"THAT'S A HARD QUESTION": UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS TALK ABOUT CULTURE

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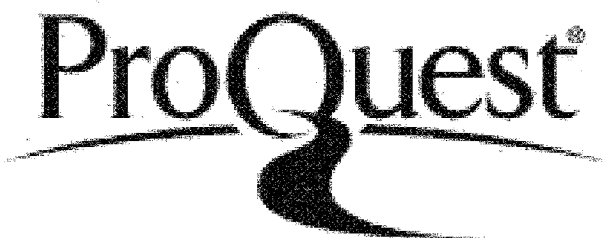

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TALK ABOUT CULTURE

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Abstract

In this project I examine the ability of undergraduate students to articulate a working definition of culture and cross-culture. The students were predominately elementary education majors, enrolled in one of two culture-based elective courses at the University of Alaska Fairbanks during the 2010-2011 school year. Through the use of semi-structured interviewing and participatory/observational autoethnographic fieldwork, I provide several viewpoints from which to look at this complex issue.

Through the examination of historical and institutional documents, I show that the School of Education within the University has had a long-standing commitment to teacher education in the Alaskan context, including creating teachers who understand the importance of cultural relevance. As this project shows, how students are taking up this aspect of their teacher-training program is varied, and few students were able to provide a concise and applicable definition or framework for thinking about culture and cultural difference.

In order to create culturally relevant teachers, the School must undertake more and better activities to provide students carefully structured experiences with cultural diversity, and culturally diverse learners, as well as ways to talk about those experiences. Like many other universities, students at the University of Alaska Fairbanks come to classes with many stereotypes about cultural groups and the importance, or lack thereof, of multicultural education. In my project, this came forth as resistance to talking about cultural diversity, and resistance to multicultural coursework. The students actively

worked minimize cultural difference in favor of thinking in terms of individual, personality, and place-based difference.

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Chapter One Introduction

Introduction

In the fall of 2009, several sets of circumstances converged ultimately leading to this research project. The first was my transition from elementary school teacher in rural Alaska to full time graduate student and research assistant for the Alaska Native Teacher Preparation Project at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). I was excited for the chance to further my education, and my job with the grant provided me the opportunity to work closely with Alaska Native and American Indian college students pursuing teaching degrees. The second set of circumstances involved my enrollment in a course titled Alaska Native Education, what the University calls a "stacked class." This means that as a graduate student, I was in the same physical class space as undergraduates. All enrolled students had overlapping readings and assignments. Those in the graduate level course were expected to do a greater amount of work, and also to be working more in-depth with the subject material.

Having only been in Fairbanks for a year at the time, I felt that I was just getting to know the town and the University. Something that stood out to me immediately was the ways in which Alaska Native students, Alaska Native cultures, and rural Alaska in general were talked about, generalized, and sometimes pushed aside by those in the community as well as some at the University. Coming from a teaching position in a rural school district, the Alaska Native elementary students I had spent the last several years teaching and learning with were quite fresh in my mind. What I took to be a somewhat

constant and irksome marginalizing and minimizing undercurrent sharpened the focus of my anticipated research.

The particulars of classmate behavior from that time period have been erased or dulled by memory, and only a general feeling of dismay remains. However, the ways in which my classmates responded to classroom discussions about Alaska Native education have stuck with me, and guided the ways in which I have approached this dissertation. As a result of the above, I undertook a project that involved not only interviewing other students at the University, but also concurrently taking courses with those students, and reflecting upon our interactions both inside and outside the classroom space. What follows is a narrative account of that research process.

I would like to provide a foreshadowing and introduction for this project with responses by two research participants. These statements highlight the overall research experience, and dissertation journey I have been actively engaged with for the past several years. Both responses include interactions with student research participants and work to show the range of student responses and understandings regarding culture, cross-cultural situations, and frameworks for understanding cultural difference.

The first is from an interview conversation with Cindy, a UAF student in her junior year, and White female in her mid 40s. This quote was in response to an open-ended question based on the readings from our class *Cross-Cultural Communication in the Classroom.*

"It's just a bunch of multicultural crap, and I don't care."

Interviewee Cindy, May 2011, [1]

[1] All research participants have chosen or been given a pseudonym.

Responses like the above were seemingly common from some of the undergraduate education majors[2] with whom I had contact on a daily basis at the UAF during my research. This comment, while said to me during an interview, is representative of classroom discourse in this specific project. This damaging, yet telling, statement, along with their attendant discourses could be labeled, as communication scholars Stephanie Jo Kent and James Cummings suggest, "[P]roblematic Moment[s]… discursive site[s] where processes that reproduce social inequality in human relations can be explored" (2008, n.p.). The ways in which students frame their ideas of and about knowledge production and valuation, as well as multicultural education, are directly related not only to their ideas about their own—and others'—identity, culture, and cross-cultural situations, but also the larger discourses surrounding these issues. This comment also foreshadows the feelings of resistance to multiculturalism and diversity espoused by teacher candidates in this specific project.

In the classroom as space, how we craft arguments, the ways in which we look at or assess situations, is greatly influenced by our experiences. This is vitally important when thinking about the layered nature of teacher education wherein teacher educators are not only conveying content area materials, but also modeling pedagogy, both of which may be taken in by the student and then later modeled in their own practice. This is reminiscent of Shulman's (1986) pedagogical content knowledge, wherein preservice

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[2] The terms 'preservice teacher,' 'teacher candidate,' 'teacher preparation student,' and 'education major' are used interchangeably. Typically, preservice teachers and teacher candidates have completed a portion of their internship or student teaching.

teachers are learning not only content, but effective strategies to convey that content to future students.

In the mind of Bryant Keith Alexander (Alexander et al., 2005), cultural studies scholar, "the classroom is a cultural site and consequently, a contested terrain of social negotiation" (p. 41). Similarly, this takes on that extra layer, wherein the students are effectively in a middle position. The behaviors modeled to them will be passed along to their own students as they enter the professional world. As the comment above highlights, attitudes about knowledge production and validity (as well as its implications in multicultural education), and its implementation in courses suggested to, or frequented by education majors at UAF, raise difficult questions. These questions are both constructed, and also performed inside and outside of the classroom.

I would argue that the framing of multicultural endeavors, as invalid, trivial, bothersome, excrement—in this specific case, or anything other than part of educational thought is akin to what Joyce E. King (1991) terms "dysconscious racism." As King states in reference to classroom situations, "dysconscious racism is a form of racism that tacitly accepts dominant White norms and privileges," further, it is "...an uncritical habit of mind" (1991, p. 135). In invalidating this literary experience, by refusing to question a western master narrative, the student who made the opening comment not only creates an uncomfortable divide between researcher and participant, but also puts forth an idea which, if left in an unquestioned limbo or reiterated in classroom situations, has the power to gain additional ground in terms of becoming a part of the master narrative, or the story surrounding the nature of multicultural education at UAF and in Alaska.

While deconstructing Cindy's comment about the value of multiculturalism, and the attending discourses surrounding the nature of multicultural thought itself are perhaps a prudent exercise in drawing attention to examples of dysconscious racism, my purpose is not to solely focus on this singular event. Beginning with and highlighting this event as an incident, serves to call attention to what is potentially, a systemic stance-related issue, namely that reference to, disagreement with, or challenges to western discourse are trivialized and invalidated.

The second interaction was with Edwin, a White male in his early twenties is indicative of the lack of framework many students had for understanding culture. When I asked Edwin to define culture, he responded:

> I think that culture is something that, which grows out of a, which develops organically from a particular society's historical background and its circumstances, something that's dependent upon how the culture views itself and how it perceives outsiders to that society. Um, I think that the term culture is not necessarily… well, let me rephrase that. I think… it's a hard question.

Edwin is right; it is a hard question. Unlike Cindy's response, his response shows no dysconciousness, but rather a lack of understanding. However, as I will further detail in the coming chapters, the idea of UAF students, and specifically those involved in education programs having a certain amount of cultural competency is something that the University prides itself upon, aside from being necessary for their chosen profession.

By analyzing the talk that occurred both in and outside of the class itself, and in the interviews I conducted with my classmates, student ideas about culture, cross-culture,

and difference will play out in conversational or narrative ways. This will provide insight into what appears to be a pervasive issue.

What follows are my specific research questions. I will then move into a further contextualizing and framing of the project, before presenting an overview of the project in its entirety.

Research Questions

The specific phenomenon I want to address is the nature in which a small number of undergraduate students, predominately education majors, at UAF describe and evaluate culture, cross-culture, and cultural difference; and the ways in which those ideas, descriptions and evaluations form frameworks for understanding that are then performed and reiterated in several settings. This divides into two specific questions:

1. How do students form frameworks for describing cultural difference? I am particularly interested in how their assumptions about culture are demonstrated and how and in what ways these demonstrations are addressed both inside of and outside of the university classroom.
2. What influences and informs these frameworks? How are the ideas of culture and cultural difference being constructed by elementary education students in these specific classes at University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Education?

Departmental Considerations at UAF

Taking into account the above, for this project, I enrolled in two courses. One offered by the English department, a popular elective course for those in the School of

Education's teacher preparation program; and one course offered by the School of Education (SOE) itself, a required course with a multicultural focus. I chose both courses, which as I will further detail in Chapters 4-6 had explicit cultural focuses, because I wanted to provide a detailed snapshot. What types of tools do the teacher preparation students have for understanding culture and cultural difference?

Although students did share feelings about their academic program, and the involved faculty naturally came forth through the interview discussions, those commentaries are not a focus for this project. My purpose here is not to be critical of the English department or the UAF SOE teacher preparation program nor those who teach in and administer them. Rather, I want to focus on the pre-service teachers whom I interviewed and their ideas about culture.

Below is the text of the SOE Mission statement. More than a backdrop for the project, the mission statement works to provide a framework and underpinning for all coursework within the School:

> Our mission is to prepare professional educators who are culturally responsive, effective practitioners, as described in the state Standards and the candidate proficiencies identified in the UAF School of Education Conceptual Framework. The UAF School of Education recognizes that schooling in Alaska has unique characteristics. We prepare educators to work in urban and rural Alaska and to work with K-12 students from many backgrounds, with a particular focus on Alaska Native languages and cultures. (University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Education, 2009a, p. 1)

A shorter version is also prevalent on printed documents and the website, "Preparing professional educators who are culturally responsive effective practitioners," (University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Education, 2009a, p.1).

The term 'cultural responsiveness,' as well as an understanding of culture and cultural difference, have long been a part of the official and unofficial mission statements, and are therefore publicly set out as a priority for the School of Education[3]. A detailed look at the history of the School of Education will be provided in the next chapter. This research will also shed light on how these objectives are making their way through the program and affecting student behavior within the confines of this specific and situated project. If cross-cultural competence is foundational to the program itself, is it evident from talking to students?

Interdisciplinary Approach

There are likely a multitude of things operating when asking how students describe and use frameworks for understanding culture. By taking a broad and interdisciplinary approach, using sociological, anthropological, and pedagogical/educational frames of reference, my hope is to gain insight by highlighting theoretical convergences and divergences. As I will further detail in Chapter Four, a large portion of the research participants are White. Due to that factor, this project could easily be oversimplified into being singularly about race and/or whiteness, and using only those discourses. However, generally speaking, people do not think about or experience their

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[3] For a copy of the current mission statement and conceptual framework, [Brochure] please see Appendix B.

world purely in terms of a singular discipline, so for me to utilize one specific framework would be to simplify the phenomena in question.

Positionality

Interdisciplinarity lends itself well to researchers working from multiple positions. During this project, I have worn multiple hats within the SOE. I have had the formal roles of graduate student, research assistant, staff member, and adjunct faculty, and the informal roles of peer, friend, tutor, and intermediary. Each of these roles requires specific filters and lenses, and it has been, at times, a struggle to juggle them all in terms of my relationships and responsibilities for each.

