that.

My father would just laugh at me, "Well, I'll tell you one thing you pick  
300 that up and you get upset and mad and angry. And all you are going to learn is  
anger and frustration. So if you really want to learn you need to learn how to be  
more patient." He says, "One day I will teach you how to paddle a boat and when  
that time comes you'll know. I will tell you, 'Lets go.'

So I waited and waited and waited and waited for how many months. I was  
305 very impatient. My father would just smile at me, "Tomorrow, tomorrow" that's all  
he would say. I don't know how many months went by and finally around



Thanksgiving morning my father woke me up early in the morning, 6 o'clock and said, "Do you want to learn how to paddle a boat?" I jumped out of bed and got all excited. Get ready, eat breakfast, got ready. I jumped out of bed and got ready. I  
310 had breakfast, put my rain pants on, my rain coat, packed my rain hat. He told me to go down to the beach and pull the boat in, "I will be right down there."

We used to anchor our boat out, so I pulled the boat in and waited for him.

And he came down and asked if I was ready. He said, "No you are not."

I said, "Yes I am." I pulled the boat in. "I have all the stuff ready."

315 He said, "Why aren't the paddles, the oars in the oar locks?"

So I jumped in the boat and I said, "I'm ready."

"Are you sure? Everything's secured, everything's tied down?"

I said, "Yes." And that day it was blowing so hard it wasn't even funny.

"Are you ready?"

320 "Yes"

"Are you sure?"

I said, "Yes."

"Are you sure?"

I said, "Yes. Yes, I'm ready!"

325 "Ah, you are going to really learn how to paddle the boat." And he pushed me out and said, "When you come back in anchor the boat back out."

I happened to be early that morning; I didn't get back till 3 or 4 o'clock that afternoon. I learned three or four different styles of paddling the boat.

“There are many different ways to learn how to paddle the boat,” he said.

330 “But, you need to learn that yourself. You’ve seen we do it before, many different ways of paddling the boat. It is up to you to think about it.”

And as I’m drifting offshore, “Dad, Dad!”

He says, “Start paddling you aren’t going to get in that way.”

I don’t know how many times I would paddle in, paddle as hard as I can to  
335 get as close as I can to the shore. I’m even too far out to chip off the bow of the boat. I looked at it, man, but that afternoon I finally made it back to shore. I ended up coming back in and I anchored the boat out, went up and sat down. My dad looks at me, “Oh you made it in. did you anchor the boat out?”

“Yes it’s anchored out.”

340 You’d better take a bath, get ready we’re going to have dinner soon.”

I took a bath, sat down and that was it. I was out for the night. That was his way of teaching me how to paddle. To me, he wanted me to learn how to be patient and to learn how to control my frustration, my anger. So I had to learn that with him, through that. I can say one thing: I learned out there paddling that boat. I  
345 learned the different styles of rowing a boat. I’m rowing strait forwards, I’m rowing backwards, leaning in on the tip. Or my paddle is just going like that, backwards. That way I learned how to use, not just one sort of way of my muscles, but I learned many different ways how to use different parts my body for rowing. I had to stand up and row: that was very interesting. In order to use the boat I had to

350 learn how to paddle the boat in case the motor, the outboard broke down and I had  
to paddle home. I can say one thing: it's keeping me very humble.

Before I started using the motor, my father told me that I had to use the  
boat. I had a fourteen-foot boat. But, I had to paddle there, paddle back up in Kake  
to McCartney, Point McCartney. It's like from her [Hoonah] to Nika Bay: That's  
355 quite a distance. And the thing was, when I was first paddled there, by the time I  
got there, it was already late in the afternoon so I didn't have much time to fish. I  
can see he made me learn that I had to start getting up earlier if I wanted to get up  
and go somewhere to go get what I want: halibut, pinks, dog salmon, silvers.  
Though that I can say that I started to learn to get up early and take off early; that  
360 way I get back before dark. Cause that first time I went out, I went kind of late, 8  
o'clock, 8 o'clock in the morning I went out and I didn't get back home until 1:00  
the next morning. So I started to learn to get up earlier the next time. So, I often  
thought about that. And so I started learning the tides: what's the best time to take  
off. When the tide, when the tide was going out. Like where we stayed in Kake,  
365 when the tide was going out, I can paddle out with the tide, and I can get to where I  
am going faster. I can fish until an hour or two after the tide starts coming in, and I  
can paddle into town. As if I'm going away from town, the tide is going away from  
town. And when the tide is coming in, I can go back in with the tide.

I had to learn how to anchor the boat out too. My father, the way he was  
370 teaching me was very interesting. But if I didn't do it right, the boat would get to  
close and I'd end up on the beach. Which I can say it happened once. Compared to

the way I do it now, to anchor out a boat, it's a whole lot different. Now I drop my anchor on my way out, I have a long rope so I can just back in and pull the boat back out to the anchor. It's a big change. Learning the tide was one thing and  
375 learning how to row in the rough weather that day, I guess I can say when my father, when he starts teaching me, it was blowing 45-miles an hour that day offshore, blowing off the shore and I ended way out there. It was taking me a long time to get back to the shore.

And I started thinking about it, when he says, "There are ways you can  
380 paddle, there are four different styles. It's up to you to learn it. And you have to use your imagination." When I was coming back in, he said, "If you do it just one way you are going to be tired. You won't make it back."

I had to think about that one. When I thought about it and started to learn how to paddle, it was a long time ago that I learned how to paddle: Three or four  
385 different styles of paddling. To see that and to think about it, he helped me out a lot of times.

When I lived in Kake, I have a friend there named Royal Jackson and he wanted to go seal hunting. So I told him, "Lets go." Well I asked him when we got out there. I said, "What size seal do you want?"

390 And he looked at me, "What?"

"What size of seal do you want? A large medium or small one?"

Out of curiosity and being sarcastic he says, "How about a medium sized one?"

So I started calling it, I shot it. I told him to go out and get it. I asked him,  
395 “What do you want next?”

And he started laughing. He says, “How about a large one, a big dominant  
male.” So I called a big male in and I went out and got it and brought it back in and  
he says, “Ah it’s just luck. So he says, “How about calling a small one?” So I  
started calling a little two year old. I called that in, shot it, went out and got it and  
400 came back in. And he said, “I saw you calling what I asked for. I don’t get it?”  
But after that time I made a believer out of him. He says, “I still can’t believe it,  
calling three different sizes of seal in: either a female, a big old bull or a small  
one.”

I can say where I learned how to call a seal, part of it was from my father  
405 and the other part was when my son was a little baby. When I was listening to him  
crying. When he started crying, “Aaa, aaa,” he sucked the air in. Then I was  
listening to him, I was trying to comfort him. I started listening to him cry like this.  
So I laid him out just to hear him, to see what he does and he’s sucking the air in. I  
started putting those two together in calling the seal. I learned the different styles of  
410 calling them in, either a large, medium, or small one. So when I started learning  
that, I learned to call from my father. As I’m calling them in, I’m learning the  
different ways of calling them than in Glacier Bay. That one there was just blow  
the air out. So anyway, there are two or three different styles that I know, that I use  
too, especially when they are up close and when I want them to come in closer. I  
415 just be real quiet and I just put my head down and make the noise and they come in

closer to me. And when I was doing it for my friend, he couldn't believe it. That same person I was taking him out one day and we stopped on this one reef, or a rock rather, a big rock. And I said "There are always seal in there in this rock. We'll go up to the highest part and we'll look out to see the seal on the other side."

420 So we stopped when we ended up getting to where we were going outside of Kake there. We climbed up on top of the rock, looked and seen a bunch of seals there. "Which one do you want?"

He looks at me, "What do you mean?" Which one do you want?"

I said, "I'll crawl up to it and shoot it for you. Which one do you want?"

425 He looked at me and he started laughing, threw his head back and he said, "I want that one laying on that rock, there's a rock on top of the rock about as big as a table. He's laying up on top, a big dominant male. I want that one."

So I said, "Ok." So I started crawling to it, as I got to be about a hundred yards, I had already crawled about half-ways, when the seal looked at me, stuck its  
430 head up and looked at me. It was laying on a rock and stuck its head way up in there looking at me. I stopped and just watched it. I was on the ground. I picked my head up and I looked at it too. It looked away, put my head down and started crawling to it again. This is the interesting part, every time I stopped it turned and looked at me and just stared at me, and I stopped and just watched it like that I  
435 picked my head up and as soon as I picked my head up he put his head down and laid down. I started crawling up. When I went to shoot it with my 22, I killed it with one shot and it was a great big bull seal. I crawled right up to it.

And he said, “Man, I’ve seen everything now, he said, “ I’m not going to even ask how you done it. I watched you and you crawled right up to it. You said  
440 you were going to do it. I still don’t understand it,” he said.

Well, that’s what I learned from my father, that one there. I saw my father walk up to a deer and pick out the one he wanted and shoot it: Sit right there and shoot it. I’ve seen him stop and just start talking to them. And while he is talking to them, he says, “Come here I’ve got something for you.” He keeps his voice calm  
445 like were are talking now and the deer come right up to him and he shoots them too. I also seen him call deer and tell me which way they are coming from. We walk in the muskeg and look around he says, “Ok what do you want a big buck or a doe?” He asks me what I want and he’d start calling; he’d call them up to us. I used that one a few time but after I started learning to use my own mouth, I quit. I used  
450 to use what my father taught me. It’s very interesting, I picked up a lot from him, from my father about hunting, and being out by myself too.

I am a safety officer at the bear sighting for Icy Straight Point. I go out to the bear sighting and watch out for the guests as they are walking through the bear trials, as they are on the platforms, on the bear trail. And I try to keep them away  
455 from the bears, because a lot of them want to go right up to them and take pictures. And a lot of them say, “Well, they are tame.”

I say, “No they are not. These are not tame bears. These are wild bears and they are not tame. We don’t feed them. They can turn on us whenever they feel like it; in a split second they can turn on us.” It is up to myself and the guides to keep

460 them away. This year I told them [Icy Strait management] I am not going to be like  
I started the first year. After thinking about it, seeing how much foolish things they  
are doing. I told them this year, I told the guides that I'm going to enforce it, to  
keep them folks away from the bears, sorry. I also told my boss down here, I told  
him I'm sorry but I'm going to start keeping them the guests and the guides away  
465 from the bears. If they are on the trail then we are going to stay on the platform  
until they are completely away, far enough away so the guests can walk through.

Last year, I ended walking up into more than a couple of bears. When I say  
walked up on, I mean that I didn't know they were there until they lifted their head  
and looked at me and they were only ten feet away from me. You never know  
470 where they are at, and when they pop up on you. That one day I didn't realize that  
the bears could move like that. I seen them walk up the trail, I took a short cut to go  
over by where it was coming up and when I got there, he was already three or four  
hundred yards away from me, the other direction. He turned real quick. I thought I  
was being quiet. They made me realize I don't quite know them as well as I think I  
475 should. So I learned that this year, I am finally keeping our guests away from the  
bears, because of how fast they can move. And to see one, I've seen two of them  
climb a tree, and they say brown bears don't climb trees: It's not true. The first one  
was about maybe a three or four-year-old and the second one was maybe a five or  
six-year-old: It was a big bear. To see it climb the tree...the tree was about two feet  
480 around, the first one, the tree was about four feet around, and the bear climbed it up  
about 60-70 feet and stayed there. And the interesting part, the reason why they



climbed the trees, was we had the guests on the trail. And I seen a bear running across the river and I kept on looking back behind us and when I looked behind us it had a bigger dominant male chasing it. When it ran into the crowd, instead of  
485 running around through the crowd, they ran straight up the tree. I said, "Well I know our guides were saying brown bears never climb trees what a way to find out that they do." When the bear climbed the tree, it wasn't very far from the guests. They got to see how big they were. They say brown bears can climb trees, but only the cubs. But, that's not true. I found that out real quick working out there. I'm  
490 standing there between the guests and the bears trying to keep the guests, hoping the bear doesn't come down until all the guests take off, and I'm trying to tell the guests to go but they are too busy taking pictures and they don't hear me. I am screaming and hollering at the top of my lungs, "Get out of here!"