As I mentioned briefly in the first part of this chapter, prior to coming to Fairbanks, and to UAF, I was an elementary school teacher in a village in rural Alaska. Before that, I completed a teacher preparation program at Washington State University Tri-Cities (henceforth WSU T-C) that focused heavily on issues of equity and diversity. As a part of the research process I have looked back at my classwork from that time, to how I was writing about culture and cultural diversity as a pre-service teacher. In a class specifically focused on Multicultural Education, I wrote the following in response to an assignment creating a diversity plan for a local school district:

> It is my very strong personal belief that every single person is special and has something to teach me. I try to convey this to the teachers as much as possible. I also believe that as educators, we must always look beyond factors like race, income level, religious beliefs, and gender when we are looking at anyone, especially children. However, it is important that we know how those factors

> influence behavior and learning. I believe that knowledge is key and ignorance breed hate and indifference, two things that we cannot have in our school culture...First and foremost, teachers must be willing to identify and combat their personal biases. (Montague-Winebarger, 2006)

The above still holds true, although my views have changed, deepening with experience, both in the classroom, and also the type of experience that comes with extended study. However, as is evident in the above passage, the ways I think about teaching, and therefore, the ways I think about teacher preparation, are tied to diversity.

The teacher preparation program I completed was different from that which is offered at UAF, both in terms of structure and stance. This difference, mostly in how methods courses are delivered and the organization of student teaching. At WSU T-C, methods courses are all semester-based, meet twice weekly, and must be completed before beginning the student teaching semester. Methods courses require focused practicum hours that must be completed before the final semester of full-time student teaching, which includes a minimum of six weeks of full-time solo classroom teaching. At UAF SOE, the program included a year-long internship with methods courses offered concurrently, and for only parts of the semester. SOE students spend the majority of their day with their mentor teacher, only leaving the school and classroom for their University classes. Students solo teach for three weeks the second semester. Insofar as stance, while UAF SOE has a cross-cultural focus, WSU T-C has a multi-cultural focus, specifically requiring English as a Second Language coursework, and extensive training in early and continued literacy.

My home frame of reference and lens will likely always be rooted firmly in education, my position likely tied to a teacher identity. However, as critical scholars Joe Kincheloe and Shirley Steinberg (1998) observe, "individuals cannot separate where they stand in the web of reality from what they perceive" (p. 3). My web, in this instance is the School of Education at UAF, and my perception of reality within which has much to do with where the above-mentioned roles and my own experience in teacher preparation have positioned me.

Overview of Research Methods and Population

This project is comprised of a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews inspired by Archibald (2008) as well as autoethnographic fieldnotes and journaling inspired by Chang (2008) to create a snapshot of undergraduate descriptions of culture and cross-culture. Utilizing a critical stance in any type of ethnographic work, as Castagno (2012) writes requires researchers to "explicitly describe our own biases, assumptions, and theoretical backgrounds" (p. 371). The use of autoethnographic methods helps to clarify and provide space for this type of self-explication. As I will further discuss in detail in the methods chapter, evocative ethnography, specifically the groundwork provided by Ellis and Bochner (2000) provides a frame for including highly personal and emotional reflections within the narrative structure of academic writing.

The specific populations for this project come from two 300-level[4] undergraduate courses offered at UAF, the first of which is an English class: Traditional Oral Narratives of Alaska Native People, and the second of which is an Elementary Education course:

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[4] 300-level courses are generally for students with junior level standing or above.

Communication in Cross-Cultural Classrooms. Both courses had a strong and explicit cultural focus, engaging students in discourse surrounding cultural difference. However, each course had a separate topic, theme, and goal. The English class, while not a course offered by the School of Education, is a popular elective for both elementary and secondary education students. The Communication in Cross-Cultural Classrooms course fulfills a multicultural requirement[5] for those seeking teacher certification from the state of Alaska, as well as meeting degree requirements from SOE.

Open-ended and conversational interviewing provided space for participants to speak freely, and to interrogate their own thinking. Autoethnographic fieldnotes and journaling allowed myself as a researcher, to become a participant-observer. With the consent of both instructors, I enrolled in and participated fully in both courses. This allowed me to not only develop relationships with the participants, but also to have a similar classroom experience to them, enriching the research experience overall. By adding in autoethnographic work, in the form of narrative (set aside in italics) a space is created to provide a snapshot of my experience as well, which parallels that of the participants. Due to both my own methodological leanings as well as my emotional and physical proximity to the research participants, I rely heavily on Indigenous research methodologies, particularly, as they are set aside by Wilson (2009), as a sense of relationality he argues, is at the center of an Indigenous paradigm.

I have intentionally kept the two classes separate in this dissertation. In this way, the two courses, my experiences within them, as well as the data collected during the

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[5] Students may also take Native Ways of Knowing, or Alaska Native Education.

interviews can be viewed as individual case studies and a simplified version of Stake's (2005) cross-case analysis is possible. I will detail this further in the methods chapter.

Overview of Chapters Two through Seven

Chapter Two provides contextual and historical information about the state of Alaska, the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and the School of Education within the University itself.

Chapter Three includes a literature review focused on five major themes including questioning the relevance of culture; stories and narrative as a filter for experience; the conflation of race, ethnicity, and culture in identity; diversity and problems surrounding cultural responsiveness; and multicultural education and whiteness. I also provide a detailed explanation of my conceptual framework which is firmly rooted in critical theory, and borrows heavily from Critical Multiculturalism (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1998), and Critical Indigenous theory (Smith, 2006).

Chapter Four includes a detailed description of the critical methodological underpinnings of this study, beginning with the importance of sovereignty in academic thought. From there, I outline the philosophical values that serve as guides through this project, including being honest, humble, rooted in a critical heart, closely situated, reflexive, and consciously partial. Also included in this chapter are description of the research population, selection criteria for participation, the research setting, descriptions of research methods, and plan for data analysis.

Chapter Five is the first data analysis chapter and centers around the first group of research participants, those enrolled in Narrative Art of Alaska Native Peoples. In this chapter, I focus on several excerpts from the group of interviews I conducted while weaving the autoethnographic data through the chapter to provide a richer contextual backdrop for the interview data.

Chapter Six is the second data analysis chapter and is focused on the second group of research participants, those enrolled in Communication in Cross-Cultural Classrooms. Chapter Six follows a similar format to Chapter Five although the interviews from this group of research participants were qualitatively different from the previous group.

Chapter Seven is the conclusive chapter and offers suggestions for moving forward in terms of research and programming at UAF SOE. The idea of story-based pedagogy is discussed, as is the need to move toward anti-racist pedagogy (Lee, 2009).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I began with the idea of problematic moments, unquestioned habits of mind, and the role they play in students' understandings of culture and cultural differences. The opening quote foreshadows the overall findings of the project, a resistance to multiculturalism and diversity, and threads of what King (1991) labels dysconscious racism.

I stated my research questions which focus heavily on culture. Specifically they try to illuminate how undergraduate education majors describe frameworks for understanding culture and cross-culture, and how those frameworks are developed and

strengthened. I also provided a backdrop for the School of Education by including the School's mission statement.

I also offered a preliminary charting of the interdisciplinary nature of this project, as well as my multiple positions within the SOE, and the project itself, providing a foreground for the research population and research methods employed. As researcher, I employ the use of semi-structured interviewing and autoethnographic fieldwork to provide a snapshot of how UAF SOE students describe culture and cultural difference, and also include my experiences as a participant-observer.

In the next chapter, I will provide historical and contextual information about the state of Alaska, the University of Alaska Fairbanks, as well as the evolution of the School of Education.

Chapter Two History and Context

Introduction

The evolution of the School of Education (SOE) at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) reflects the relatively recent history of the state of Alaska. From the introduction of 'formal' schooling brought about by missionary influences in the 1800s, to educational policy and laws enacted in the recent past, many influences from outside the state have shaped the ways that Alaskan residents experience and think about schooling. The stereotypical binary of White and Alaska Native in terms of racially derived cultural categories adds to the social, economic and historical factors. This then plays into what I consider the "Alaska Master Narrative[6]," a set of stories, expectations, and colonial/frontier imagery which combines the above aspects in a way that makes for easy consumption of the state, its people, and history.

This chapter will provide a brief overview of the history of the state, as well as significant educational milestones for Alaskan residents. After building historical context, I will provide an overview of accreditation reports prepared for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education[7] (NCATE) which show the evolution of UAF SOE, in its own words, as a leader in terms of education in a cultural context. Next, I will provide information about the current programs offered by SOE, specifically focusing on the undergraduate Elementary Teacher Certification program. This includes required

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[6] I borrow the term 'master narrative' from Lyotard (1979), as a way to signal both the uniqueness and ubiquity of Alaska as a set of collected stories and ideals in the collective consciousness.
[7] NCATE is a national standards-based accreditation entity. More information can be found at http://www.ncate.org/.

courses, evaluation and assessments used for teacher candidates, and will further focus in on the evaluation of cultural competency. The intention of this chapter is to locate UAF SOE in a specific regional, geographic, and political climate; to provide a richer backdrop for the interviews and narrative to come.

Alaska, an Overview

In providing a historical overview of the state, I will detail significant events that relate to the SOE's emphasis on education based in the Alaskan context. However, by no means will this be a comprehensive look at the development of the state.

Alaska is the largest state of the fifty United States. As of 2010, the population of the state of Alaska was 710,231, with around 232,000 living in rural areas, and 478,000 living in urban areas (USDA, 2012). Although the majority of the population lives in the urban centers of Anchorage, the Mat-Su Valley, and the Fairbanks/North Pole areas, these locations make up just a small percentage of the overall area of the state (USDA, 2012).

The urban and rural[8] divide is an important factor in Alaska, with much of the state accessible only by aircraft, boat, or snowmachine. Significant in this geographic divide are cultural divides as well. Typically, the state is split into six geographic regions (southeast, southcentral, interior, southwestern, western, and arctic) roughly splitting the Indigenous cultural groups as well (Eyak, Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian; Aleut and Alutiiq; Athabascan; Yup'ik and Cup'ik; Inupiaq and St. Lawrence Island Yup'ik), those

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[8] Rural Alaska, especially the part inaccessible by road, is often referred to colloquially as the "bush."

cultural groups then split further into four distinct language families, and at least twenty languages within the state (Holton, 2012).

Colonization, Cultural Divides, and Early Schooling

Pre-contact, before the 1741 arrival of Vitus Bering, between 60-80,000 people lived in the geographic area now set aside as the state. This began to change with colonization of the area, and the first White settlement was established in 1784 on Kodiak Island. Missionary schools have largely influenced the shaping of the educational system of the state as it is today.

Father John Veniaminov, a Russian Orthodox priest was one of the first outsiders to the state concerned with education. Veniaminov first worked with the Aleut people of Unalaska, before moving to Sitka and working with Tlingit children. According to educator, poet and Tlingit scholar Richard Dauenhauer (1980), Veniaminov, as part of the Russian Orthodox Church placed a "tremendous value…on education and native language literacy in the Russian Orthodox missionary effort" (p. 6). For the Russian Orthodox Church, the first missionary influence in the region, bilingual education was necessary for conversion, and as Dauenhauer points out, "the Orthodox tradition maintains great respect for the language and culture of the individual" (p. 8). Once the Church arrived in Unalaska, some of the first tasks were to gain an understanding of the language in order to provide translations of scripture and liturgy. These actions signal the beginnings of the first bilingual schools in Alaska (Dauenhauer, 1980).

By 1876, the Swedish Evangelical, Moravian, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Congregational, and Roman Catholic churches had all established mission schools. The Russians sold Alaska to the United States in 1867, and by 1894 the mission schools were no longer being subsidized by the government. With the appointment of Sheldon Jackson as Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1885 things began to change (Dauenhauer, 1980). According to Dauenhauer, Jackson had several goals including "to convert and educate Natives, but at the same time protect his school graduates from exploitation by merchants and other members of the white society" (p. 12). Jackson, a Presbyterian missionary, approached education and spiritual conversion from a vastly different standpoint than the Russian Orthodox missionaries. As Dauenhauer (1980) writes, the most singularly important part of Jackson's philosophy was that "only through massive acculturation could the Natives be Christianized and therefore spared the military havoc of Native Americans in the lower 48 states" (p. 13). Jackson's vision, along with the Presbyterian missionaries, was in direct conflict with the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as the Moravian, Catholic, and Episcopal churches that were establishing footholds throughout the state. It was in this way that "Alaska became a battleground between these conflicting visions of education" (Dauenhauer, 1980, p. 16).

Jackson made many decisions while at the helm of Alaska's schools, as outlined by Dauenhauer, including "requiring parents to sign papers giving their children over to the school for a period of five years," the "concept and policies of English-only curriculum, with active suppression of Alaska Native language and culture," and, after succumbing to pressure from Whites in the area, he began segregated schooling in Alaska

including the "parallel school systems that exist to the present day" (Dauenhauer, 1980, pp.17-18)[9].

A missionary in Southeast Alaska, Livingston Jones, provides another view on language policy that was prevalent during this time. In 1914 he writes "the Tlingit language is doomed to speedy extinction, the sooner the better, for the natives. There is little in their language to merit perpetuation" (Dauenhauer, 1980, p. 21). Jones provides further rationalization of his views in the following points:

1) The Natives are shut up in [stuck inside] their own language without access to literature.
2) The Native language is useless for communication with Whites.
3) Tlingit is inadequate for widening intellectual horizons.
4) With English, the Indians will get away from old, degrading customs.

Dauenhauer offers the startling commentary, "opinions of Jones are worth including here because they are not as dated as one might think," he continues:

> Such were the attitudes faced by Alaska Native students in American classrooms at the turn of the century; such attitudes are still alive and well in many

[9] In 1980, when this piece was written, two entities; the state of Alaska, and the federal government controlled Alaska schools. The passing of the Nelson Act in 1905 allowed for local control of schools serving predominately White children, while schools serving Alaska Native students were controlled by the federal government. Eventually control of schools serving Alaska Native students was transferred to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. With the Johnson O'Malley Act, schools began to be transferred from BIA control to territorial control, although this was a slow process. In 1976 Rural Education Attendance Areas were created in rural Alaska to establish local school boards, which act like larger districts in the states more populated areas. See Getches 1977, Dauenhauer 1980.

> classrooms today. This conflict is as alive in the 1980's as it was in the 1880's." (1980, pp. 21-22)

Dauenhauer continues, "I believe the conflicting visions of the 1870's and 1880's are still in conflict. This conflict remains an open sore in Alaskan education of the 1970's and 1980's" (1980, p. 28). Over thirty years later the conflicts remain. English-only education, still in fashion and a political hot-button issue, coupled with decades of deficit model research 'on' Alaska Natives and schooling has done little in the way of changing those damaging viewpoints. While many Alaska Natives have pursued and attained teaching credentials, as well as administrative credentials, the educational workforce in the state remains largely White, perpetuating a power differential in terms of educational decision making that does little to move away from the colonizing us vs. them mentality associated with the Alaska Master Narrative.

Population and Policy Shift

A gold rush in 1897, and then again in 1900, brought a new boom of people to the state, outside of the existing towns and settlements. As Schneider (2011) writes, "that Westward expansion set in ever increasing pace the legal, social, and intellectual terms for a 'voice at the table,' a chance to create opportunities and even define one's history" (p. 1). Contrary to the idea of increased opportunity, as more and more Westerners arrived in the state, the effects of colonialism in terms of the legal, and educational systems had overarching effects on Alaska's population, Indigenous and otherwise.

Between 1917 and 1919 federal boarding schools were first established in Alaska. At this time, some schools were still operated by church missionary groups as "contract" schools (Barnhardt, 1985). Few rural sites had schooling for children outside of the primary grades, and some sites had no schools at all. Alaska became a state in 1959, and then in 1963 the State and the Bureau of Indian Affairs came together to develop "An Overall Education Plan for Rural Alaska" (www.alaskool.org, 2004).

At this time, the state, in conjunction with UAF, also began providing regional workshops for teachers in rural areas, those teaching at the over 50 BIA operated day schools, and focusing on teaching students whose primary language was not English.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), which was signed into law in 1971, divided the state up in several ways and signaled a sea change in terms of organization and self-determination for Alaska Natives. Seeking to provide an answer to the issue of land, mineral, and oil/gas rights, ANCSA[10] set aside twelve Alaska Native regional corporations, and paid those corporations 962.5 million dollars, for the surrender of property rights outside of specified boundaries totaling about 1/9 of the state's total land area. Part of ANCSA was also the reification of 'Alaska Native' as a legislated identity. With the creation of corporations came the need for shareholders, and shareholders had to prove their Alaska Native identity through blood quantum.

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[10] For a detailed description of ANCSA, please see the UAA Justice Center http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/rlinks/natives/ak_natives_ancsa.html

In 1976 a watershed moment occurred for students in rural Alaska when the "Molly Hootch[11]" case was settled in state Superior Court. This legal battle provided local high schools to be built in predominately Alaska Native rural areas, where students had previously had to leave their communities to attend boarding schools in other parts of the state, or even in the lower 48 if they wanted to pursue a high school education. While this settlement marked a step away from the damaging and colonizing efforts of boarding schools, often local control of the new schools was not in place, and as it continues today, educational decision making was and is largely done by community outsiders in far-removed central offices, and by a teaching force sometimes unfamiliar with the histories, cultures, languages, and the political and physical geography of the state.

Creating the Frontier

Alaska has largely been seen by outsiders as an extension of the U.S. western frontier. It has taken its place as the "last frontier" as evidenced in the design of the state license plates, and in numerous names of parks, hotels, and other public and semi-public spaces. Starting with the early work of nature writers such as John Muir, who described Alaska as the "new world's new world" (Kollins, 2001, p. 29), several things have helped to shape the state in the minds of both its residents, as well as outsiders. As Kollins details, often nature writers work to first empty, and then "fill the landscape" as they see fit (2001, p. 29).

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[11] The Tobeluk v. Lind ruling (referred to commonly as the Molly Hootch case) can be accessed through http://www.alaskool.org/native_ed/law/tobeluk.html

For tourists, an image is constructed and being sold to those seeking entertainment, lodging, or sustenance, from places such as "Pioneer Park," "The Hotel Captain Cook," "Frontier Lodge Motel," "Sourdough Sam's," and the descriptive "Alaskan Frontier Gardens Bed and Breakfast" among others. Along with constant references to its frontier nature, references to its natural rugged setting, mining past, influx of national and international persons, and Alaska Native heritages are common.

Fairbanks itself has a long history as a frontier town (especially when contrasted with the larger and more cosmopolitan Anchorage), both in terms of infrastructure developments, and in terms of it being a place where diverse cultures; where material and other effects play against and with each other in a multitude of ways. Business interests in the forms of mining, tourism, government, Native corporations and the military compete for resource use, and tensions exist between those interests and environmental and conservation-oriented entities. Tensions also exist culturally between Alaska Native groups, long-time non-Native residents, and the constant stream of newcomers from the lower 48, as well as internationally. Current and widely publicized examples can be found in the quest for mining permits and rights for the Pebble Project, a large-scale copper and gold mine set to be created in the Bristol Bay region, as well as oil and natural gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), and off the northern coast in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. Millions of dollars have been spent on media campaigns and scientific reports both for and against these efforts, with perhaps the farthest reaching and ubiquitous slogan "drill, baby, drill" popularized by former state Governor and Republican vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin.

Subsistence plays a role in the lives of Alaska Natives as well as non-Natives, and ranges from traditional activities such as fishing, hunting and berry picking, to forms of extremist neo-survivalism. Subsistence activities are also viewed and interpreted in vastly different ways, ranging from 'a fun thing to do on the weekends,' to 'a physically and spiritually integral part of daily living,' and everything in between.

The above-mentioned economic and social differences are often layered, multi-faceted, and readily distinguishable in everyday talk in greater Fairbanks, and at UAF specifically. Differences may be even more palpable when thinking about the number of students attending UAF via distance from communities around the state, as well as nationally. Remnants of colonial thinking, and the effect of that thinking on public policy, specifically educational and other social policies, reflect these tensions. Then in turn, these tensions work to strengthen already existing the quasi-artificial racial/cultural/political binary categories of White and Alaska Native, further reinforcing the Alaska Master Narrative.

Continuing to narrow my focus, I will now provide background information about UAF as an institution, as well as the School of Education, its history and how it has been portrayed through several examples of scholarly work, and institutional reports.

UAF as an Institution

UAF is perched atop a ridge to the northwest of Fairbanks, looking out across the Tanana Valley, the braided Chena River, and South to the Alaska Range and Denali (Mt. McKinley.) The land, historically referred to as Troth Yeddha' by the Lower Tanana Athabascans, refers to not only the typography of the place, but also what was typically

found here, wild potatoes (Holton, 2012). Preserving both the original name as well as the place is important to the Lower Tanana Athabascans, as the place itself was and remains culturally important.

UAF began as an agricultural and mining college, and actually took over the area where a federal agricultural experiment station was in place. With the beginning of World War II, and national interest in polar studies and communications, the Geophysical Institute was opened in 1946. During the 1950s, the University played a large role in Alaska statehood, and then during the 1960s research at UAF quickly expanded. Between 1960 and 1970, the state legislature created the Institute of Marine Science, Institute of Arctic Biology, and began operating the Poker Flat Research Range, the "only university –owned rocket range in the world" (King, 2011, p. 3). In 1970, the University was also made a Federal Sea Grant institution.

Viewpoints on the UAF School of Education

Historical Overview

Culture and cultural awareness as it pertains to the Alaskan context has been a large part of the SOE[12] for many years. Work by many current and previous faculty members has been instrumental in the development of the School of Education. In this section, I hope to provide some historical context of this development through the reviewing of SOE projects, institutional reports, as well as published scholarly work. However, this is much more easily said than done. As with any institution, written

[12] The School of Education has at times been a department within other colleges and schools. I will note these 'housing changes,' but refer to SOE as an entity as 'SOE.'

documentation tells only a portion of the story. The SOE has not existed in a vacuum since it awarded its first degree in 1937 (SOE, 2004), and has not become what it is today without a bit of controversy. For this reason, and to stay within the constraints of this specific project, I am relying on how the SOE writes and talks about itself, and how faculty have written about their time here, specifically since the early 1970s.

In 2010, Ray Barnhardt created a dual timeline "Rural/Native Education Milestone Events in Alaska, 1970-2010" detailing the history of the School of Education as well as social and political factors outside of UAF. The next section draws heavily from that timeline. According to Barnhardt (2010), as well as the NCATE 2004 report prepared by the SOE, the current focus toward rural and Alaska Native education began in 1970 (little information exists about the nature of teacher training before this time) with the grant project Alaska Rural Teacher Training Corp (ARTTC). ARTTC was an experimental program in field-based education to train Alaska Native elementary teachers. From ARTTC, the Cross-Cultural Education (X-CED) program began in 1974 carrying on and expanding upon the same work. In 1975, the University of Alaska adopted a statewide model wherein UAF was to focus on rural, cross-cultural, and distance education; University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) would focus on special and adult education, while University of Alaska Juneau (UAJ, which later becomes University of Alaska Southeast –UAS) focuses on early childhood education and educational administration (Barnhardt, 2010). Since the seventies, UAF has staked a large part of its identity in Alaskan culture, Alaska Native languages, and relationships with rural Alaska and rural Alaskans.