I can say this year we have to figure out something a little more than  
495 hollering to keep them safe and ourselves. This year, the first tour ship that came in, I showed the guests where the bear climbed the tree, you can see the claw marks on the tree, how wide, holding on where he climbed up. The guests told me that the brown bears don't climb trees.

"Yes, you can tell anyone that but me."

500 "What do you mean? Well, last year we had a bunch of guests that were surprised when a bear came running at them and he ended up getting close to him. He didn't know where to run so he climbed a tree and couldn't run back because there was a big ole dominant male chasing him."

Yes, I'm still learning about brown bears.

505 My grandfather and my father, through my grandfather when he was growing up he learned it [halibut fishing] from his father, my great-grandfather. They learned by what time of year, where to go. What time of year, what time of month, where they are at or when they are in the deep. Through that I learned it through my father. There is a certain time of year, I won't say the months, when  
510 they come into the shallows. I shared that with my son. Well, they say it's not good [to get small 'paddle' halibut] but I often think about that because as I was growing up, when the seine boats would go out fishing, they stopped the seine boats from bringing in the small halibuts, but they wouldn't bring in the small ones. The ones they'd bring in were about two feet long, but after they cut the head off and  
515 everything they are as big as the ping-pong paddles. But those are what we use for smoking and drying and there still used to be a lot of halibut out there. Now they are bringing in even the small ones, so they are not given them a chance to grow. I know the smaller ones, the halibut boats used to let them go. A day or two before the seine boats came in from out fishing, the day that they came in, when they were  
520 pulling up their halibut gear, they'd save all the halibut about two feet long for the community. They would put them on the deck. They would put them on the deck.

When I used to see the seine boats coming in Kake, I used to run down to the dock. I was still a child then. I would go down and get as much halibut as I can, filet them out, and carry them up in bags. They said, "Help yourselves." And they  
525 had a lot of halibut for sale and I used to filet them out. That's where my filleting

started was down at the docks filleting halibut and bringing them up for smoking and drying. [That size of halibut] It is not quite as fat so and they are smaller, and when you dry them they are crispy; when you go to dry the great big ones, because they have much fat on them and when you dry them the meat is like chewing  
530 leather.

We smoke them and dry them right in the smokehouse with alder. Never use spruce, never use hemlock. My father says never use that. So one time I was trying to be lazy and I handed it to him. My dad got so upset with me. I wondered why he was getting upset with me. He already knew what I ended up doing wrong,  
535 "I told you not to use spruce on this dry fish." When it comes out it dries like leather. It's real hard because of the pitch on there it makes it hard and very brittle. And that's what a lot of the folks they don't understand about smoking and drying too, smoking and drying fish is they will use spruce or hemlock; don't worry about what they use because they are smoking and drying it. My father told me that the  
540 only time you use that is when you use a stove it's got a chimney on it and the chimney goes outside. And you still want to keep the heat on it, that is the only time otherwise don't he told me. I found out why, I ruined a whole bunch of fish by using a spruce tree. It was all *very* tough, my dad says, "These ones are yours. We'll use the other ones that we smoked with alder."

545 I decided to try it onetime, when he was out, to see how the difference was made. And that was my way of learning and my father said, "Well, one way of teaching is having you eat that one, put your teeth on it." I believed that I chipped a

couple of teeth. Through that I learned that, never to use spruce always stick to alder and smaller halibut.

550           There is a story that I usually share at the culture camp every year in Kake when I worked there, I worked there for a good sixteen years. I used to share stories there all the time. This is one story that I used to share there all the time it was about this little boy. So the little boy, the parents always told the boy not to play down the beach, with the stuff on the beach. “One of these days something will  
555 happen to you.” They kept on telling him that every day. The little boy wouldn’t listen like all the kids there: they won’t listen to you. Tell them not to do it and they’re going to do it.

                  So I shared this with the kids at the culture camp every year and when I tell them I say, “It’s no good to play on the beach, because one day something will  
560 happen to you. There won’t be anything you can do.”

                  And this is a story that has been passed onto me now from generation to generation to generation for a long time now. The story goes on about this little boy getting stuck underneath a rock and they couldn’t get him out. I’m cutting this story real short. Anyway, the little boy was stuck underneath the rock and they couldn’t  
565 get him out. The little boy started crying on the beach, he was crying calling for his mom and dad. The dad said, “Let him cry for awhile I’m getting tired of telling him to stay off the beach. I kept telling him that he’ll get stuck on the beach. Let him cry for awhile.”

They ended up getting a knock on the door. A knock on the door, “Is that  
570 your son down on the beach?”

The dad said, “Yes it is.”

“Are you going to go check on him?”

The wife says, “No, I said let him cry. It’s about time he learns about the  
things on the beach.”

575 “Well, your little boy is on the beach crying real hard.”

The father said, “Well?”

She said, “You should see all the people standing in the road.”

Well now the people were all curious. So they all walked down on the  
beach and surrounded the rocks, surrounded him. They are trying to pull him out  
580 but as fragile as kids are, they almost pulled his arms out of their sockets. His joints  
you can feel it. His arms were stuck really good. The parents saw that and the  
walked down through the crowd, “Excuse me, excuse me.” They pushed their way  
through.

As he got towards the little boy the dad said, “I told you that’s why I didn’t  
585 want you to play with things on the beach. Maybe the next time you will listen to  
me.”

As his father was talking to him the boy was crying real hard, “I’m sorry  
dad. I’m sorry.”

All the people are standing around, and the father said, “I’m sorry you had  
590 to witness this. I should have done this a long time ago.” But the little boy wouldn’t

stop crying. Every time he tried to say something the little boy was crying so hard. He tried to say something to him but the boy wouldn't stop crying. "Son I'm trying to talk to you now listen to me." But he started crying and he wouldn't listen. "I'm sorry you folks have to witness this." All of a sudden you can hear a big  
595 loud...Smack! The boy stops crying and looks at his dad. His father said, "I've never hit him before, never spanked him." All of a sudden his father smacks him on the face, his cheek. He looks at his father real quiet. The father says, "Son what I have to share with you, listen to me this time. It may mean your life. You need to listen."

600 The boy said, "Ok dad."

The father said, "We are going to get some seal lion skins."

One of the guys standing in the crowd had sea lion skins made into balloons and he said, "I'll go get that."

One of them said I have sea lion intestines, I'll go get that, "we'll use that  
605 for like a hose."

Another of them said, "I have some twine, some rope I just fixed out of bark. I made rope out of it. We'll tie I down with that."

Another one said, "There is some rocks here. I will tie it off so they don't float up."

610 So they all got together and blew up the skins and they started fixing up so where they could put the sea lion intestines into the skins.

And the father said, "Son listen to what I have to tell you, son listen to what I have to tell you."

He said, "Ok dad."

615 "You put this in your mouth; put the sea lion intestines in your mouth and you breathe through your mouth and let it out your nose. This it could mean your life or your death. It's up to you," the father said.

But, they couldn't get him out, dig him out because the tide was coming in too fast, whether they dug or not. I hate to say it, but the boy didn't make it and  
620 because of that we have a totem pole for that little boy. It's been passed on in our culture from generations to generations, in our culture. And through that every time I worked at the culture camp, the older ones, the ones that heard that story before they said, "Owen you have to tell that story because they are playing on the beach and they won't leave things alone, they won't listen to us." And through that kids  
625 listen to that story. That's a story that has been passed on in our culture for a long time. It has been told to me many times. When it was told to me, it was told to me in the Lingit language and translated into English. Because my father, at the time, couldn't speak English that well, he had a hard time translating most of the stories. And he always told the stories the old traditional way. Not like now when the  
630 stories are being told, you're telling from the front to the back. Back then it was from the back to the front. So when he told it to me he told it from the back of the story to the front. When he was trying to translate it, he didn't speak English that well. He had a hard time trying to pronounce some of the words in English. He

lived to 104 but because he didn't have a birth certificate they made him eight years  
635 younger than he was supposed to be. All he said "It's all right it makes me feel that  
much younger." So, on his record they said he was 106, 104.

My ancestors did come down through the Stikine River underneath the ice.  
Back many generations back, they came back underneath the ice. My great  
grandmother and great grandfather came down underneath the ice, underneath the  
640 glacier. When they came back down through it, but before they came down, they  
sent their slaves down through it: two slaves. The first ones they sent didn't come  
back. So they waited for a while longer, a few more months. Every so often they  
would send two slaves down underneath the glacier to see if they come through. If  
you make it through one of you will come back and they will stay down there and  
645 wait for us. Well, they finally made it so they sent the first bunch down underneath  
the ice through the glacier. My grandfather's family was one of the first ones  
through. When they came down underneath the ice, the Tsimshians ended up  
killing them all off except for two: my grandmother and her slave. So she sent the  
slave back up over the ice and told them what happened. When they came back  
650 down through, my father's side of the family sent another bunch more of the family  
down through and my mother's family went down through with them, came out  
through with them the second time. But this time they sent nothing but warriors  
down, came down through the ice, through the back side of the glacier. They  
dressed up in their wives clothes, so they could dress up like ladies to see if they  
655 can fool them. When the men walked into the woods they acted like they were



gathering food. The Tsimshians came in, tried killing them off and the Tlingit warriors ended up killing them off. My father said they can do it to us once but we will figure something out for the second time. So I often think about that when he shared that one. I have never been up the Stikine River.

660           The name he [my father] has is one of the points when you come around, one of the places on the Stikine River. I have relatives up the Stikine River, Carcross and other places. My mother used to tell me about them. My father's side of the family are Killer Whales. My father always told me that when I see them out in the water through a piece of herring or toss them out in the water. He always told  
665 me either throw a piece of your herring over to them or if you have cigarettes and toss it over to them. Usually it's always herring because I don't chew and I don't smoke. He always told me to say, "How are you doing today?" Those, there [brown bears] I usually watch, enjoy watching. Unless I am hunting then it's a different story. Frog, Dog Salmon are my crests. One of my names is from the Frog, and the  
670 other name Kaak.laak is dog salmon after it comes up the river. It started getting white spots on it; it's getting old. Sinook means a small frog when it is first starts crawling out of the ground, when it first starts coming out of the mud and it's crawling out to sit on a rock: that's my name. My name is connected to the mud and water. I am Raven. I have four names; one of them is from Hoonah here, which  
675 is from an elder who used to live in Kake, he had given me his Tlingit name. He is from here and the other one is from Klawock. I'm given a Tlingit name from Klawock. One is from Klawock is strong man. [Duktool]. The one from here I have

to find out more about it. He says, "I know you like doing the Raven dance, dances." So he named me a Raven name.