In 1976, the 'School of Education' was formed at UAF for on-campus programs which operated separately from X-CED. In 1980, three Major Administrative Units (MAUs) were formed by University of Alaska, formally separating UAF, UAA, and UAJ. During this time period, rural education was housed in the Community College and Rural Education Extension (CCREE), which already existed as an independent MAU. In 1982, the College of Human and Rural Development (CHRD) was formed, which then included the 'Department of Education.' In 1988, the College of Rural Alaska (CRA) was established, subsuming CHRD as well as the four rural campuses (Chukchi, Kuskokwim, Bristol Bay, and Northwest), (Barnhardt, 2010).

1989 brought about the SOE's first round of successful NCATE accreditation, which I will further detail in the next section. In 1992 the 'Department of Education' moved from the College of Rural Alaska (CRA) to the College of Liberal Arts (CLA), and became, formally, the School of Education, as it is known today. The early 1990s also brought about plans for a joint UAF/University of British Columbia (UBC) International Center for Indigenous Education, although they were not approved (Barnhart, 2010).

In 1995, keeping with the theme of rural and Alaska Native teacher preparation, the Rural Educator Preparation Partnership (REPP) formed in hopes of providing support for a largely rural Alaska Native population of potential teachers, as well as the Alaska Native Knowledge Network (ANKN), a clearing house of information, lesson plans, papers, and master's theses and projects. ANKN was part of a larger effort of the Alaska

Rural Systemic Initiative (AKRSI). At this time, the University imposed severe budget restrictions.

In 1997, another round of cross- MAU collaboration shifted and reified the focuses of the three campuses. This time, UAA would take the lead on Special Education and Educational Leadership; UAF would stay focused on Rural/ Alaska Native education, and UAS on Early Childhood Education and Technology Education. During this time, UAF lost its NCATE accreditation and reverted to state accreditation through the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) [13]. This loss caused the SOE to be portrayed negatively in the local media, and also caused the four-year teaching degree and certification programs to be abandoned in favor of a five year, post-baccalaureate program. In 1998, SOE moved temporarily from CLA to the Graduate School.

In 2000, SOE moved out from under the Graduate School to become a stand-alone unit, and by 2004 the School had regained its NCATE accreditation. In 2008, SOE initiated the Alaska Native Teacher Preparation Project, which provided financial support and cultural mentoring for Alaska Native and American Indians involved in the teacher preparation program, and in 2010 NCATE accreditation was renewed for the SOE. It is also worth mentioning that during this long and somewhat transient history of the SOE, various faculty have been stationed at the aforementioned rural campuses, although due to several factors, including what has been explained to me as difficulty finding qualified

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[13] Whether the School of Education lost its accreditation through NCATE, or was put on a plan of improvement is not clear. In using this terminology, I am echoing Barnhardt, 2010.

faculty to serve at the far-removed campuses, budgetary restrictions, lack of interest by rural students, and the development of better distance education infrastructure, this is no longer the case. The SOE now actively seeks to serve the needs of rural students through a large offering of courses via distance-delivery, i.e. audio and video conferencing and a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous technologies and modalities.

The above information provides a rather limited view of SOE, and certainly little in the way of how the structural changes, initiatives and projects affected staff, faculty, and students. In the next section I will focus on how faculty have written about SOE in difficult times, and then move on to the institutional reports, which emphasize the best of what SOE has accomplished.

Perspectives on Controversy

Several sources may be looked to for self-described perspectives on stance or foundations at the School of Education, in addition to the mission statement, goals and conceptual framework that I will cover in the next section. Lisa Delpit (1995) provides what may be viewed as an historical perspective of faculty, and possibly of stance, in the beginning pages of *Other People's Children*. She details her time at UAF in the mid-to-late 1980s in a chapter titled "Controversies revisited." In this chapter, Delpit notes two types of faculty in the UAF SOE, the first of which are the "conservative traditionalists" who were "often most critical of students who were not part of the mainstream, and they frequently questioned these students' capacity to become teachers" (p. 5). The second type of faculty, the "anthropologically oriented liberals... identified strongly with the

Native Alaskan students, saw their role as creating more opportunities for Native Alaskans to become certified and teach in their own village communities" (pp. 5-6).

Not ten years after Delpit made these observations, the University was embroiled in a scandal, a 'grading controversy' regarding perceived grading differences between Native and non-Native students, brought about by a School of Education faculty member, publicly indicating University pressure to 'pass' (read graduate) Alaska Native students. This incident was especially problematic for the School of Education as the discussion had started with the faculty member being invited to discuss alternative methods for teacher certification, and especially hurtful for Alaska Native students on campus and graduates, as it publicly called into question the validity of their degrees.

Perry Gilmore and David Smith, both faculty at UAF during this time, as well as Larry Kairaiuak who was then a graduate student, detail the tensions throughout the community, and the way the "incident itself functioned to maintain hegemonic practices at the university and to obscure the demonstrated and increasing successes of the Alaska Native student population" (1997, pp. 91-92). Although Delpit, Gilmore, Smith, and Kairaiuak made these observations in the 1980s and 90s, those that lived through the 'grading controversy' are still present at the University, and in the community at large; the incident and surrounding drama remain in the collective consciousness of the community.

In the twenty years since, much has changed. As I will detail in the next section the SOE has reified its commitment to cultural competency through both its mission statement, as well as the ways in which teacher candidates are evaluated.

Accreditation and the Development and Use of Standards

In the coming section, I will systematically go through each of the existing NCATE reports, starting with the first one, prepared in 1987. Much work goes into the preparation of each report, and preparing for the associated campus visits. Again, these reports offer a limited perspective, but do detail how the School of Education sees itself, and its strengths.

NCATE 1987

According to this report, during this time period, the SOE was housed in the College of Human and Rural Development (CHRD). As this was the first formal self-report for NCATE accreditation, it is rather minimal, however it does function as a starting place for how the SOE writes about itself, and sees its place within Alaska and UAF.

Prior to NCATE accreditation, "the elementary program [was] designed to meet the 1981 guidelines of the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC)" (UAF, 1987, p. 2). While being relatively comprehensive for the time before a standards-based approach to teacher evaluation became the norm, NASDTEC has no standards related to cultural competency or multicultural education, the focus of SOE at that time. In light of this and to reify the cultural goals of SOE as well as the mission of UAF as an institution;

> Two other self-imposed guidelines have been used in the development of the elementary education program. First, with passage in 1975 of Public Law 94-142, Education For All Handicapped Children's Act, most of the education courses

> were redesigned to include information and teaching techniques related to the exceptional child. Second, while we are indeed training elementary education teachers to teach anywhere, the mission of this College is to train teachers with a special emphasis for teaching in rural Alaska in cross-cultural settings. (UAF 1987, p. 2)

According to this report, programs offered during this time include a bachelor's degree in education, or a minor in education, sometimes referred to as a "teaching minor." Students interested in Secondary education could obtain a bachelor's of education with certification in social sciences, math/science, humanities, or get a bachelor's degree in their content area, with a minor in secondary education. Those interested in Music and Physical Education had the opportunity for K-12 licensure.

At this time, required classes with a cultural focus included:

- PSY 204 Developmental psychology in cross-cultural perspective
- ED 350 Communications in cross-cultural classrooms

Each Elementary Education student selected an area of concentration, either Humanities, Social Sciences, Math and/or Science, ESL/ Applied Linguistics, Alaska Native Languages/ Bilingual Endorsement, or Early Childhood Development.

Seemingly, during this time period, the SOE was offering many ways of tailoring the teaching degree to certain populations, specifically with the offering of "concentrations," an option which no longer exists. Also, by going above and beyond with the creation of self-standards, the School took steps to fill the role set out for them as the hub of all things cross-cultural in the state University system.

NCATE 1995-96

No reliable published or printed data is available from this time period, although it is pertinent to note that resulting from this report, NCATE accreditation was not renewed for the SOE. At this time, SOE reverted back to the NASDTEC accreditation, which had remained in place. The loss of the NCATE accreditation caused a large splash in the local media, and also caused recent graduates and employers to question the validity of their degrees and certification. Although this was an embarrassment to SOE, the integrity of degrees and certifications was never an issue, as the School remained accredited by NASDTEC, the state accrediting body. Much like the aforementioned 'grading controversy' this event also remains at the front of the community's collective consciousness, with the widely held misconception of the school completely losing its accreditation.

NCATE 2004

The Chair of Elementary Education, Carol Barnhardt, oversaw preparation for this round of accreditation. This included the development of a conceptual framework and changing of the mission statement (as expressed on the SOE NCATE website).
This round of preparation focused on setting UAF SOE apart, developing an "Alaska Context, " and highlighting Alaska as a land of "contrasts and extremes" (UAF SOE, 2004, p. 3). This report also highlights the "high percent and number of Alaska Native people" both within the state, and attending UAF (UAF SOE, 2004, p. 4).

Included in this report is information on the Alaskan K-12 educational context, including the 3 types of schools; urban; road system/ marine highway; and village and regional rural center. High school graduation rates are brought into play, as well as the shortage of qualified teaching staff, and remarks about high teacher turnover rates in rural Alaska. Also provided is an overview of the history of SOE, echoing that little to nothing concerning teaching in the cross-cultural context appears until 1970, with ARTTC.

At this time, both the elementary and secondary teacher preparation programs were being offered via distance delivery, as well as the M.Ed. programs. Requirements were the same for both on and off-campus students. This changed in 2003 as a result of the REPP (Rural Educator Preparation Partnership). Before 2003, course requirements were different for on and off campus programs, as the programs were thought of as being separate. As previously mentioned, REPP was developed with Alaska Native students in mind, but as the project grew, the rural focus was diminished, so the rural distance and face-to-face programs merged. REPP changed its focus back to Alaska Native students and moved away from directly administering distance education programs, but provided instead, support in terms of "financial aid, tutoring, travel funds, and recruitment efforts of middle and high school students" (UAF SOE, 2004, p. 9).

The distance education capacity of SOE was also highlighted in terms of technology, and audio and web-based instruction. Full time faculty at this time were still located throughout the state at the rural campuses. This was a time of many partnerships and collaboration across campuses, and also with the other institutions of higher education. State-sponsored development of the Alaska Quality Schools Initiative

occurred during this time period, in response to the Federal No Child Left Behind legislation, and UAF SOE attempted to partner closely with struggling schools throughout the state. Part of the relationships developed with Alaska school districts involved the beginning of the rural practicum, which had been in place for 3 years at the time of this report. This valuable experience entailed SOE teacher candidates traveling to rural sites within the state, and volunteering within the school for a week.

As highlighted in the report, during this time period, faculty research centered mainly on issues "related to Alaska and Alaska's unique challenges" (UAF SOE, 2004, p. 11). SOE faculty were serving as Primary Investigators for Math in a Cultural Context and the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative (in its ninth year at the time). Highlighting UAF SOEs contribution to the state, UAF is cast as the "leader in the state in the preparation of Alaska Native Educators" (UAF SOE, 2004, p. 12). In terms of solidifying the desired purpose and personality of SOE, this report is important because it reflects a perceived renaissance articulated in terms of faculty effort, funding opportunities, and student support.

Critical and integral to this report is the development and explication of SOE's Conceptual framework, within which "the faculty have put into writing many of the priorities, policies, practices, and philosophies that have guided our unit for the past 30 years" (UAF SOE, 2004, p. 13). This process, which is described as having taken three years to complete, includes assessment systems based on candidate proficiencies, is much more well-developed than the previous NASDTEC system, and includes a category for culturally responsive practice.

In terms of assessment, professors began evaluating students using culminating portfolios, Formative Observation Feedback Forms (FOFFs), and Professional Characteristics Feedback Forms (PCFFs). Current forms can be found in the Appendix C.

Required courses with a cultural focus included:

- ANTH 242: Native Cultures of Alaska
- HIST 461: History of Alaska **or** HIST 115: Alaska, Land and it's People
- ED 350: Communication in Cross-cultural Classrooms **or** ED 420: Alaska Native Education **or** ED 461: Native Ways of Knowing

Also available was a minor in General Education, which was offered in partnership with ETEP (Elementary Teacher Partnership Licensure Program). The required multi-cultural coursework included for this option was:

- ED 350: Communication in Cross-Cultural Classrooms **or** ED 420: Alaska Native Education

The abovementioned increases in student assessment were yet another step towards accountability for SOE. With the implementation of the FOFFs and PCFFs, professors, in theory, had real ways to characterize and critique student dispositions in terms of cultural competency aside from graded and written work.

NCATE 2009 & Current Programs

Much like the preceding report, included in this iteration are the historical and geographical contexts of the SOE. Much is the same in terms of the institution's characteristics, as well as the School of Education and its programs, although there was

an addition of an M. Ed. in special education. Distance learning plays a large part of how SOE administers coursework, and the standards are the same for both in-person and distance sections, with most courses being taught by the same faculty.

As of this report, the majority of the changes since 2004 had occurred in the graduate department. Due to factors such as low enrollment, and budget cuts within local and state school districts limiting the number of language-related specialists, the strands within the Language and Literacy M.Ed. option had been reduced, as the Bilingual/ Multicultural Education endorsement, World Language Education endorsement, and Native Language Education endorsements were no longer being offered. Community Counseling was added to the counseling strands of the M.Ed. program. The specialties of Elementary Education and Secondary Education had been added to the Curriculum and Instruction strand, as a way to tie certification and a master's degree together for the students in the post-baccalaureate program. As of 2009, SOE had suspended admission to the M.Ed. in reading, citing a lack of interest.

This round of NCATE reporting finds the conceptual framework largely the same, including a re-articulation of the mission statement, with SOE preparing "professional educators who are culturally responsive, effective practitioners" (UAF SOE, 2009, p. 8). Assessment strategies were still being modified at this time, with the SOE standards reflecting the Alaska state teacher standards, as well as the Alaska cultural standards. Also detailed in this report is the development of technology standards for teacher preparation students.

By the time of this report, it is apparent that standards have become a large part of how SOE think about teacher education. As the report states, "over the last six years, all programs have worked through a 'backwards mapping' system to develop a program assessment system..."(UAF SOE, 2009, p. 7). This marks the beginning of the transition system for the Elementary Education majors (three steps toward successful graduation: admissions, mid way, completion), which is in place today. An emphasis has been placed on performance-based assessments, including the use of analytic, task-specific rubrics. In terms of cultural awareness and competency, "candidate proficiencies related to diversity are embedded in our AK/UAF standards" (UAF SOE, 2009, p. 7). According to this report,

> The proficiencies relating to diversity are assessed in various ways in all of our programs. Individual programs have also developed program-level assessments of professional dispositions (referred to as Professional Characteristics Feedback Forms, or PCFFs) that assess professional dispositions, including assessment of professional characteristics aligned with the candidate proficiencies related to diversity. (UAF SOE, 2009, p. 8)

In addition to the above, specific attitudes are lined out insofar as student responses and attitudes toward culturally diverse learners,

> Our Conceptual Framework defines CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE [original emphasis] educators as those who have an understanding of and respect for the children, families, and communities they serve as professionals. They are educators who interact with their communities in ways that honor the cultural and

> linguistic heritages of the children they teach, and who are committed to the personal and academic success of the community's children. (UAF SOE, 2009, p. 8).

Both of the above passages clearly state what is expected of students who enroll in and complete the teacher certification in terms of cultural competency. It remains unclear, however, how professors use the PCFFs, as they are kept strictly confidential. In fact, students do not get to review the PCFFs at all, and departmental chairs are only alerted when they are consistently marked down in one or more area. Because of this secrecy, it is conceivable that students may make it through the program with borderline marks in cultural competency.

This NCATE report also provides a more in-depth perspective on the faculty philosophy that "emphasizes the theory and research bases of culturally-responsive and place-based education, in addition to the constructivist learning theories of Dewey, Vygotsky, etc." (UAF SOE, 2009, p. 9).

The above-mentioned POFFs, SOFFs, PCFFs, and transition evaluations all include criteria on cultural competency, although culture is often mentioned alongside language about respecting individual differences. Required coursework with an Alaska, cultural, or diversity focus for the Elementary program now includes:

- ANTH or SOC 100 Individual, Society and Culture
- ANTH 242 Native Cultures of Alaska
- HIST 461 History of Alaska **or** HIST 115 Alaska, Land and its People

- ED 350 Communication in Cross-Cultural Classrooms **or** ANS/ED 420 Alaska Native Education **or** ANS/ED 461 Native Ways of Knowing

According to the report, in addition to the above listed courses, and concurrent with the mission statement and conceptual framework, cultural competence is to be integrated into each SOE course. In what ways that integration actually happens is not clear. Professors are relatively free to interpret cultural competency as they see fit, as long as all assignments meet rubric guidelines. Because of this, some faculty and courses stress cultural competence far more than others, not to mention that courses taught outside the SOE may have no cultural requirements whatsoever.

Conclusion

The complex state and University history outlined above has a wide effect on SOE programs in terms of stance, curricula, reification of master narratives about education, as well as about the state and people of Alaska in general. The long process of finding grounding in rural and cross-cultural education has not been unproblematic for the SOE, and although processes are in place to evaluate and maintain cultural competency both within the frameworks of required courses, and in the ways that students themselves are evaluated, dilemmas remain. Can historical issues linking back to divisions set forth from before Alaska became a state still occasionally be felt as undercurrents, under-girding the rules of what we do and do not talk about? Not to be underestimated, the students within the SOE are also products of this unique environment, albeit some more than others. How and in what ways is the Alaska Master

Narrative as well as other master narratives affecting student descriptions and treatment of culture and cultural difference?

As the history of the SOE shows, many committed educators in Alaska, and at UAF specifically, have spent significant parts, or their entire careers, devoted to education within the Alaskan context, and more specifically cross-cultural and rural teaching with a goal of cultural sustainment rather than colonization. However, little attention has been placed on the day-to-day interactions across cultural borders within classes, and how students in the program talk about, as well as express their own cultural understandings. This project seeks to do just that.

Chapter Three Culture, Valuation, and Teacher Preparation

Introduction

In beginning, when thinking about a body of literature to review for this specific project, several things came to mind. The first was the need to limit the pool to something manageable, and the second was that the literature review continue to remain useful to the rest of the project: the interviews, the methods and methodology, and the analysis.

The body of literature surrounding teacher preparation, specifically the preparation of White teacher candidates, has been gaining ground since critical multiculturalist scholars Carl Grant and Christine Sleeter (1985) found that multicultural education is typically treated as a sub-theme, an extra to the curriculum, and not integrated into all curricular areas. However, Doris Walker-Dalhouse and Derick Dalhouse (2006) suggest, "there does not appear to be a consensus about how to prepare teachers to teach multicultural students" (p.71). Recently, Dana Gregory Rose and Ann D. Potts (2011) provided insight as to the complexity of "culture" and how teacher candidates respond to and resist diversity. Eloise Tan and Haidee Smith Lefebvre (2010) tighten the focus to how local narratives inform teacher candidates who are contemplating whiteness and diversity.

My intent here is not to produce an echo of previously written work, but to survey across disciplines (Whiteness Studies, Teacher Education, Anthropology, Communication, Sociology, and Interdisciplinary projects) within the framework of my research questions. My aim is to highlight the areas in which we think and talk about culture and cultural difference, and how those ways can link to, talk back to, and inform

another area, specifically teacher education. Multicultural education and whiteness are a natural starting place for this work, but I intend to expand upon that literature by initially focusing on the role of culture, how culture and race are socially tied together, and how culture fits into the whiteness discourse. Alice McIntyre (1997) suggests that we answer these questions by looking for the "cultural center of whiteness;" the place in western culture where ideas about whiteness are developed, reified, and performed (p. 30).

In examining the above, the following categories seemed most helpful in providing a physical place or location as well as intellectual space for this type of engagement: 1) Questioning the relevance of culture; 2) Stories and narrative as a filter for experience; 3) The conflation of race, ethnicity, and culture in identity; 4) Diversity and problems surrounding cultural responsiveness; and 5) Multicultural education and whiteness. I will discuss each in turn, followed by a comprehensive synthesis of the conceptual framework.

1) Questioning the Relevance of Culture

When we talk about U.S. American culture the first question that comes to mind is "which one?" The popular idea of American culture is tied (in my own White, 30 something, female mind) to the 50s, to mid-century American ideals cultivated in response to the Cold War; a social creation in response to perceived outside threats, ideas of wholesomeness, Christian values set aside from church, and a sort of exceptionalism that sets us apart from the 'other.' I recognize that this is a nostalgic view, albeit a seemingly mainstream one.

The ideas of American culture that come directly to mind have little to do with practical cultural ideals for present-day thinking, immigrants to the US, those who are pushed to the margins, and those who are third, fourth, or even fifth generation citizens. I imagine when considering the question of American culture in five or ten months, let alone years, my own answers would be different.

However, there are ideas, stories, beliefs, and aesthetic leanings that tie us together. I am not sure they are something to be labeled "culture" in a formal sense, as they are more political or nationalistic in nature. How are "American ideals" taken up in various subcultures, in group membership contexts? How do cultural stories play out across the country as well as in local contexts, or schools in this specific project?

Beginning with Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), many anthropologically inclined scholars have strived to come to a central definition of culture as a way to unite the discipline. While plenty of others have followed suit (i.e. Ortner, 1972; Clifford, 1988; Posner, 1989; Featherstone, 1990) into a tricky and amorphous place chasing an abstraction, I prefer to use the (re)frame provided by Borofsky, Barth, Shweder, Rodseth, and Stolzenberg (2001). These authors worry not about what culture means, or if culture is the central subject of anthropological pursuit, but rather, focus on the WHEN of culture, thinking about when it is appropriate to use culture and cultural study. What is useful for this project is thinking about the ways in which culture is used as a descriptor, a "conceptual tool," and framework for thinking about similarity and difference in social life.

Insofar as defining culture, I look toward existing definitions that have already been struggled through, established, and those that promise a certain amount of flexibility in moving forward. Rather than provide a "best definition" from existing works, I will provide several sample framings and the ways in which those framings may prove helpful for this project. Concerning culture, Goodenough (1970) states, "the expectations one has of one's fellows may be regarded as a set of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, communicating, and acting" (p. 99). These 'expectations' or 'standards' serve as cultural guideposts, a shared set of rules that Goodenough later relates to something akin to the shared understanding of the rules for games. If we look at Goodenough's standards, we see how they can be construed as socially constructed, lived, embodied, and performed.

This definition or framing, as shared understandings, works well when considering interactions within cultural groups. As culture-members we have expectations and can ascribe behavior outside of those guideposts as being different.

In terms of everyday life, Indigenous Hawaiian scholar Manu Meyer (2001) explains that Hawaiian ways of knowing are like the boat on the ocean of Hawaiian epistemology. Culture is the boat and epistemology is the ocean, culture is how we might navigate. She continues, "Culture shapes our view of the world, and thus how knowledge is experienced because how I enter the ocean is totally different from how you would" (p. 194). Culture is how we make sense of, navigate, and organize, but culture is also a filter for experience, acting as a framework for assessing value, truth, and what is 'real.'

However, in real-life situations, difference is not always thought of in terms of adherence to cultural rules. Anthropologist Renato Rosaldo echoes this by stating, "yet a classic concept of culture...grants little space to the mundane disturbances that so often erupt during border crossings" (p. 29). This discussion of border crossings gets at the idea of the exotic and the ordinary. Rosaldo (1989) writes that:

> By defining culture as a set of shared meanings, classic norms of analysis make it difficult to study zones of difference within and between cultures. From the classic perspective, cultural borderlands appear to be annoying exceptions rather than central areas for inquiry. (p. 28)

We see ourselves as ordinary, and the other (across borders of class, gender, race, normative behavior, etc.) as something exotic, not always exotic in an exciting or positive sense, sometimes with a air of disgust, or longing. Also problematic to this definition is the notion of being a member of multiple cultural groups, or sub-cultures. Again, Rosaldo (1994) brings up an interesting point with cultural relativism, "the idea of separate but equal cultures no longer seems accurate; they are not confined to their own individual museum case, they exist side by side in the same place" (p. 520).