680           The Eagle Raven Lovebird dance is when the Raven's are flirting with the Eagles. The Eagle/Raven Love bird dance they usually call it now. So after my uncles passed on I carried it on, carry on. He used to have a Raven hat that he used to dance with which was lost in the fire. We ended up losing him in a fire. So after he passed on I fixed a Raven hat like it and started using it. I carve dancing staffs  
685 too. The dancing staffs are for when they do the Sway Song. Like when you see Sitka when you see them sway. They just stand there and use the staff and sway. There are also different ways you can use them in different songs. I am still yet to fix a video tape about the different styles of dances, why they used to dance that way. Using a *shakee.át* : how to use it correctly. How to use the potlatch hats, how  
690 to dance with it correctly. How to use the headbands, how to use the two small paddles, how to dance with that correctly, and how to use the feathers, how to dance with that correctly; how to use the different size paddles. And also how to use the long 8-10 foot long staffs that they use for dancing, also the song leader staff. There are many different things that I haven't shared yet. I shared some with  
695 my son every once in awhile but that's about it. Every once in awhile he still asks me about it and I still share with him son. He's always asking me the questions. I don't mind. I figure I've been native dancing now for 44 years: Native dancing. I learned from my father on the staffs how to use them why to use them certain ways, or paddles, song leader staff or long paddle. One of these times, I'd like to get a

700 group going and have them dance correctly. The way the ladies used to dance is a whole lot different now. This is the interesting part, I can say this, when they started in Kake, Native dancing. One lady, young lady, I couldn't get her to dance like a lady. She always wanted to dance like the men. I went and talked to the elderly back home, "What can we do about it."

705 "Just leave it alone" an elder said. This is back in 1980 something. Anyway, when we talked with them about it, he says, "Just let her dance like it."

I said, "Why?"

Back then the elder said, "Well, they are going through that phase now. If you pay attention to the news or radio, it's women's lib now."

710 So we let her dance like the men did. We ended up getting a lot of folks, getting upset about it, asking why didn't you folks teach her the correct way to dance? So we shared with them about how we talked to the elder about it. At that time he was 90 something years old and he told us to just leave it alone.

"Why is that?" they said. "Well, women's lib."

715 We are getting to a point where things are changing, being very strongly changed. We just left it alone kept it quiet and let her dance that way. And she was happy about it. It's amazing back then things were really changing. When my girls were getting older, they wanted to dance certain ways. I told them, "No you can't do that. There are certain ways ladies are supposed to dance." They didn't like it.

720 They wouldn't listen. So I wouldn't let them dance. I would like to start a group to show them how to dance. I would like to get the ladies to dance the way they are

supposed to, and the men to dance the different styles. Teach them that and leave it from there.

It started off as when I was a child I was supposed to be a paraplegic. I was  
725 supposed to be a paraplegic when I was growing up. I didn't start walking until I  
was seven-years-old. My mother and them took me to the hospital and asked the  
doctors why I couldn't walk: I was paralyzed from the waist down. When I seen  
my mother cry so hard, I worked my hardest to learn how to walk. We had a coffee  
table next to our couch and I was using my arms to go back and forth, put my  
730 weight on my legs, just kept on doing that. And that's how I learned how to walk.  
Before that my aunts used to pack me around. It was very interesting, when I  
learned how to walk. I figured I'd learn as much as I can, do as much as I can,  
because I used to watch the kids play out the window. And I would go back and  
forth from window to window and watch the kids play in the street, watch them run  
735 around. And I would cry because I couldn't be out there playing with them. And  
they would come and ask me to go out and play and I couldn't because I couldn't  
walk. And so when I learned how to walk, they couldn't keep me home.

I was out running around. I was trying to learn as much as I can and my  
interest was watching the elders dance and their styles of dance. And I would sit  
740 and watch them for hours. And because I sat there and watch them, they wouldn't  
chase me out. But because the other kids used to run around they chased them out  
because they were too noisy. I paid attention to everything they were doing. And so  
that's how I learned to native dance. I learned the different styles of dance. And I

asked them about, and this is the interesting part, I asked them about their Peace  
745 Blankets. And I told them I would like to make one of those and use it. I ended up  
getting bawled out by the elders for trying to fix one to use it. Only the Peace  
Maker is supposed to use it for dancing. Now you see the ladies wearing it. They  
are very particular about that a long time ago. The ladies couldn't even touch it.  
Now you see the ladies using it. Oh, give this to my granddaughter to use for  
750 dancing. Oh boy, our elders back when I was younger were very particular. I  
couldn't touch it, I couldn't handle it. And I asked them why and they told me that  
you can't have any anger in you. You can't show any frustration, can't show any  
anger. The thing is when they were training the person to use that, they have  
somebody with them constantly when they are going up so he doesn't show any  
755 anger, any frustration and doesn't show any bitterness towards anyone. It's one of  
the blankets that you have, see there's one blanket here, another one here in the  
middle, another one here, here, another one here and here. So there are six small  
blankets. That's called a Peace Blanket. Now they have ladies wearing them. I  
think back about it what they told us, our elders would be just screaming and  
760 hollering if they were still alive and they seen that. They are small ones sewn  
together. They all are like so big. There is one big blanket, and they have one here,  
one here, and one more right here. And this one here is part of the big blanket itself.  
So it looks like six blankets. All there is are buttons on it. One two three on the top  
and the one two three on the bottom and they look like small blankets sewn  
765 together. Like it is blue with red trim. And no one else can touch it. Only the one

who was there to keep an eye on him, to put it on him, the Peacemaker. The Peacemaker, when he got older had to be there at all the meeting to keep the peace, “No this here’s wrong I’m sorry, this is the way it has done.”

The Guwakaan, yes, the Peacemaker. You see the blankets that are used  
770 this way now and it is bothersome. I told my daughter, she fixed one for her daughter. I said, “You are lucky we don’t have the elders here now, because that’s not right. This is only to be used for the one who is kept an eye on when he is growing up.”

And they start teaching different things, how to go about it, how to solve  
775 problems, how to talk about it. The only thing about it you see, a lot of things I want to say, but I don’t say it because a lot of folks don’t want to listen anymore, “That was way back then.”

“Yeah, but still you dishonor our culture.” I want to tell them they are dishonoring their culture. But to be nice I just leave it alone. And I am nervous.

780 Some people say, “But you should tell them because that is the only way they are going to know.”

“ I can tell them but they will get mad at me and tell me I am making it up. Or they’ll tell me, ‘I don’t care what you say and they say I’m going to do it anyway.’”

785 When I first seen it at Celebration the young ladies were using that Peace Blanket. I tried talking to them but they turned and won’t listen. They start saying things out of anger or frustration turned and walked away. Later I tried talking to

them about it. And later on they talk to me about it, “My father gave it to me, it’s supposed to be that way.”

790           I start telling them that “You have to be trained up to use the Peacemakers Blanket.” How do you tell people so you don’t insult them? I thought about how to go about it. Because it hasn’t been shared, they think you’ve been making it up. I look at all the different styles of hats and they aren’t being used the way they are supposed to be, the way it should be done. I tell them anything about it, How can I  
795           get everything I’ve learned to share with them?

*Mitch Mork: Contemporary Tlingit identity*

I was raised in Wrangell until I was twelve and then I moved to Sitka and I lived there for eight or ten years, somewhere around there. And I've been in Anchorage going to school for about the last three years. And in Wrangell I grew  
5 up by the beach. In Sitka I spent most of my time, while my dad still lived in Sitka, going out fishing and hunting. Then when he moved away I stopped going out for a few years. Then I tried going to school in Washington and while I was down there I missed the outdoors so much that I moved back to Alaska and since then every weekend I've spent hiking, fishing, camping, anything outdoors: I love it.

10 The river especially, there is the hot tubs. I always loved going up there and having birthday parties...on the Stikine River. And we use to go up there to the Twin Lakes and go water skiing. Just playing in the river. Of course there is the desert or the sand duns. We would go up there and hang out on those, have a barbeque. I love barbequing. And when I was ten, I bought a boat with the money  
15 from selling garnets down at the ferry terminal. And getting the garnets was fun too. We would go camping and go chip the rocks, chip the garnets out of the mine. And with that boat I went all over the place. I got stuck on beaches, couple different beaches, because I was ten-years-old and didn't know what I was doing, apparently. And, went up the river a few times in it.

20 One time I went up the river with some friends and in our own boat, getting to know the river by ourselves. And my dad and cousin, they went up in the bit boat and we decided to head down early and we got stuck on the sand bar. We were



trying to push it off and it was taking forever and we decided the easiest way to go was around the backside of the island, at the mouth of the river. And that turned out  
25 to be way longer than we had planned for. The boat ran out of gas on one tank, so while it was dead we switched tanks, then we couldn't get the boat started again. And so we just pushed our way along this backside of this island and at six in the morning the next day, I see my dad and Randy Churchill driving up.

While we were almost to town by then, by paddling. And uh, they we were  
30 pretty scared for us kids. I was probably fifteen....fourteen. And uh, it turns out that the motor was just, had a short and if we would have just turned the switch off and tried it again we probably would have been able to start it and it would have been a lot easier. But it was an adventure and we had fun. Except for I think I was the only who was prepared with extra clothes and food, so I shared with everybody on the  
35 boat.

My dad [taught me to hunt]. The first hunting we ever did was on Zarembo island in Wrangell. It's the first hunting I remember anyway. We would go out on three wheelers on these logging roads and look for deer and go up in the woods. It was a lot of fun: I loved it. And then there weren't a lot of deer, but they were big  
40 deer. Then we moved to Sitka and we started running the beaches in our boat in Hoonah Sound, and there was lots of deer: lots and lots. We got boat-loads of deer and shared them with all the family when we brought them back. My dad taught me how to blow a deer call with the blueberry leaf. How to make one out of branches and leaves or branches and a rubber band. That's always been useful...helpful.

45 Except for, I kind of lost the touch with the blueberry leaf. Can't do it any more.  
I've tried numerous times, every time I see one, but I just can't get it. But I can still  
make them out of the branch pretty easy. I can use a blueberry branch. I try to call  
them [deer] up every once in a while and take pictures of them. One time I did and  
I got them to come a little bit, recently. But I haven't attempted lately. I haven't  
50 even been hunting in six years. Instead, I take lots of pictures... [Figure 8 *Devils club*]



Figure 8: *Devils club*. Note. Photo courtesy of Mitch Mork.

55

Well, I've always hated photography in high school and I couldn't  
understand why people brought their cameras everywhere. And then I got a camera

for Christmas, and I decided it would be kind of nice to document stuff. And then I stopped documenting stuff and just started taking pictures of landscapes and  
60 outdoors stuff because I love the outdoors and I like to remember the places I went and I like put the pictures on my walls. I go everywhere in the pursuit of photography. Anyways, I went on a 27 mile hike the other day and I have to admit that most of that was because I wanted to take pictures. But mostly because I love being outside. And share it with other people because I know everyone likes  
65 landscape pictures. So that is what I do. Try to make the best ones.

I always remember Canoe Pass, on the backside of Wrangell. The water was warm, we stopped there fishing a couple times and went swimming and the water was probably in the 60 degrees or something. And that was fun, we brought out the mustang suites and went swimming and went camping back there. There's a  
70 cabin.

I would much rather be outside than inside, any day, all day, even if it's raining. I miss the rain. Up here in Anchorage we get like 15 inches of rain. Where we are from in Southeast we get more a little closer to 100-inches. And the weather, I love all weather: All the extreme weather. Really hot, of course I love  
75 that. But when it's really rainy, when it's really windy, or really snowy. The in between stuff, not so much, but it's ok. If it's nasty out, I love it. I like to go hiking in the rain, but the only thing is, nobody really goes with me. This last summer I ended up going hiking and camping by myself a lot because nobody would go with me. I do it a little bit too much for people I think.

80           I have a tent. We didn't use a tent once this summer. I hiked out to the  
Causeways in Sitka where the old bunkers were and slept on the beach. That was  
fun. And cabins are good and I use my tent a lot. I just went camping last weekend  
in cabin up on a lake. It was -5 degrees: it wasn't very hot. So I was definitely  
happy to have a cabin to have a nice stove in it.

85           My common sense and problem solving is rooted in my commercial fishing  
background because that's where I learned to solve problems which is going to  
make me a pretty good engineer. If I decide to pursue that further. I was good at  
math and I thought computers were cool. And I like solving problems, that's why I  
choose engineering. And I think, I heard they make a lot of money and that's I  
90           guess my ultimate goal is to make a lot of money so that I can go hang out,  
outdoors. But I don't know if that's the best thing. So I don't know if I am even  
going to use my engineering degree.

          Well up here [in Anchorage] you can't make fires. I mean it's the city,  
there's not easy access to the beach and to the woods and all that stuff. I mean you  
95           can go, but it's not the same. So when I got to Sitka, I was really excited. I think  
every day for the first couple weeks I went barbequing. And sometimes my  
barbeques took me into the woods. I would take my grill and some strings and  
stuff. I ended up going by myself, but that's fine. I like the peace. And I take  
pictures, but often times when we are hiking I end up stopping too much to take  
100          pictures and it gets annoying. And it gets annoying for me too, but I just can't help  
myself.

I know the basic names of the main plants, but I don't know a whole lot though. I don't know that that black plant is or that tree. I know that's a devils club. I know a lot of common names. I like the blur of the water in my pictures. My love  
105 for the land was just something that grew too. I mean my dad's always liked hunting. That didn't have any bearing on how I feel about the land. Not that I know of anyway. Maybe subconsciously, but for the most part I think I just missed it so much that when I got back to it, I realized how awesome it is and I don't want to disrupt it, so I try my best not to impact it too much. It makes me mad when people  
110 don't respect it. All the time I pack out garbage. Most of the time I just make them pack their own out. But I pack out garbage all the time, yeah.

Well, really the only reason I started commercial fishing, well I guess initially was the candy and that soda pop. Because my dad would always have lots of candy and lots of pop and when you're out on the boat there were no rules,  
115 regulating how much you can consume: so I drank lots of pop and ate lots of candy. Then it started being about the money and it's a pretty fun way of life. Not if you have a girlfriend or a wife or something, it's not for me. But um...yeah it's nice though when you're at the end of the day and you're done fishing and you anchor up the boat in the harbor and you turn off the boat and everything is silent. That's  
120 the best time: that's the thing I miss the most I think.

I started out halibut fishing and shrimping. And went to crabbing, I guess we did crabbing also. And then I started crabbing by myself for a little bit, and then I went seining And I seined for about three or four years. Then I realized that I

didn't want to fish for the rest of my life so that's when I started pursuing  
125 engineering. Not that I don't like fishing, it's just that the body doesn't last as long  
as the mind does. So I decided to use my mind.

I believe in God, but at the same time I believe in science. It's hard to when  
you're a big sci-fi nut and when you realize that the universe is a pretty big place.  
And that humans are unlikely to be the only sentient beings (laughs). Anyways,  
130 I've taken about 30 science courses. I understand why things act the way they do.  
That's kind of neat. I can calculate everything.

I remember being scared by those stories, lots and hearing them all the time.  
They're good stories. Although, like I said I'm pretty scientific, so....I don't  
remember any of those stories, good enough to tell them. I'm a horrible story teller.  
135 I'm very bad at it. I can't remember jokes, stories....I wont read *Alaska Bear Tales*,  
because I know those are pretty scary. I read those a long time ago, but I wont read  
them [bears] again, not until I am too old to go camping and hiking. I think I've  
had lots of focusing on them while falling asleep and....You know when you're  
right at that point right before you fall asleep?

140 In the fall when it's starting to be basketball season, I think about  
basketball. When it's spring and I'm starting to think about camping more in the  
summer time, getting excited about that, bear encounters start happening in my  
sleep. So I pretty much ran through every scenario. You know...how to react.

Once when I was snow machining there were some wolves, but they ran off.  
145 And I heard some wolves beginning of this last school year. Uh...like September

2006. There was a pack of wolves, I heard them in the morning when were  
up...that was up here by Gerdwood or something like that. I didn't even know we  
had wolves up here. But it makes sense, since we are attached to the rest of the  
continent. My great-grandma told about being in the woods. Grandpa Lewis and  
150 Ailene Lewis were out hunting near Wrangell somewhere and they were in the  
woods and it was starting to get dark and they were heading out of the woods, you  
know how in the woods it gets darker earlier? And their skiff was on the beach, or  
their boat. And they heard wolves howl and they turned and looked because they  
were still in the woods, right at the shoreline and they looked up at the horizon, I  
155 mean up on the hill and there were some wolves. Three or four of them, running on  
the thing. And when they turned and looked, they saw the wolves stand up and  
walk like men. And they got really scared and they ran the rest of the way out of  
the out onto the beach. And they got into their skiff. But that's one story that your  
great grandpa always told about the wolves who stood up and walked like men and  
160 they knew right away that they were *Kooshdaa kaa* is what they said and they got  
out of there. I remember that story. A long time ago. I remember all the stories, I  
just don't remember how to tell them.

When I moved from Wrangell, where I knew all the beaches and places, to a  
new place, Sitka, it sucked, but I started playing basketball and pretty much became  
165 more of a city oriented kid. But I went out hunting a lot and we would go crabbing  
and I drove every time, the boat, and I learned my way around pretty well. And  
that's how I learned the water around there. And then after my dad left, and I

stopped going out on the water and I still didn't go in the woods at all, or that much. And uh...that's when I moved down to Washington and I missed it. And I  
170 came back and I started learning about the woods a lot. Now I've been to just about every place in Sitka, in the woods. Once I hiked up Mt. Edgecumbe but it was foggy. It's tough to get out there though because you have to find somebody with a boat who is willing to hike 15 miles. It was fun though. It was cool to see the inside of a volcano. There's lots of that pumas rock stuff, or what ever you call it. It's that  
175 rock that floats. But I couldn't [bring any back] because they were really big and really light. But I didn't bring any back, because I don't really take souvenirs from anywhere or anything except for pictures. I got lots of pictures of it though.

I would imagine, I think being Tlingit affects your relationship to the land. There might be some subconscious thing in there, but I just feel like I love it. My  
180 grandparents and parents were close too. If I grew up in the city, I probably would have been a city boy. But since I didn't, I grew up in Southeast Alaska, I love the water, I love going out in the woods, all that stuff. That's my fondest memories, so that's probably why I always do it.

We ate lots of fish and crab, and shrimp. I guess that's traditional. We ate  
185 all those kinds of things. As far as like seaweed and herring eggs and all that stuff, I'm slowly warming up to them, but I'm not a big fan right now. We had tons of crab and shrimp. We commercially fished for all of this, so we always had easy access to it. And plus we lived on the beach. Well right next to the harbor, so it was easy to get out. I try to eat as much traditional foods as I can. Fish and stuff. Well,



190 if I have access to fish, which fortunately right now, I'm loaded with it. And so we  
are going to eat it a lot. I tried moose a long time ago, but I didn't really like it, but  
I was a little kid, so...but caribou is really good.

Actually, of course I'm going to teach them [my children] how to go out.  
I'm not just going to teach them, I'm going to go out, so they are going to want to  
195 come with me. And I'm going to show them all the fun stuff they can do outdoors  
and how they can live off the land. They have to. It's nice knowing that if I fail in  
the Western civilization that I can live off the land. I would probably be happier  
doing that. In a perfect world I would go find a place near the water, that's got lots  
of fish by it, and shellfish. Build a cabin in the woods and eat fish and hunt. That's  
200 about it. I'd love it! I would probably get tired of it and have to come back to town  
for a while. But I think for the most part, I would be happy.

*Elizabeth Martin: An elder's cultural landscape*

I was born Killisnoo on an island. I'm Raven and I'm part of the bear house too. There are two different houses. My Tlingit means I'm an Island Mother. That's what it means. I lived on an island [outside of Angoon] and then we moved across  
5 Admiralty. We had a land there, about five acres. We had a nice....we had a big home there: a three bedroom house. I was raised in a nice home and we had everything. I was just a little girl. I don't remember how old I was. I must have been about, probably five years old...around there. Yeah I think so. And we had to go to school when we moved across, but we use to walk on a little trail. Up and  
10 down, up and down. And in a winter like this, my dad always use to go ahead of us at 5:30 in the morning to break the trail for us with a lantern to go to school. There was so much snow, with the Taku wind blowing. We would put things on our face, pull it up, walk this way and pull it down again. And our lunch buckets, we didn't even have regular lunch buckets. We had these lard cans and we had our  
15 sandwiches; whatever we would take to school for lunch and pack it. It was a hard way to go to school.

We would have to start off about 5:30 in the morning, three miles, and we would get there time to go to school about after eight and we'd go to school. That's how come my sister lost her hearing. She caught a cold. She was only 18-years-old,  
20 when it happened, because there was hardly any doctors. They had one Japanese doctor, but he was old. Everyone depended on him. But my dad always cleared the trail. Then after school we would go back, back on the trail again. Get home

about....lets see....we get out of school about 3:00. After 3:00 we get home about  
before 6 o'clock. Dad would have our dinner already. We would have dinner and  
25 then we would stay up for a while and do home studies. And go to bed about 9  
o'clock at night so we have to get up early again.

There was me and my sister and my brother....there were five of us. But my  
other brother was in the Sheldon Jackson school and my sister and I was there for a  
little while, not too long. And my brother passed away, my older brother. And my  
30 sister passed away a month after my brother died. Yeah, the same year. My brother  
was 21 and my sister was 17 when she died. She died from pneumonia I think or  
something and my brother, I don't know. I was small. They were home.

In the spring, it's much better for us to go to school a long ways. Sometimes  
we walked the beach. We'd climb on cliffs when the tide was up. And our neighbor  
35 was Joe Matagey and his brother William Matagey. And there were five of us  
together that goes to school like that. From the same place. But we had a lot of fun  
in the summer, but not in the winter. It was kind of tough, but we never missed a  
day of school. We were always at school five days a week. Unless we are sick, we  
didn't go to school. But we did. From Angoon there were many kids from school.  
40 They didn't like us for some reason....they didn't care for us very much because  
we weren't full Indian....discrimination. They always tried to see that we'd get in  
trouble, but we never do. They always try to make us have trouble, but we don't  
pay no attention to them.