Rosaldo furthers the discussion by bringing epistemology into the picture as the 'value judgment portion' of worldview. He writes, "Culture is laced with power and power is shaped by culture" (1994, p. 525). In this way, aspects of worldview: epistemology, ontology, and axiology, can be seen as culturally bound. Meyer (2001) suggests that epistemology is "everything" and advocates the use of epistemological study to "unearth hidden systems of power" (p. 193).

The importance of not only recognizing our own culturally bound epistemology, but also understanding epistemological differences and how those manifest in multiple ways, including valuation of knowledge, becomes important for this project. If we eschew the formality of rules and standards and think instead in terms of habits of knowing, being and doing, the framework for how we use culture as well as how we interpret cultural difference become easier to manage. Framing culture as habits of knowing, being, and doing is then akin to the idea of worldview.

The way that I am thinking with and using the term 'worldview' is in line with the definition put forth by Maori scholar, the Reverend Māori Marsden:

> Cultures pattern perceptions of reality into conceptualisations of what they perceive reality to be; of what is to be regarded as actual, probable, possible or impossible. These conceptualisations for what is termed the 'world view' of a culture. The World view is the central systematization of conceptions of reality to which members of its culture assent and from which stems their value systems. The world view lies at the very heart of the culture, touching, interacting with and strongly influencing every aspect of the culture. (Marsden and Henare, 1992, n.p.)

As Indigenous Māori scholar T. A. Charles Royal writes, "Worldviews are invisible sets of ideas about the world that lie deep within a culture, so deep that many, if not the majority of a culture will have difficulty describing them" (2002, p. 19). Also, the late Oscar Kawagley, a Yupiaq Indigenous educator adds that, "worldview enables its possessors to make sense of the world around them, make artefacts [sic] to fit their worlds, generate behavior, and interpret their experiences" (1995, p. 8).

Culture acts as a lens, shapes worldview, determines how we classify the world and the people in it, and rules for living. The simplest definition of culture tends to work the best. Culture as a colonial project is something that we ascribe to the other, not something that is self identified or labeled. As Borofsky et al. (2001), suggest "with different people using the term in a host of different ways that may or may not overlap, we might reasonably ask what is gained by using an anthropological concept when an indigenous one might serve as well, or, even perhaps, better" (p. 434). Borofsky et al. uses indigenous with a little "i" to highlight the external nature with which culture has been applied to, as the other rather than culture being something internal. Keeping this in mind, one wonders what frameworks may prove more helpful when those having 'culture' ascribed to them are asked to quantify a more useful framework (i.e. belief systems, linguistic differences, etc.).

Another difficulty comes from the tension between cultural groups that self-identify and self-name, contrasted with the groups that have cultural descriptors, names, etc. pushed onto them. This, in essence, also gets at the simplistic notion that ascribing culture to the outsider, the one marked as different from the self, is an easier task than engaging with one's own culture, values, and epistemology. This has been evident to me both in a real and practical way. For instance, when asking undergraduate students about their own culture, they are slow to answer and usually couch their responses with reference to spending time in a foreign country or an experience wherein they first saw themselves as a cultural outsider (fieldnotes).

So, if culture is not always an effective frame or tool for talking about difference, what are better or more effective tools? What are the organic components that spring forth from asking about culture? How do we think in a globalized society about culture, ethnicity, and race? Are these issues so conflated, or overlapping that they begin to lose meaning when separated? When people think about their own identity, what is it that they are thinking about? Is it culture, worldview, and/or race? Or is it something completely different? How do people think of the groups with which they belong? What does this have to do with how they think about other people? When we talk about culture in a general way, in daily conversation, we are implicitly talking about race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc. I would argue that we even employ the use of culture as a way to talk about things or around things that are too tricky to talk about using explicit words, pushing aside words tied to racism, sexism, or classism and using a phrase such as "cultural difference."

As is becoming apparent, culture is highly contested territory. Borofsky et al. (2001) state that, "culture is what various people conceive it to be, and, as these definitions make clear, different people perceive it in different ways for different ends" (n.p.). To counter what they term as a "disjunction of meanings" and "intellectual baggage" (n.p.) surrounding notions of culture, they suggest, we think about using frameworks other than culture that prove more helpful and accurate.

On the other hand, asking about culture allows us to think about the ways in which we assign value, ascribe difference, and construct groupings within our social experience. It allows us to not only think about epistemology as it functions in others and

in the process of othering, but also how it creates frameworks in our own selves and those whom we feel group membership with.

While recognizing the elusiveness of culture, several important questions remain. What does describing culture and cultural difference tell us about the ways in which we engage difference, understand worldview, and recognize alternative ways of knowing, being, and doing? The aforementioned 'when' of Borofsky et.al matters in this case, specifically, because this project involves teacher preparation. As mentioned in Chapter Two, cultural competency is set out as a priority for these students. The 'when' of when to use culture as a descriptor and framework has thus been established.

In terms of my research questions, how do the master narratives about culture and difference and the Alaskan Master Narrative discussed in the previous chapter, influence our frameworks for understanding both culture and difference? How are these cultural stories taught and learned in both the conscious and subconscious ways?

Taking into account the above, conceptualizing culture to be habits of knowing, being, and doing, allows for several things. This includes the overlapping circles of group/cultural membership and also facilitates an easy relationship between culture and worldview, wherein worldview and its parts (epistemology, ontology, and axiology) are culturally bound. Lastly, this framing enables and eases the conceptualization of master narrative as a filter for experience (Bruner, 1968).

2) Stories and Narrative as a Filter for Experience

For the moment, it may prove helpful to think of culture as narrative, in a way that compliments constructivist leanings. Developmental psychologist Jerome Bruner (1968)

suggests that narrative models can be an important way to characterize (and I argue think about) culture, as well as considering the use of stories as a 'net for experience.' By framing culture as a series of shared stories, or master narratives, it may be easier to see both convergences and divergences. Narratives allow us to see how sub-cultures and parallel cultures are both the same and different, as well as examining differences within the smaller groups. Personal and group overlaps can become variances in the story, a slightly different weave in the net if you will.

Derrida, among other post-structuralists, argue that text implies human reality is fundamentally discursive. How we 'make up' or construct our arguments/ descriptions (thinking), ties together discourse and daily life action in a way which the argument or description is a performance of the sense we make of that specific discourse. In terms of this specific project, educational researcher Allan Luke (1995) suggests, "the problem, simply, is that many educational analyses have difficulty showing how large-scale social discourses are systematically (or, for that matter, unsystematically) manifest in everyday talk and writing in local sites" (p. 11).

Again, Bruner (1968) provides valuable insight suggesting, "Myth, perhaps, serves in place of, or as a filter for experience" (p. 33). Master narratives serve as teacher myth; they act as cultural stories about the educational process, the Alaska Master Narrative, and the mythification of personal experience. How will these narratives sift through and influence personal frameworks for understanding culture and cultural difference? In this project, the narratives, stories and myths have taken the form of

notions and stereotypes about race, ethnicity and place over culture. In the next section, I will further discuss the interrelation and conflation between/of these concepts.

3) The conflation of Race, Ethnicity, and Culture

While I do not want to conflate the idea of race with that of culture the two are well linked in contemporary Western social thought. Kwame Anthony Appiah (1985) suggests an ideational view of race, and this framework lends itself to thinking about culture. In speaking about the criteria-based ideational definition of race he concludes, "[the idea of race] will be important, even if there are no races: first, because we often want to understand how other people are thinking, for it's own sake; and, second, because peoples act on their beliefs, whether or not they are true" (p. 61). The same could be said about an ideational view of culture. We want to understand how people are thinking. People act upon their beliefs (ideas) about culture, specifically the culture of the other, and this is important in terms of how we think about ourselves, and others, especially in the classroom. This could even be seen as invoking larger issues of culturally-bound knowledge authority in teacher education, as well as in the K-12 school setting.

Educational anthropologist Greg Tanaka (2009) details an idea of multiple or a repertoire of identities (i.e., how to maintain ones' own identity in a socially diverse setting or settings), intercultural practices rather than multicultural practices, all which I take to be important in terms of how we define things. 'Multicultural' goes along with attaching culture to certain groups, while Tanaka's approach allows for self-definition and interplay between identities or parts of self. He defines intercultural as "learning and sharing across difference where no culture dominates" (p. 83). This statement, while

interesting, is also problematic. I cannot envision an atmosphere where no culture dominates, for example even the style of organization or self-presentation in the classroom reflects specific cultural norms. So, Tanaka is highlighting a problem, while failing to pose an adequate solution. Though, certainly his approach allows for the culturally and socially bound personally constructed notions of race and ethnicity.

Alexander (Alexander et al., 2005) provides an example of this interplay by frequently reminding readers of his multiple identities, prefacing his comments with, "as a Black-gay-male-student-teacher-scholar…" (p. 42). While it may be relatively easy for his students to determine some of those identities, his use of self-identifying or marking is important in creating a framework for his arguments, by laying bare assumptions, and providing a gendered, racialized, historicized and politicized context. Alexander's openness resonates with me in his willingness to look at or acknowledge his identity, analyze what those classifications mean in terms of power in the classroom, and move forward into the work he feels called to do in a way that acknowledges the multi-faceted nature of identity.

Appiah (1994), in categorizing the current ways in which we use race, writes:

> Current ways of talking about race are the residue, the detritus, so to speak, of earlier ways of thinking about race; so that it turns out to be easiest to understand contemporary talk about "race" as the pale reflection of a more full-blooded race-discourse that flourished in the last century. (p. 62)

Insofar as American social distinctions, if race isn't helpful, and culture isn't helpful as racial vocabulary, and cultural groups do not match, what are we left with? When asked

about culture, often we think of an essentializing descriptor such as race or ethnicity instead. As I will expand upon later, this was echoed in my own research experience during this project.

Joane Nagel (1994) contends, "ethnicity is constructed out of the material of language, religion, culture, appearance, ancestry, or regionality," and that "boundaries are continuously negotiated" (p. 153-153). Ethnicity is, again, just as problematic as race or culture in that it is a conglomerated identity. Tanaka also suggests that White students (in his experience) are often troubled with inability to "name the shared meaning of a particular ethnic culture" (p. 82). This experience shapes Tanaka (2009) as he puts forth new constructs for social analysis outside of culture and race in the form of a move to an "inter-cultural" practice (p. 82).

Tanaka, focusing on "how all of the 'posts'" were unable to help him in a practical way in a diverse classroom, defines intercultural behavior as "learning and sharing across difference where no culture dominates" (p. 83). This proves problematic for many reasons. Primarily, the academy Western culture dominates even when we can't see it explicitly doing so, it operates in the form of privilege, down to the institutional organizational management, and style of classroom encounters. Tanaka is somewhat focused on the "absence of a meaningful ethnic culture for White students" (p. 84), his claim being that a lack of a "repertoire of identities,' some societies have found useful when struggling to maintain their own meanings in diverse communicative space," (p. 84) causes a type of paralysis, an inability to move forward with dialogue in a way that is both meaningful and respectful.