Harry Smogle was my dad's name. My mother's name was Annie Young.

45 Mother and dad were very strict. The house has to be cleaned. We had to clean  
house every Friday. Polish furniture, do the floors. We used to have a rinsing water,  
and soap and little brush and knee pads. Scrub with, you know the little brushes,  
soap, and then rinsing water. Sometimes knee pads. And we had a long kitchen  
from here to there, a long one. And there were wooden floors. Yeah, they didn't  
50 have any linoleum. Finally they came in and we got some, but not in a kitchen, only  
in the living room.

And then they got the radios, the old fashioned tall ones. I use to like to  
listen to Amos and Andy. You can see the pictures only, you know. And we would  
sit next to the radio on the floor, listen to it. My favorite program was Amos and  
55 Andy. And after a while they came in, it was something different. Oh my gosh, it  
was something. We didn't have running water so we had to pack water. My dad  
made a pole, you know just like the Chinese. They had a bucket here, and a bucket  
here. And you put it on.

My sister, oh she was kind of mean. It was her turn to do it. We'd take turns  
60 packing water. She was going up the steps and she fell down. Her buckets slipped. I  
laughed and laughed. And oh, she was mad. She was standing up there at the top of  
the steps. I guess she tried calling me some names. Oh, it was funny. I will never  
forget that: it was comical. She was mean and every time....she was the oldest one.  
And when they bought the....you know they had those big ribbons in the  
65 back....she had long hair and with a clip on it, real fancy. She always choose the

big one. I had to get a small one. Of course my hair was like this. I had to have a small one and I wanted the big one, but she didn't want me to have a big one. But her, it would be way back here with long hair. It was pretty big. I'll never forget that. She always wanted everything the biggest.

70 Her and I had a bedroom together, she put my bed way back right by the door. I had to sleep there, the bed against the wall. I told her I didn't want to be against the wall, but it has to be. And hers was on this side and then she'll go downstairs and complain to my dad. But she's the oldest one, so she has to have the privilege of everything, you know. What can I do? Nothing. She was the big  
75 cheese, you know. For Christmas we'd get new dresses. Every holiday. New shoes.

We had a nice home, and we had everything we would need. We had good food; we had a lot of food. We had good clothes and the reason why is some of the kids who were jealous of us in school, we dressed the best to go to school with good clothes on. But those kids they didn't have good clothes, that's why they  
80 didn't like us very much. It was funny. But we can't help it.

I used to go with my dad to hunt and we shot a deer: we had to split it. I couldn't pack the whole thing. I had to pack some of it on my back. And then he trapped. We used to go pack the traps on the back of us. And we had a mink; my dad was raising some minks. He had a lot of minks and we had chickens and we  
85 had pigs: Little pigs, baby pigs. They would come into the kitchen. I had one pig and my sister had one. My brother didn't want no pigs, so he didn't have a pig, he didn't want no pig. We planted all our vegetables in the spring. We did garden

work. We shoveled. Whenever we worked, we would get up about six o'clock in the morning and have breakfast and go out and work on the garden with the shovel  
90 in our hands.

Yeah! My grandpa and grandma. I think his name was David John and my grandma was Sophie. They were so old, but still they were clean. They couldn't stand up like this, they were hunch back like this, but they were clean. She would sit on the floor with her knees and wash the floor. That's how clean they were.  
95 They were that old, they would go like that. And when we would go to the camp, they had no paper money: they had silver dollars. Fifty cents and my grandpa, there's a potato sacks and jeeze it would be heavy, with the money in there. We use to pack it and my grandpa use to sit and watch, guard it. Sit and watch it, take those things down the boat to go camping. And pack the money and sometimes they  
100 buried it, they don't believe in the bank. And my uh...my mother, they have this thing, they put leaves on them, when they leave for vacation. And my grandpa came there, and he seen the fire. They heat the stones, red hot. And shovel them in the little....you can't stand up like this, you have to go like this. And then you pour water on them and all the steam comes and it gets hot. My mother she built a...she  
105 was heating a rock, and here my grandpa had buried in a coffee can, their money. He got mad and he came out and he pour everything, poured water on. And she didn't even know it. And we didn't even know it, they buried it. They buried our money, but they know where it is.

That was funny. Really nice olden days, life. Uh huh! He was a cook. My  
110 dad was when dad came from Japan he was up north, being carted all over. And he  
was a cook, he was a cook for the Forest Service and he worked in canaries, and  
that's all what he did was cook. Hired all the maids too. We didn't use recipes, we  
would just go by measuring cups. Nowadays they have measuring cups and spoons;  
we use to put a little powder on, so much. It was something different. Nowadays,  
115 you don't do that. I still do it, just the way I figured, once in a great while I use it.  
Like vinegar, that's the only one that I could measure: Half a cup of vinegar, for my  
cooking. It was quit something in the olden days, to be a growing up.

And then we washed all our clothes. My dad use to make a big 50-gallon  
can and he would cut it in half. And when we would wash the blankets, you have to  
120 have boots on. We would plunge into the water and pour the water out and rinse it  
that way, you know? And then the ringer would wash the sheets, and we had those  
wash boards. I have one of those little wash boards in the bathroom. The glass  
ones, that's how we washed our sheets. And then we would put the blankets up  
after they were rinsed and let them drip down and then hang them up. That's the  
125 way we did laundry. And ironing, we had those irons that were kind of heavy. They  
were heated on the stove. I use to like to only iron the fancy pillow-cases, the  
embroidered ones: I didn't want the plain stuff. That's all that I picked out. No  
ironing board, we would just do it on the table. It was kind of nice, and you get  
used to it, you know? But nowadays, everything is so different. Everything is new.  
130 We didn't have flush toilets, we had to go to the outhouses. No toilet tissues, we

use to use this Sears order catalog for tissues. They use to make it soft, you know. It was funny! No showers, we had to take a bath in the tub, pour water in there. Oh it was a funny life. It was funny, but it was a lot of work though.

No electricity. We used kerosene. I always had to fill the kerosene lamps  
135 every evening before it gets dark. I had to be sure it got oil in there and that the  
chimneys they were put on, and they had to be washed and cleaned and the wick  
put in there. I'll show you the little lantern that we got. It's just a little small one,  
but we had a big one that we carried. I don't know what happened to the others.  
You have to pack it like this, not like that, but there with the handle. And they were  
140 bigger, but they were made like this and the wick there and you put the oil in there.

We grew big, about five acres: cabbage, lettuce, radish, potatoes, carrots,  
turnips, rutabaga, and big rows of raspberries: they were big. And when they would  
tell use to go and pick raspberries, we use to hate to go and do it. We use to tramp  
on them, my sister and I and we would just pick a little and squash it up. We had  
145 raspberries, strawberries, and we had blackberries, we had all kinds.

And we had to pack wood and we had to cut wood too. It [wood stove] was  
that long, one side with the handle there, and one had to go like this...my sister  
would be on that side of it (laugh). And we would get the big blocks...My dad  
built a big sled, as big as the table. And we would pile the blocks on it. She would  
150 pull and I would go behind so I could climb, so they wouldn't fall off. But we  
would bring it down and take it to the wood shed and I would have to chop  
kindling, every day. I have a big pile of little kindling, to make a fire with.



Sometimes as big as my finger. A big pile. I packed wood in every day. I shoveled snow. The snow would be like this, we didn't have a plow: we had to shovel snow.

155 Yeah, it was hard on your back. But it was a lot of fun. We worked hard. We didn't go anywhere, we just stayed there. We didn't have friends. The kids use to go by our place and holler and wave at us on the boats going to picnic. We couldn't go because we had to be in our garden planting potatoes and seeds and we'd weed. Sometimes we sit on the little stairs seven or eight hours a day.

160 Our house was quite a ways from the beach. I have pictures of it in the summers. We had a pretty nice home. My mother had gardens, flower gardens all outside. And my dad fixed a concrete wall to go out. It was real nice. I wish my dad was living now, my family, it would be nice. Now I'm all alone. My sister passed away about two or three years ago and I'm the only one left in my family. All, my  
165 brother, my sister, my mom and dad and my uncles, they are all dead. My aunts are all dead. The only person I have close to me is Elsie, she's my cousin. She's the only one...her and I are the only ones living. That was a long time ago. They are gone. I have nephews, my brother's children. That's all. One boy and three girls, that's all. My brother's kids that are living.

170 When I lived in Killisnoo they had a herring plant there. And my dad was cooking there. And then the plant caught on fire and they all left there. So the people all left and moved to Angoon. That's about three miles across from the island. The plant burnt down in Killisnoo. Nobody lives there. It's an island. Everyone moved at the same time. They tried to give some part of the island to my

175 brother, but he didn't want to take it. He said he refused to accept it. I don't know,  
he just didn't want it.

And we used to go and fish by hand from the boat. They have a stick there,  
and when the fish bites, it goes like this, and got it inside the boat. That was hard  
work. Yeah, but it was...sometimes we got these fishing poles, but oh we would  
180 have to fight with them. Hit them all, you know. And let them get tired out and then  
we would pull it in. We didn't have a net there to pull it inside the boat only a little  
gaff-hook to pull it up. My sister she (laugh), every time I think of it, I always  
laugh to myself, she is funny. It was a fun time. We had fun. But we'd leave about  
six o'clock in the morning to go fishing. We had to go across to the islands, WAY  
185 out by Admiralty and take our lunch. And at lunch time we would row ashore or eat  
in the boat and we would just, you know, hang around and when we would have to  
go potty we would have to row across to some beach (laugh). It was funny. That  
was the olden days. Nowadays, everything is so modern compared to then.

Well, half the people [in Angoon] are dying, it's mostly younger people. I  
190 lived in Angoon until I got married, and then I left there. When I first came to the  
big city, I was kind of scared. I couldn't get use to the people, you know. And over  
here we use to go down to the docks. Every night I would get lonesome and I  
would have to see the water and sit there, then I'd go home. It was a long time  
before I got use to it. And I didn't know very many people, hardly. We would just  
195 go to the store and back. It was something.

Now everything is modern. But in Angoon, I like the beach and everything. It was something. I see a lot of changes. We use to have awful storms in the winter. Taku winds all the time. It was cold, oh my gosh. Well summers were pretty good at times. Some summers they were kind of short, only about six, seven, 200 eight weeks, that's about all. Then we started fall weather. It would start to rain.

Oh yeah, we used to go pick berries all the time. We would leave about seven o'clock in the morning and pack a lunch in the woods. We would pick berries and we would go a long ways. And we would can our berries and we would can our fish. We make...we can all our food for the winters. We'd can all our 205 jellies and deer meat and fish. And they used to salt the fish with rock salt, in barrels. But you have to soak it one night and then you change the water in the morning, and then all the salt comes out. I couldn't eat it now, I don't think. We couldn't fry it, we had to boil it. But it was pretty good, but you get used it.

My dad didn't even know how to make a smoke house. They have a hole on 210 top of the roof and then they put the boards one way, and when the wind was going this way, they had to go over there and turn it this way with the boards. He didn't know how to build it, so he had to walk three miles to Angoon to look at the smoke houses, at how they were built. We'd make a bonfire and sit around and you'd cook your fish then. Roast it on long sticks. And they'd put grease on it. It was a funny 215 thing. Then they used to have those iron pots to boil the fish in, it was good though.