But, White Western culture exists. The 'White' problem, for lack of a better term, is not that we (I shall refrain from pretending to be outside of this situation) do not have a culture, but rather we do not know what it is, or cannot effectively articulate it because we have spent so much time developing a desire for and a systematic exoticization of the other. Tanaka suggests this in asking if perhaps culture is "doomed by its historical connection to a Western colonial project that assigned such romanticizing notions to non-Western peoples while reserving to White people the luxury of no longer having to possess an ethnic culture" (2009, p. 85). This thinking is tied to a desire of the different, or the richly exotic. For some reason as White Western people, the tendency as is laid out by Tanaka, is to believe that we have the material effects of culture while rarely seeing them as such. Perhaps we do not know how, and as Tanaka suggests, we certainly have the "luxury" of not having to. Tanaka views this disconnect, as it plays out in discursive spaces as the "Incongruous copresence of dislocation and privilege" (p. 84), and suggests the dissolution of the White subject. By this, I take him to mean something similar to the previously noted "dysconscious racism" (King, 1991), in which Tanaka's White college students simultaneously benefit from their "mainstream" culture while believing that it doesn't exist.

Pākehā[14] educational sociologist Alison Jones adding to this, writes of the "contradictory pedagogical and liberatory interests in play in [a] multiethnic classroom" (1999, p. 4). Jones details the experiences of Māori and Pākehā students in a college level class that is split into groups by race. She notes that while the Māori students felt freed by

[14] Pākehā is the Māori descriptive term for non-Indigenous New Zealanders. It is a racial, cultural, political and linguistic signifier.

the culturally homogeneous grouping, the Pākehā students felt left out, and that that they were somehow missing critical cultural information shared by the other group. What Jones engages is the idea of pedagogical desire, and the covetous relationships that can take place between self and other, which can be a by-product of critical projects in the classroom. This idea of desire is tied to the need to fully know or understand the other.

4) Diversity and Cultural Responsiveness

Jones' and Tanaka's work can be seen as an example of recent diversity scholarship, and fit into one (if not more) of 5 categories of diversity scholarship proposed by Ellen Swartz (2009). Swartz provides an effective framework and survey of categories of diversity scholarship in education including 5 categories of scholarship:

- Worldview and historical origins of education models
- The Black studies intellectual tradition
- Diversity and the law
- Dominant diversity discourse in education
- Emancipatory practices that rethink or replace hegemonic diversity

For this specific project, and in thinking about my research questions and interview discussions, I was thinking in terms of the last distinction. In asking participants about culture, surely diversity and cultural responsiveness will come through, especially for students who have been in the UAF School of Education teacher preparation program for several years.

In reference to the idea of culturally responsive schooling, a practical question arises when thinking about the previously mentioned work of Jones (1999), wherein she

proposes the benefits and charts the struggles encountered when separating a college-level class by culture, and the reaction of students. Contrasting this with the type of activity (intercultural) outlined by Tanaka, where does each story leave us? Which is culturally responsive, which is relevant, who is asked in each case to surrender themselves and their assumptions?

In my experience, present efforts, waged under the umbrella of "culturally responsive teaching" all too often focus on Alaska Native culture as an object of study while continuing to center and therefore privilege White voice and identity, for instance treating local cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices as 'add-ons' to lesson planning, scheduling local elders as guest speakers for "story time" or "culture class," thereby sequestering their knowledge to only one area, framing that knowledge as 'story,' while keeping science, math, and reading separate and outside of the influence of 'culture.' This reflects Delpit's assessment from the 1980s, and outlined in Chapter One. Angelina Castagno and Bryan Brayboy (2008) suggest that in terms of culturally responsive schooling for Indigenous youth, educators rarely take culturally responsive scholarship seriously. When they do, the tendency is for this to further an essentializing discourse wherein surface aspects of culture are focused upon and deeper aspects are largely ignored. This points to a question of 'who should culturally responsive schooling benefit?' The easy answer is 'everyone,' and while answering this question in greater detail is not my intended purpose, it is important to again reference the need for preservice teachers to understand culture as socially constructed habits of knowing, being, and doing; cultural responsiveness (Gay and Howard, 2000); cultural relevance

(Ladson-Billings, 1994), and specifically, as suggested, sovereignty and self-determination, racism in schools, and Indigenous epistemologies. As Castagno and Brayboy (2008), also suggest, "[b]ut the fact that in 2008 we are still making this same argument and trying to convince educators of the need to provide a more culturally responsive pedagogy for Indigenous students indicates the pervasiveness and persistence of the problem" (p. 981). Echoing the previous sentiment about essentializing discourse surrounding multicultural education, Marilyn Cochran-Smith states that "mistaking color blindness for educational equity or [learning] 'the characteristics' of people of various races and cultures" works to "decontextualize teaching" and may even work towards "bolstering stereotypes" (1995, p. 494). Cochran-Smith, when referring to color blindness, is getting at the practice wherein teachers (and others) either do not, or else convince themselves that they do not see color (read race). This practice leads to the lessening or dismissal of important socio-cultural factors historically tied to race and racial difference.

Gloria Ladson-Billings (2009) offers a helpful definition of the idea of cultural relevance, "[t]hus, culturally relevant teaching uses student culture in order to maintain it and to transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture," (p. 19) by providing cultural referents, and that "these cultural referents are not merely vehicles for bridging or explaining the dominant culture; they are aspects of the curriculum in their own right" (p. 20). An example is Ladson-Billings' (1992) charting of the literacy practices of two teachers, wherein each teacher uses the students' cultural base as a reference point for all of the texts used in class. In this way, the teachers are not only validating the students'

culture, but also making the required curriculum fit the students' needs, rather than the other way around.

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), as used by Geneva Gay and Kipchoge Kirkland involves the use of "the cultures, experiences, and perspectives of African, Native, Latino, and Asian American students as filters through which to teach them academic knowledge and skills" (2003, p. 181). This is a similar concept to the above cultural relevance, but as used by Gay and Kirkland, has an added factor of combatting the "maneuvers teacher education students use to avoid engaging with racial issues in education" (p. 181).

In terms of the above-mentioned racial issues, the United States, and Alaska as a part of that, are fundamentally cultured and racialized places, our schools are not immune or excluded from this, rather they are often the battleground for competing ideals which then get reified in official curricular ways. Michael Apple (2000) refers to this as "official knowledge," echoed by William Pinar (1993) who suggests that:

> Curriculum debates about what we teach the young are, in addition to being debates about what knowledge is of most worth, debates about who we perceive ourselves to be and how we will represent that identity, including what remains as "left over," as "difference." (p. 60)

This is, at its core, a question about culture, about value, and about the convergence of the two. Who we are as U.S. Americans, as Alaskans, and what exists as our story is at stake.

Pinar (1993) continues that, "cultural literacy is a noncontroversial requirement for any citizenry. What becomes controversial is the composition of such literacy" (p. 63). What constitutes culture, a specific and location-based culture, increasingly gains importance when framed in a way such that Americans with European ancestry who, as Pinar again argues "in their ignorance that they are racial creatures, that their knowledge is racial knowledge, indeed that their culture and material wealth is in significant measure the product of others… they forget history and politics—and themselves" (p. 68). So, the question then becomes, or follows, how to not minimize the White student, because that causes guilt, fear, and backlash, but to create an environment wherein cultural expression and narrative are discussed and privileged. How do we as educators create a space where a multitude of narratives are valued, where students can "feel good" about their own culture, and yet feel good about others' as well? Rose and Potts (2011) also discuss a similar backlash, specifically in a teacher education context. They note resistance to diversity from preservice teachers in three areas or forms: colorblindness, believing that race doesn't matter, and thinking of culture as coming from a specific geographical area, (2011).

If we teach preservice teachers to think about culture in terms of shared meanings in a classical way, a purely ethnic way, we are engaging in a failing project. Human memory is short, and culture is an evolving, living process. By focusing on culture as a set of stories, or a filter for experience, a narrative example of habits of knowing, being, and doing, the cultural cosmology idea (Bruner, 1968), it is not imperative to have a set and finite idea of "American or Alaskan culture," rather we can think of it as a flexible

arrangement of narratives which function differently in different situations and for different people. Although this may prove problematic when thinking about 'schooling,' and what to teach from which standpoint, it allows for a certain plasticity that takes into account a notion of place and the various ways in which difference is constructed while remaining non-essentializing; something invaluable in the classroom.

Flexible arrangements of narratives or stories, when placed into the construct of teacher education, do not, however, remain unproblematic. Critical scholars Joe Kincheloe and Shirley Steinberg (1998) place an importance on "the ways individuals interact with representations of race, class, and gender dynamics in a variety of pedagogical spheres" (p. 3), in detailing the concept of critical multiculturalism. Preservice teachers bring cultural stereotypes as well as ideas with them into the classroom, and these affect their interactions with text, instructors and each other. In the next section, I will detail this interaction, and because of the population of this project, specifically the role of whiteness in multicultural education.

5) Multicultural Education and Whiteness

Kincheloe and Steinberg (1998) write that, "[a] cardinal aspect of the entire conversation about whiteness is the fact that liberal and pluralist forms of multiculturalism and identity politics have not produced a compelling vision of a reconstructed White identity," (p. 12). Michael Apple (1998) writes that, "whiteness [is] an explicit cultural product" (p. ix). Michelle Fine (1997) describes whiteness as, among other things, a socially constructed form of "cumulative privileging," (p. 57). These are all serious elements to consider when thinking about the education of teacher candidates.

In Chapter One, I introduced the concept of "dysconscious racism" which is described by King (1991) as "uncritical habits of mind" (p.135). This is also a good place to start when thinking about whiteness in education, or as it feels to me, a backlash toward Multicultural education. Dysconscious racism is a product of whiteness. It is also not unlike what Solomona, Portelli, Daniel, and Campbell (2005) term "ideological incongruence" (p. 153): where "people can engage in and/or reinforce racist/sexist practices while simultaneously making claims to racial innocence" (p. 154). While this project is not singularly about race, as I detailed in previous sections, race is often conflated with, and I argue gets in the way of, thinking about culture.

This idea of conflation or the intertwined nature of the pieces of social identity, is echoed by Kathy Hytten and John Warren (2003), wherein they discuss the ways in which preservice teachers "divert the conversation away from race and its presence in our lives" (p. 65). Hytten and Warren found that "whiteness was much more diffuse, much more fluid, much less easily located in the categories commonly thought to be powerful," (p. 67). In my own research, this plays out in terms of what participants are willing and unwilling to discuss.

Suzanne Fondrie (2009) states that, "what students say in class regarding their perspectives on multicultural and social justice issues and what they actually *believe* are sometimes quite different" (p. 217). She suggests an exercise wherein students write down their thoughts anonymously on a piece of paper for other students to read aloud. Fondrie believes, through this exercise problematic moments turn into teaching moments

that interrogate stereotypes. This practical example, similar to what Tanaka suggests, also relies a certain measure on group dynamics.

Tanaka and Fondrie touch upon an important concept that goes unhighlighted, but is perhaps best said by French scholar Martine Abdallah-Pretcielle. She frames the discussion in terms of cultural competence as "know-how rather than knowledge" (2006, p. 477). Thinking in this manner moves us away from focusing directly on knowing others' culture, and shifts us toward recognizing the sites where cultural difference are likely to occur. Seemingly, this would work to mitigate what Kincheloe and Steinberg (1998) describe as the "power illiteracy," which goes hand in hand with whiteness. If we can recognize and interrogate stereotypes, honing in on communicating and bridging cultural differences, then we move away from the idea that to be culturally competent, one needs to know everything there is to know about other cultures.

Summary of the Literature Review

Culture in and of itself, as a conceptual construct, is highly contested in terms of what it is and is not. Informally, culture is taken to be, in this specific context, habits of knowing, being, and doing. Culture proper is tied to power, and as shown above, whiteness is protected and reified through culture and structural elements within culture (Rose and Potts, 2011). This holds true in educational contexts. Teacher candidates who understand the importance of culture, and when it is appropriate to use culture rather than another framework, should have an understanding of cultural difference, and how cultural difference manifests. Dysconscious racism and ideological incongruence are features of unexamined whiteness and forms of cultural and power illiteracy. These have real

consequences for those becoming teachers, and should therefore be of utmost importance to those interested in teacher training, specifically multicultural education.