Your not suppose to scare them [bears] if you run, they'll go after you. You have to hide. They'll walk along and eat the berries, the black bears. Boy, in

Angoon they are just like human beings. They go to the dump that carries all the garbage. Just like human beings they stand up; Some of them staring and watching.  
220 Some of them go down the other way, where they stay I guess. Some of them are just around there. But they don't hurt people, if you don't get...if you don't scare them. Some of the Indian people talk to them in Indian and they could hear them, they know what they are saying.

When we go picking berries, we have to bang on our cans and make noise  
225 and scream, talk loud, they just go away. They start going away, they go the other direction. Usually the bears are mean though, but not the black bears. Sometimes...they just go and dig out things[in the garden] We would have to re-do it again. They do it at night, but not during the day. We didn't see much bears by our house. We lived by a lagoon, the water runs down it on the other side they  
230 come down by the water, looking for some fish. But there was no fish. They go way down and go to the other side. We always watched them, mostly black bears.

I remember she [my mother] always use to go to Angoon and go with some of the Indian people dancing, you know. And she wanted me to learn how to do it but I didn't want to. After she passed away, I got interested in it. My dad didn't like  
235 the idea of it. The lady said Angoon had a hold of him. He's suppose to be inside when my mother was dead. She said, "Where did papa go?" He was in the shed, every day.

This woman taught him how to dance and they had a blanket for him and when the time came, at the ANB Hall, here was my dad. My mother couldn't

240 believe it. He came in dancing with some of the women, everybody was yelling.  
After that, he never done it no more, he didn't like it. But he had to do it, to satisfy  
the other people. "The one time is enough," he said. My mother used to try to teach  
him how to fish halibut and how to cut the heads off the fish. And he use to get  
mad, "I'm not an Indian," he said. "I don't like it, god damn it! I want to go home."  
245 He didn't want to learn, but he finally did after a while. It took him quit a while to  
get use to it. It was hard for him. Yeah, my mother used to try to teach him to filet  
halibut. He said, "I'm not an Indian." (laugh). It was funny.

At fish camp, it's our crabs, we even get that. You know our camp was right  
by a crick, and you have to go way up where the fish spawns. And there's lots of  
250 crabs, Dungeness crabs. And then when some people go up the crick to get fish,  
they use to pay my grandpa and them some money. I don't know why. And then  
they let the boats go up and get some fish. And then we would go out and get some  
crabs Dungeness crabs, that's all they had there. Not the big ones. They were great  
big ones: oh, they were beautiful. In October is the best month for the crabs, you  
255 know. Their meats are all filled out and they taste very good and then September. It  
starts September, October, to November and then December they get thin. So we  
always went to the camp about that time. For my family to get fish and dry them  
and then we get all that crabs. Anyway, we would have a big washtub, those olden  
day wash tubs. We would cook them there with salt water, not plain water, from the  
260 beach and we put kelp on the top like a cover. And then they cook them and then  
about eleven o'clock, ten or eleven o'clock, and the moon would be shining like a

big light and we would all sit on old logs there and eat crab. Dungeness, boy it was good.

We use to have a lot of fun. You really enjoy it. And some people eat it  
265 with. The American people eat it with butter, but we just ate it plain. We didn't  
have any butter those days. But what we had used for butter, we had lard, you know  
and we'd put it on Pilot Bread and sprinkle sugar on it. That was our cookie. It was  
good though. I use to hide it under my arm to go out and play. My mother and dad  
used to tell us not too each too much of it. But we use to hide it under here. We put  
270 the lard on it together and the sugar and put it together, you know? And then we'd  
eat it when we were out there playing. That was our cookie. Those days, they had  
them in wooden boxes, they didn't have them in, you know...Pilot Bread. They had  
them in wooden boxes. My dad use to order them by the boxes for all winter. And  
we were suppose to use only so much, so it could last us. And that's the way we  
275 had it and we use to put blueberry jam or something on it. We had everything to  
eat. We had good food, but we weren't very wasteful. The way kids waste food  
now a days, you know? So it would last us so long.

We didn't play with kids at all. Hardly. We were by ourselves mostly.  
That's why they didn't like us, they did care much for us. We played among  
280 ourselves. We didn't have very much of anything, but we played tag, you know?  
Sam Newman, oh he was horrible! (laugh) We use to pick those sea things, they  
have stickers on them... Yeah and we had buckets and the waves would run way  
down and we would run down and grab it and put it in the bucket and then Sam

wouldn't get any and he would steal it from our buckets for his dad and we caught  
285 him, we got mad at him. "What did you do that for," we'd tell him.

"That's for my dad," he's say.

"You get your own, we get our own." They use to split them [sea urchins]  
open and eat them raw. It'd kind of orange colored inside, but I never did eat any. I  
tasted some, but I didn't like it. I spit it out. But the older people, you know? And  
290 we use to get and get all that. And then we played tag, chased each other around.  
That's about the only thing that we knew, how to play. Catch each other and hide  
away. Yeah, hide and go seek. (laugh)

We didn't have American games. And then we had sticks...oh Sam. He  
would always lie, that Sam. He was a liar. Poor guy. Oh, he's so funny. He use to  
295 come and see me and he'd say, "Don't tell my wife that I gave you some deer meat,  
I'll bring you deer meat."

"Yeah, go ahead and bring it." He'd come and give it to me. I said, "Ok."

"But don't tell Ginger I gave it to you," he said. It was funny.

She [Elsie] was there too but she was a slow poke. Even though I am now.  
300 They swam up Fish Crick, up North Douglas. She was raised there. Someone got a  
hold of it [the grandparent's land] and took it away from them. And he had quite a  
lot of things going on over there. That was my grandparents camp. They owned it,  
it is called White Water Bay. ... Way, way further up, is Hood Bay. You have to go  
through Hood Bay cannery, and go way up on the hill. And they discovered coal up  
305 there, way up on the mountains. Coal, you know. They use to burn that a long time

ago. They use to sell it by the sacks. Boy it was good. It gave you a lot of heat. It was better than oil heat.

We would have to chop wood. I was the one would have to make sure the kindling was chopped. We had a big long saw. One on that side and one on this  
310 side and we would go like this. We cut them in blocks and piled them and took them down on a sled and split them with a sledge hammer. We'd hammer it and it would split open: we use to do all that. We didn't sit around. It was a lot of exercise though, but it was nice. We had a big shed at home and we would pile it up and have it chopped up so you could put it in the stove, not the big pieces. For the  
315 kitchen, the cooking stove and heaters, a little bigger pieces. But it was dirty, all the messes we would have to clean up all the time. We had to keep it clean. It was a dirty mess all the time. But the stove gave out good heat. Better than oil heat. Boy, we use to stand around and go out and come on in. We lived in the smoke house and had to sleep on the floors. We'd have pads and our blankets to cover it and a  
320 bonfire on the side of it. We didn't have a fire going at night, but all the draft comes down and you cover your face up with a blanket.

That's were we lived, in the smoke house, because we didn't have a house. Finally my dad built another little one. But when we first got there, it was nothing but smoke houses, and we had to sleep in there: all gravel, no floor, nothing. We  
325 had to....when the gravel got dirty, we had to go and get some clean ones and bring it in, and put new ones in, clean ones on from the beach, so it would be dry. Finally,



they built little houses like, with the bunks. Yeah, boards, no spring, nothing. Just boards. (Laughs)

We stayed there and we'd go in October, probably thirty days there: Five to  
330 six weeks, then we go back home. We had to go. We only get the fish to dry it,  
hang them. And when they are dry, we pack them and take it home. And that barrel  
of fish, like salt fish with rock salt. For when they do the dry fish, it takes two days.  
You've got to have the fire not too hot so the fish won't get cooked, you know?  
They hang them for three days and then it's ready and then they split it. They take  
335 the backbones off and the tailbone and then they open them up to hang down. And  
then they put them up for about three days; they hang and then after three days they  
put them through another stick. Then they hang them to dry. They all hang like this.  
And then after they are dry, they pack them and fold them, you know, just like  
clothes, they put them together. And then they put rope around them and pack them  
340 that way and take them home.

It takes about, well to split them, about three days, and then four to five  
days after they are split open to hang up. And then they can tell when they are dry.  
You're not suppose to have it too crispy or else they come apart. As long as they  
can be folded, then you pack them. And you're not suppose to handle them rough.  
345 You're suppose to be kind of careful where you lay them. So they won't crumble  
up.

Oh, my dad and them, they had a shed, a tall shed with all the sidings where  
it's clean and they had tables and a platform and they store it in there and closed the

door and locked it up. Well our family went and my uncle and them they would go  
350 and my grandpa and we would go: about three or four families. And we go on a  
boat, in open boats.

Oh, how we fished up crabs. Well, one person or two people have to go on  
the skiff and we have a long pole and we have a sharp thing...my dad would fix it.  
One would sit like this...and then [they'd] have that pole and watch. And one  
355 would role here and say "Back up, back up. There's some there. Poke it down and  
bring it up." Yeah, sometimes we go on the beach and wait on the beach and pull  
them out. They would be crawling all over. Gosh, there was a lot of crabs crawling.  
In October, great big ones. Oh they were so pretty and nice, with big claws. Those  
days was real nice. Now you have to pay five dollars for little ones at the store.

360 I remember my dad use to go out, in Wrangell and go out to Shoemaker  
Bay and there was a lot of deep holes that you could walk around them on the  
beach when the tide was out and he had one of those poles and he used to stab them  
and put them my bag.

Sam told me that when he was a little boy, downtown Juneau out there in  
365 the bay, he said that in the fall time it would be just full of fish everywhere. The  
whole thing would be just full of fish. Yeah, at Gold Crick there used to be a lot of  
fish. And then down at Ship Creek there used to be a lot of fish, just go up so they  
could go and spawn you know. They made cheese out of the eggs. My mother use  
to dry them. They hang them and they kind of dry them and they get some cheese  
370 cloths. Mashed them a little and put them in a cheese cloth and then dry them and

then you could slice it and eat it. I didn't like it though. It was kind of dry, you know.

Oh yeah, (laugh), seaweed, we use to climb around the cliffs and they were slippery and you have to pick them in the spring when they grow, just like berries.

375 And pick them, and we dry them. We had table cloths or some clean clothes and you know, put them all, spread them out and dry them like that. And then when they are half dry, my mother used to put them in the five-gallon cans. Kind of square like this and a board on top and then you have to kneel on it, stand on it, go up and down, up and down. And they come in cakes about that thick: Square. And

380 she use to put clam nectar with it as sprinkle, to give it a taste. Clam nectar. They boiled the clams and the juice, you know. That's how she use to make it. And we use to grind some too, into little things. Oh yeah, they use to do it [grind into cakes] Nowadays, they don't do it and you have to pack it with some kind of leaves that grows on the crick like, they smell kind of good, something like mint. And then,

385 pack it with that to keep it nice and fresh. That's the way my mother use to do it. And you could slice it and eat it. I liked it though, the dry ones. And then, I didn't like it when it was raw, there was no taste to it. It was just kind of fishy like, but when it was fried, it got a different taste to it: It's good. Now I have some of the little grind ones. I like it with rice. You steam rice and you put the seaweed on it

390 and you mix it with a little fish, like a can salmon. You know, the good parts, or with canned clams [with a] little onions in it: it's good.

Oh yeah, they have red ribbon seaweed, a kind of a reddish color. They are about that long. I didn't like them, because they were like rubber. But when you fry them, they are crispy... We used the black seaweed for cakes, not the red ones. The  
395 red ones you know, is just like eating potato chips. In a cast-iron pan you cook it on a medium heat. Not too high. They get really crispy: it's good that way. That's the only way I could eat this. They call it sea ribbons. The red ones...but the other one is black.

And then we use to get them gumboots [shaaw]. I didn't care for gumboots.  
400 It was a lot of work. Because you have to know how to cook them. If you cook it too high, it's just like rubber. You're suppose to have a boiling pot of water, after you wash the boots. Wash 'em good and then you put it in the pot, the boiled water. And then you plunge it right, and stir it and turn it around. But no heat. Just like that. And then when you open it, you have to take the shell off and clean it and  
405 wash them again. But, it's just like eating rubber and I don't like it. No taste to it.

Finding them though is fun. On the rocks, you have to lift up the seaweed, and they are on the rocks and then they got those big red ones too. You know, about that big ones, I forgot the name of them. You have to pry them off, but I didn't like them. My mother use to get them. I didn't care for much of them and the  
410 black ones, oh yeah I ate some, but if you cook it right. My nephew from Angoon, he always brings me some, but I never eat it. I give it to somebody at ANB hall. I give it to someone but I never eat it. He knows how to do it. He brings me some all the time. He didn't bring me any this year. Last year he brought a lot. Every time

he comes in from Angoon, he always brings me a bag, a couple bags. And that's  
415 the way it was. It was really good.

Sometimes we went to a summer camp but not very much because we have  
to get the berries and take care of the fish. You know, trout and things like that  
were coming in. And clams, they use to dry those cockles. You ever see the  
cockles, they got striped shells. They dried them. They put them on a stick after it's  
420 cooked. And then when you want to use it, you soak them in the water, you cut the  
edges off, the tips. My mother used to dry them in the smoke house, by a stove.  
Behind a stove, hang them, and dry them. I could eat that. They were pretty good.  
Yeah, that's the way, many people used put up their food for the winter: Clams and  
cockles, and fish and deer meat. They even dry the deer meat too. They use to kill  
425 bears and they eat the bear meat. Just black as could be. I couldn't believe it.

Oh yeah, that [dried halibut] is good. Real good. There was a woman there  
in Angoon that Lyle would get some halibut and he would give some to her and  
they would divide it. She dries it and gives him about half of it, but he hasn't done  
that the last couple years. Her name is Matilda Gamble. She's good at it. It's kind  
430 of expensive though, but it's real good.

Yeah that's the way the old people use to bake...Roll up the skunk cabbage  
and put it inside the fish and then wrap the fish in skunk cabbage, a lot of skunk  
cabbage and then they would burry it. And then they would start a fire and bake it  
like an oven. But you can't use the older skunk cabbage, because it stinks too  
435 much. Yeah, they dig down. That's the way we use to bake potatoes too, in a

bonfire. You dig down and you put your potatoes in and you cover it and bake it like that, it's good. Yeah that's the way...and my mother use to fix the fish. She had a stick that they put...she put the fish on it and they swiveled it through the stick with the thing holding like this, with the fish inside. They put some kind of  
440 strings, and then they put it by the fire. They turn it around, not very high heat you know? And they put the grease on it, on both sides and then they turn it around: It was good. I used to eat it too. Some of them, I didn't eat though. But some of the stuff I ate.

I didn't care much for seal oil. I liked herring oil better. We use to kneel on  
445 it, the herrings, and all the grease goes down in a bucket. It's got to be clean bags, we use to kneel on them. I didn't like seal oil very much, even to this day. Yeah, seal oil is very strong: to me it is. Hooligan grease, that comes from Haines. My mother she had a lady friend that use to send my mother, the hooligans, all fried on a string. And just like herrings. And she use to get the grease, but it stinks. I don't  
450 like it. I use to hate it. I don't like the smell of it, but my mother use to use it. I never did like it. And what else was that. Oh yeah, that's the woman that made that Chilkat blanket I got. She is the lady, she was the head of it.

Jenny Thlunaut made it, you know, the blanket I got. I'm not suppose to sell it. My mother said that who ever is alive, if something happens to me, my family  
455 gets it. And one day when someone dies, the other one gets it. But Emma wanted to sell it. She use to tell me, "Go and sell it!" I said no, and my mother said no that I can't sell it. I don't need to sell it. I think they are worth pretty high now. It's in my

bedroom, on a shelf. You're supposed to roll it. It's supposed to be rolled. My grandpa and my grandmother, they had big ones. Beautiful ones and when they  
460 died, they put them on their grave and they split them. So when somebody steals them, it won't do them any good. They hung them over their graves.

And they stripped them all. That's what the old people do. Because if they don't strip them, they steal them for whatever it is. About \$20,000, or \$30,000 dollars. And some of the old things, you know, like what my mother had and my  
465 grandfather and them. The olden day things, it's worth quit a lot, but I don't know what happened to...my brother had all the stuff. The big bowls for parties, you don't see those any more now. But my brother had them, but the girls took them all. And I asked the girls what happened to them, and they said they were all broken up. But they are lying, they have them in Angoon. So I just leave good enough  
470 alone because it doesn't do me any good, I got no place to put it here. So I didn't even take any. Yeah, they had a lot of things that were worth money from the olden days. Nowadays people just get rid of things.

Oh yeah, she [my mom] beaded. I got some of her stuff in the attic. That's where I learned to do beading. My mother showed me. She was sick and I use to sit  
475 by her bed and she showed me how to do all that and I learned to make those moccasins. I cut them out and sewed them: the whole thing. Yeah I made the whole thing. I made my own beaded tunic, and my blanket to dance with, and my headbands. I made all that my self. I sewed then. I beaded them. I got my brothers

blanket. It was up in the attic. I have a good notion I should tell Bud to bring it  
480 down. Probably shouldn't be up there.

Yeah, it was given to him and it's a beautiful one from Yakutat. Some  
woman adopted him and she made the blanket for him. Oh, it was a beautiful,  
pretty blanket. Nowadays the kids, they don't bother, they don't want no part of it.  
But in the long run, you know, they'll be worth something. And the culture will be  
485 gone, and then nobody knows what's going on.

Oh yeah, they do have parties once in a while now. That Doctor Chew, he  
was adopted too, from Hoonah. He got an Indian name. They had a big doings  
when he retired at the ANB Hall. They have him an Indian name too, poor thing. I  
don't know, I can't pronounce his name. It's funny. That's his Indian name. You  
490 put money on their head, twenty dollars or forty or fifty and then they have a big  
party.

I went to school in Angoon and no they [the teachers] weren't [mean]  
because we were half, we weren't full blood Tlingits. We weren't all white. We  
couldn't speak Lingit in school. We would get into trouble, so no we never did. I  
495 grew up speaking Lingit. My mom spoke it a lot. My dad didn't like it.

My husband was a fish buyer. I met him in Tenakee. I was working in  
Tenakee. I was about twenty-one-years old. I worked in a cannery. All of us, we  
were there. They had housing for us there, canning salmon.

Yeah, my mother used to tell us a story a long time ago before, you know,  
500 the Indian people they fought each other. They had a war. They killed each other.



They didn't bury them, they burned them. They burned the body. That's what she use to tell us. And they used swords or whatever. It was terrible she said. And they had nothing but canoes: they were on canoes and they didn't have boats until after. They use to fight. A whole bunch of them would come in on big long canoes and  
505 just all come ashore and fight and have Indian wars among themselves. That's how they killed each other. Everybody would be dead, and then they burned them, they don't bury them. They do kill women and children too. They killed everybody. Different tribes, opposite tribes, they all fight among themselves, sometimes over land.

510           Yeah, my mother she use to tell us some kind of a story, we were suppose to...she was among some good native people, you know....the good ones that had respect for each other; and were not suppose to make fun of people, no matter how bad they are. We are supposed to respect and be nice to them, but nowadays they don't. They don't do that. They are just real ornery. Some of the old people that  
515 they used to argue you know. They used to argue and spit on their hand and give it to you like that. (laugh)

My mom didn't tell us how she grew up. I think she grew up pretty good. My grandpa and grandma was real good then. She came from a good family. Some were bad, and some weren't bad, some were pretty good.

520           I went hunting with my dad when I was only a teenager. I wasn't scared hunting with my dad. No, we were pretty brave people. We couldn't hunt behind our house, because there are a lot of houses there. In the camp we did go hunting. I

know how to skin a deer. They hang it up and you cut them. You spread them, take the whole skin off and then my mother, they use to put it in something...and they  
525 would take all the hair off and then they washed it with **fillsap** soap and soak it in there. Then they ring it and then they put it on a frame. And get the water out with something. That's how they made moccasins and we tanned the hides. They were kind of cheap and then we quit making them. I never did make them to sell them, but I used to sell the them for my mother, but now they are pretty expensive,  
530 especially the moose ones, the moose skins. You have to buy the moose skin though.

We just worked in the garden and worked outside and picked berries and things like that. We were raised in a land by ourselves. We went to town once in a great while, not all the time, very seldom. Yeah, we use to walk it. You had to go,  
535 walk. Sometimes we see one or two, [bears] they were way up, because we were further down.

Our house was right a little ways from the ferry. That's our land where the ferry is, that's part of our land. It's right on the end, it's right on this side. And the old house you can see one of them or two still there. My dad gave them the right of  
540 way, for the government to build a car road to go through our land on the back. It's towards the beach. That wasn't a very good place for water though. The water wasn't good. And our land is on that side. It was on the other side, [the clam beach] on the beach, but we don't dig clams in June, July, August. They are poisoned then. October and November is when we pick.

545           She'd come over and visit my mother...Albert's [Kookesh] mother.  
Sometimes three days she stayed and she brought her change of clothes. She came  
by skiff and stayed with us. She rowed from Angoon to Admiralty Island, about an  
hour and a half. We used to do that too. We use to go on a boat to Angoon before  
we had to row. You had to go on certain tides. You had to go when the tide is going  
550 down, that's when it swirls. But when the tide is up, just a little wind like. If you hit  
the right tide you're fine. It's the big whirls. But that one in Angoon too is kind of  
dangerous, you have to go up on certain tides and some of the boats, they just go  
right up. And they don't know it. It's kind of scary, they have big holes, they just  
go right in.

555

## APPENDIX E

## Tribal Letter

P.O. Box 519  
 Hoonah, Alaska 99829  
 and 1109 Edgecumbe Drive  
 Sitka, Alaska 99835  
[doctorviv@hotmail.com](mailto:doctorviv@hotmail.com)

February 20, 2006  
 Hoonah Indian Association  
 P.O. Box 802  
 Hoonah, Alaska 99829

Attention: Research Board  
 Dear Hoonah Indian Association  
 Subject: Graduate Research

First allow me to introduce myself in the proper manner:

Ch'aa adéi yei xat nay. oo. Vivian Martindale yóo xat duwasáakw. Atk'ahéen Lingít  
x'éináx yoo duwasáakw. Yéil naax sa iyatee. Mitchell Prescott yóo duwasáakw ax eesh.  
 Lorna Woods yóo duwasáakw ax tláa. Howie Martindale yóo duwasáakw ax xúx.  
 Binkley's dachxán áyá xat. Sáami ka Suomaliset yadi áyá xat. Kaachxaana.áakw dax ax  
 een.aa áyá. Xoonaa ka Sheet'ka kwaan áyá yei xat yatee.

Please forgive me if I don't do this correctly. My name is Vivian Martindale. My Lingít name is Atk'ahéen, Faith. I am from the Raven moiety. My father's name is Mitchell Prescott. My mother's name is Lorna Woods. My husband's name is Howie Martindale. I am a grandchild of the Binkley's. I am a child of the Sáami and the Suomalinen. I am from Wrangell. I am living in Hoonah and Sitka.

I am currently a student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program and I am conducting my research with the Tlingit people in Southeast Alaska. My goal is to facilitate interviews with a variety of persons from your community. My research will focus on the Tlingit relationship to place. I have enclosed a copy of my research proposal for your reference.

I will be providing the following information to Hoonah Indian Association in accordance with your expectations. : 1) A copy of my research proposal 2) copies of recordings if permission is given by associate/participants and 3) copies of signed consent forms.

Respectfully,  
Vivian Atk'ahéen Martindale  
Graduate Student  
University of Alaska Fairbanks

## APPENDIX F

## Informed Consent Form

Study: *Lingítx Haa Sateeyí, We Who Are Tlingit: Contemporary Tlingit Identity and the Ancestral Relationship to the Landscape.*

IRB# \_\_\_\_\_ Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Researcher: Dr. Ray Barnhardt  
University of Alaska Fairbanks  
Center for Cross-Cultural Studies  
PO Box 756730  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-6730  
907-474-1902, 907-474-1957 fax  
email: [fyxcxs@uaf.edu](mailto:fyxcxs@uaf.edu)

Research Student: Vivian Martindale  
P.O. Box 519  
Hoonah, Alaska 99829  
Phone: 907-945-3214 [doctorviv@hotmail.com](mailto:doctorviv@hotmail.com)

Sitka Address:  
1109 Edgumbe Drive, Sitka, Alaska 99835  
Phone: 907-747-8744

I am inviting you to participate in a research study concerning the Tlingit people and their relationship to place. I selected you to be a participant/associate in this study because I feel that your knowledge will contribute to this research. Please read this form and ask any questions before you agree to participate in this study.

**Process:**

The method of research will be in the form of an interview conducted through audio. I will be conducting an interview with you at a site of your choice. Although you have signed this consent form, you have the ability to withdraw from this study at any phase; and at any time during the interview process you have the option to stop the interview. In addition, you can ask not to have your interview included in the research and may request its disposal. Also, as a part of the process, I will share the written transcript of the interview with you for editing purposes and provide you with final copy.

**Risks and Benefits:**

The risk of participating in an interview is minimal, however your words may eventually be seen in print and this fact should be taken into consideration. The benefit of participating as an associate in this research is that your knowledge and point-of-view can be passed on to the next generation, but we do not guarantee those benefits from taking part in this study.

**Confidentiality:**

By signing this consent form you agree to be interviewed via audio-tape, or CD, or in digital format. Your name and the community in which you live will be made available. This data will be stored and managed by myself until it is archived at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in the Department of Cross Cultural Studies for a minimum period of five years and afterwards will be held at the same facility

indefinitely. This data may also be used for educational purposes as well as possible publication.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Your decision to take part in this interview is voluntary. At anytime before-during-or-after the interview process you can cancel your interview and/or have the data destroyed. After reviewing the transcripts or audio of the interview you are free to make any editing changes.

**Contracts and Questions:**

If you have any questions about this research project and the process you may contact me or Dr. Ray Barnhardt at the Center for Cross Cultural Studies, University of Alaska Fairbanks (see above addresses). Also, if you have any concerns about your rights as a participant/associate, please contact the Research Coordinator in the Office of Research Integrity at 474-7800 (Fairbanks area) or 1-866-876-7800 (outside of Fairbanks) or [fyirb@uaf.edu](mailto:fyirb@uaf.edu).

**Statement of Consent:**

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study/interview. I have been provided a copy of this form for my own records.



---

Signature of Participate/Associate & Date

---

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent & Date

## APPENDIX G

## General Interview Questions

1109 Edgecumbe Drive  
 Sitka, Alaska 99835  
[doctorviv@hotmail.com](mailto:doctorviv@hotmail.com)

In regards to: Research participation

Name/Participant Associate

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Participant/Associate,

First allow me to introduce myself in the proper manner. Ch'aa adei yéi xat nay.  
 oo. Dleit Kaa x'éináx Vivian Martindale yóo xat duwasáakw. Atk'ahéen Lingít x'éináx  
 yoo duwasáakw. Yéil naax sa iyatée. Mitchell Prescott yóo duwasáakw ax éesh. Lorna  
 Woods yóo duwasáakw ax tláa. Howie Martindale yóo duwasáakw ax xúx. Binkley's  
 dachxán áyá xat. Saami ka Suomalinen yadi áyá xat. Kaachxaana.áakw dax ax een.aa  
 áyá. Xoonaa ka Sheet'ká kwaan áyá yei xat yatee.

Please forgive me if I don't do this correctly. My name is Vivian Martindale. My  
 Lingít name is Atk'ahéen, Faith. I am from the Raven moiety. My father's name is  
 Mitchell Prescott. My mother's name is Lorna Woods. My husband's name is Howie  
 Martindale. I am a grandchild of the Binkley's. I am a child of the Sáami and  
 Suomalinen. I am from Wrangell. I am living in Hoonah and Sitka.

Gunalchéesh ax eet idashiyí. Thank-you for helping me. I am fortunate to have you participate as an associate in my research project. The following questions are provided to give you the opportunity to think about your answers prior to our interview. These questions and your answers may lead to other communication during the interview therefore any time you do not have to answer any questions that you may be uncomfortable with. At any time, before-during-or-afterwards, you may choose to not participate in this interview.

**Research Questions:**

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself/what you do for a living, your interests, your family.
2. How do the names of the places around you affect your life?
3. What oral traditions can you find meaning in and how do those stories relate to where you live.
4. How does what you do (occupation/ hobby/other interests) affect who you are?
5. What is your experience of living in Alaska and being connected ancestrally to the land?

Thank-you for taking the time to look over and think about the questions I have posed. In addition, I have enclosed a consent form for you to look over. Please feel free to contact me by telephone or email regarding any questions or concerns. I am looking forward to working with you on this research project.

Sincerely,  
Vivian Martindale  
Graduate Student  
University of Alaska Fairbanks

## APPENDIX H

## Interview Questions Supplement

*Interview questions specific to: Clarissa Hudson*

1. How did your relationship to place influence your decision to reside part-time in Alaska?
2. What art or projects are you currently working on?
3. Please discuss the Katlian painting and the Jenny Thlunaut picture.
4. What is your relationship to the weavers in the past?
5. What communities do you have a relationship with in terms of family and heritage?
6. Why is it important for you to go into communities such as Hoonah and Juneau and teach your art?
7. Email Interview Question for Clarissa Hudson, T'akdeintaan weaver and artist: when I inquired if she considered that what she creates, especially the woven blankets and garments will someday be considered 'sacred' becoming a clan's *at.óow*. How does that thought of creating something sacred for your people impacts her life?

*Interview questions specific to: Teri Rofkar*

1. How does the weaving that you do affect your relationship to place.
2. Tell me about the generations of weavers in your family?
3. I saw on your website that you mentioned something about your relationship to the trees and refer to the Tree People. Can you explain this further?

Rofkar: My weavings are a reflection of an ancient relationship rekindled. It is a fragile relationship, fragile only in our lack of knowledge. There is so much to learn, and I enjoy the opportunity to put myself in the presence of these ancient spirits. This is the best explanation I can give for the power held in my weaving. The *energy* comes from the materials themselves, the spruce roots, and mountain goat wool...not from my humble twining...

4. More quotes from your website which I will form into questions:

Rofkar: Cedar bark is another wonderful local material used for basketry and Chilkat wool Regalia. I only weave a few pieces in cedar bark anymore. The Cedar are very abundant, but the harvesting does impact the living tree for the rest of its life... Also, the spruce root was also the preferred material over the centuries and I have come to trust that traditional knowledge, it usually is rooted in Indigenous Science.

5. What is the Lituya Bay robe and how did that come about?
6. What about the Earthquake robe?
7. Who is Grandma Eliza and how did her life affect yours?

8. How did you get interested in weaving; basket, Chilkat, and raven's tail?
9. Tell me about the Raven's Tail weaving revitalization? What is two strand twining?
10. Tell me about T'akdeintaan history of being weavers?
11. What is a *rhythm* of weaving?
12. How does place influence your creativity?
13. How does a sense of place relate to the visualization of your basketry and weaving?
14. How do you now when to gather roots or materials for weaving?
15. What is otter fur finger weaving?
16. Tell me about the Ice Walker Robe?

## APPENDIX I

## Lingít Glossary

<i>Lingít word</i>	<i>English Definition</i>
<i>aani</i>	land
<i>at.óow</i>	sacred item/art
<i>at yaa awunéi</i>	respect
<i>éeshaan</i>	poor thing
<i>gunalchéesh</i>	thank-you
<i>guneit kanaayi</i>	opposite moiety
<i>guwakaan</i>	peacemaker role, the deer
<i>haa atxaayi haa kusteeyix sitee</i> (atxaayi)	our food is our way of life
<i>haa déi</i>	here we are
<i>haa shageinyaa</i>	spirit-in-all-things
<i>hit</i>	house
<i>hit saati</i>	house leader
<i>hit wooshdei yadukicht</i>	house dedication
<i>kusteeyi</i>	way of life, culture
<i>koo.eex'</i>	pay-off party, memorial party, potlatch.



## Lingít Glossary cont...

<i>Lingít word</i>	<i>English Definition</i>
<i>koolyát kanaa.ádi</i>	play clothes
<i>kwaan, káawu</i> (Hoonah Káawu)	people of a particular landscape
<i>latseen</i>	strength
<i>ligas</i>	taboo
<i>Lingít</i>	Tlingit language
<i>Lingít haa sateeyí</i>	we who are Tlingit
<i>l s'aatí at</i>	masterless thing
<i>naa káani</i>	brother in law
<i>shagoon</i>	ancestor
<i>shakee.át</i>	ermine headdress/hat
<i>shaaw</i>	gumboots
<i>shuka</i>	ancestor: those born ahead of who are now behind us, as well as those unborn who wait ahead of us
<i>Sít Eeti Geey</i>	Glacier Bay
<i>tax'</i>	snail
<i>tleikw yakwaheiyagu</i>	berry spirit
<i>yadi</i>	child (singular)/father's clan
<i>yan gaa duneek</i>	dignity
<i>yatx'i, haa yatx'I</i>	children/his or her father's people

## Lingít Glossary cont...

<i>Lingít word</i>	<i>English Definition</i>
<i>yéik</i>	shaman spirit
<i>Yeikootee</i>	spirit songs
<i>yoo duwasáakw</i>	name, what you are called
<i>yooxatangi</i>	thinking
<i>x'einax'</i>	language