Taking the above into account with my multiple positions at UAF and the interdisciplinary nature of this project, finding and simply articulating a theoretical home is challenging. In the next section I will begin with critical theory, integrating feminist and indigenous theories, in hopes of providing a conceptual base for the project. This discussion will also be carried into my methods chapter.

Conceptual Framework

There is a fine line between the usefulness of critical theory and pedagogy, and the irritating acultural all-knowingness of its utopic vision (discussed in depth by Lather 1998, Ellsworth, 1992 and others). While this is by no means a treatise on the shortcomings of critical theory and pedagogy, it is helpful for me to start here with my own personal dispositions; to begin with an evolution of critical orientation, a reconciliation of its problematic nature into something useful, and personally rooted.

Critical theory, insofar as sociological thought was introduced formally by Horkheimer (1937) of the Frankfurt School as an addition to scholarly work wherein scholars could critique or change society rather than only working to explain or theorize it. For me, it is helpful to begin with Paulo Freire, and critical pedagogy. Freire's critical pedagogy stems from concepts of oppression, criticality, conscientization, and humanism (2000, 2005). Freire compellingly invokes the idea of love, and uses it in a revolutionary sense, a form of thinking that is seated in the heart, that leads to social justice, while getting to the effects of power, and the valuation of knowledge.

Indigenous scholar Jo-ann Archibald (2008) drew my attention to the idea of the "compassionate mind and love for others" (p. 2). She paraphrases and sums up the late Walter Lightning's work (1992), writing that, "the compassionate mind combines physical, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual learning with humility, truth, and love" (p. 2). Love, usually used in a gendered and feminine way, here used by two male scholars, Freire and Lightning, is qualitatively different than the more familiar maternal love, and is more symbolic of humanism or stewardship. How can this be contrasted or reconciled with the idea of criticality? Thinking about critical and feminist educator Patti Lather (1998) and a pedagogy of unknowing which entails a certain humility in the way we think, write, and take up arguments. What I mean is a way of asking questions in which we recognize the imperfect nature of the questions, the unlikeliness of finding the answers we are looking for, and the improbability of the observations we gather providing a full accounting of the specific phenomenon.

Lather (1998) suggests a "working of the ruins," a "move away from legislating meaning and toward contradictory voices, counter-narratives, and competing understandings" (p. 488). I think about this by asking two process related questions. Where does this get us? And, where does this leave us?

Is it possible to move forward with a type of critical lens that is concerned with social justice, based in the heart, and takes into account love, humility and truth? Unknowing and multiplicity work toward getting us in the right direction, but what does this mean for this specific project at hand? In thinking through these questions and how they relate to my larger research questions, I come back to the overarching importance of

epistemology and its relationship to culture and power; and how stories and narrative as a filter for experience.

Cultural study, aside from definitions, is a political venture; it can and has been linked to progress, development, hierarchy, and as much as it serves the study of the conveyance of beliefs and behaviors, it also serves to construct difference. Asking about culture allows us to think about the ways in which we assign value, ascribe difference, and construct groupings within our social experience. It allows us to not only think about worldview as it functions in others and in the process of othering, but also how it creates frameworks in our own selves and those with whom we feel group membership. This idea of being cognizant and asking about culture, and the ways in which cultural habits of othering and of valuation inform our consciousness is similar to the idea of critical multiculturalism (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1998; Sleeter & McLaren, 1995) wherein a classically critical stance is focused on issues of power as related to cultural difference. Critical multiculturalism also addresses the acultural critique I provided in the introduction to this section as well as the power illiteracy introduced in my literature review.

Summary of the Conceptual Framework

Following the suggestion of Borofsky et al. (2001), I use an indigenous or amalgamated definition of culture as habits of knowing, being, and doing. Further, I use Bruner's conceptualization as narrative as a filter for experience to frame the ways in which culture as story, or cultural master narratives filter through the interview responses of my research participants.

As this project moves forward a stance related to critical multiculturalism plays out in paying careful attention to how worldview, culturally bound epistemology, informs knowledge valuation, and evaluation, specifically in the realm of education. Whiteness, and its symptoms of dysconcious racism and backlash to multicultural endeavors also provide a lens through which to view the participant interviews.

Chapter Four Methods

> Humans –feeling, living, breathing, thinking humans –do research. When we try to cut ourselves off at the neck and pretend an objectivity that does not exist in the human world, we become dangerous, to ourselves first, and then to the people around us. (Eber Hampton, 1995, p. 52)

Methodology Overview

This project is an ethnographic study utilizing qualitative semi-structured interviewing (Archibald, 2008), and auto-ethnographic methods (Chang, 2008) presented in the form of two case studies (Stake, 1978). As such, I believe it may be prudent to lay out some definitions and assumptions that I am working from, regarding the nature of inquiry. I also examine how worldviews (i.e. epistemology, axiology, and ontology) are tied together in what I like to think of as a certain sovereignty required in scientific thought, as I will further detail, and specifically how these play out in terms of research methodology and specifically situated educational research.

The initial argument here should be the use of the word "science" and the invocation of what Lather (2004) mentions as "the science wars" (p. 27) into the realm of educational research. The term in and of its self is not especially helpful, as implicit in this discussion is the conflation of "science" with "good" research.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines science as "the intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment." Whereas research is defined as

"the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions." Both of these definitions reflect a type of classification, a systematic study, which suggests not only a defined way of doing things, but also a set of standardized rules. Inquiry is defined as "an act of asking for information," a definition much more in sync with the types of research that happen not only in educational setting, but in the greater social sciences as well.

In terms of sovereignty of academic thought, what I am trying to convey is my belief in what I like to think of as a "big table," and is somewhat related to what others have referred to as a "big tent" of research paradigms. I imagine the 'education table' is very big, and there are an immeasurably large number of seats available for all concerned parties, including researchers, practitioners, administrators, parents, community members, and students. At the table are invested parties, and each of them sees education (policy, pedagogy, practice) from a different and valid place. This table idea, although messy and problematic, holds a lot of potential in terms of different entities with differing points of view, differing research methodology, different questions, and different motivational factors which come together to provide a holistic picture of phenomena, in this specific case undergraduate frameworks for describing culture.

I take sovereignty in terms of research to mean that the research and/or invested parties have equal authority to choose not only what questions to answer, but also how the questions framed, and how to go about determining the best way to answer those questions. The idea of sovereignty also alludes to certain relationships between and among the invested parties, and also signals respect.

Indigenous scholars and researchers such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Manulani Aluli Meyer, Eve Tuck, Shawn Wilson, and Q'um Q'um Xiiem Jo-ann Archibald provide perhaps the most compelling glimpse into why a governed and rigid view of research is so problematic. Clearly, Meyer (2001) was correct when quoting Ignacio Martin-Barro, "If you do not define your epistemology, someone else will do it for you" (p. 194). Wilson (2009) provides two somewhat guiding statements; the first of which concerning ways of knowing and validity, and the second of which concerning relationality. He writes, "The idea that knowledge is approached through the intellect leads to the belief that research must be objective rather than subjective, that personal emotions and motives must be removed if the research "results" are to be valid" (p. 55-56). Meyer (2001) adds to this, "Our senses are culturally mediated, and that's an uncomfortable thought for many people" (p. 194). Although these viewpoints represent philosophy from an Indigenous paradigm, they have similarities with other qualitative paradigms, and are greatly helpful in an auto-ethnographic context.

Wilson (2009) also points out that, "If Indigenous ways of knowing have to be narrowed through one particular lens (which it certainly does not), then surely that lens would be relationality. All things are related and therefore relevant" (p. 58), this gets at both the idea of interconnectedness within the world, as well as the idea of what is real, relevant, and therefore valid. Smith (2006) echoes, "What makes ideas 'real' is the system of knowledge, the formations of culture, and the relations of power in which these concepts are located" (p. 48). What is real to Smith may not be real to anyone outside of her own cultural group, just as what an outsider to Smith believes is true may not

resonate with her. However, the notion of what is real and is not real can be a dangerous, as Meyer reminds us, "For me Descartes represents reason and objectivity and science, and these three ideas have also been used as tools of "truth" that have helped heal and helped kill" (p. 189).

Linda Smith (2006) perhaps warns us best about this in that, "systems of classification and representation enable different traditions or fragments of traditions to be retrieved and reformulated in different contexts as discourses, and then to be played out in systems of power and domination, with real material consequences for colonized people" (p. 44). The consequences in this case, play out for more than just colonized people, they play out for anyone with a research agenda guided by methods and principles considered outside of the norm, and that is not only sad in terms of what is implied about academic sovereignty and who holds the power to direct the future of social science research, but dangerous as well.

Typically, one would look toward a methodology based in critical theory to piece-apart these notions of power operating within the research context, but as Lather (1998), Grande (2008), and others lament, critical theory isn't always enough. Grande (2008) postulates that "...critical pedagogy remains rooted in the western paradigm and therefore in tension with indigenous knowledge and praxis" (p. 238). Lather (1998) suggests a "praxis of stuck places," a way of "working the ruins" of critical pedagogy, animating the failures, and working from the folds. As Ellsworth (1992) reminds us, we can never know if through our own liberatory actions, we are causing harm or oppression to unseen others. Ellsworth suggests a "pedagogy of the unknowable;" wherein one

cannot fully 'know' their own oppression, certainly not 'know' the oppression of others, and could not be certain that through their own work toward liberation they were not oppressing others. Also included in this indeterminacy is the idea of legitimacy, who is legitimately oppressed, who is perceived as the oppressor (or maintains certain characteristics of the oppressor such as gender, race, ethnicity, etc.), and who is allowed to talk, think, write about being oppressed and/or liberated. As I have previously stated, there is a fine line between the usefulness of critical theory and pedagogy, and the irritating acultural all-knowingness of its utopic vision (Lather 1998, Ellsworth 1992). Critical theory tends to frame things as tensions or problems, which is not only a bit depressing, but also rooted in a deficit analytic style recently critiqued by Eve Tuck (2009), among others wherein the authors call for a shift away from approaching subject matter from a point of view firmly based in deficiency. Tuck means this as a way to shift the negative lens, often focused in the direction of historically marginalized populations, to a view that recognizes previously minimized strengths, providing a more fair and nuanced view of phenomena in question.

Using a research methodology or methods, which only serve to amplify the effects of a western lens not only works in direct opposition to my own methodological inclinations, but also may work to prevent tangible, material, and relational products of the research from attaining their full potential. What I mean by that is that any choices in methodology, which create or cause tension between researcher and participants, whether epistemological or otherwise can create damage.

As I will further detail, my own position as an inside/outsider/peer to my participants prompted me to feel a closeness or responsibility to and for them. My position as a student/research assistant/staff/adjunct for the School of Education also prompts me to feel a relationship to that entity as a whole, but also my fellow students/staff and faculty.

Philosophical Values

Because of the highly situated nature of this project, my multiple positions within and outside the project, it is appropriate for me to follow an approach set out by Wilson (2009), and outline several guiding philosophical principles that have helped me to maintain a research path. My thought is to begin by articulating a methodology that is honest, humble, rooted in a critical heart, closely situated, reflexive, and consciously partial. My methodological tenets come from several established paradigms including critical, Indigenous, and feminist methodologies, so I move forward with an amalgamation that is respectful to its parents, yet at the same time, a methodology that is fluid, flexible, and meaningful in this specific context. These tenets are closely tied to emotions as well, but as Michelle Knight-Diop and Heather Oesterreich posit, "Emotions function as sites of knowledge to create cultural rules of interaction" (2009, pg. 2679).

I will go through each philosophical value in depth as the chapter progresses, before detailing the specific methods used to both answer my questions, and allow for the above-mentioned facets.

By invoking the value of *honesty*, I am hoping to equally evoke the ideas of clarity and responsibility. Being honest not only to the research participants, but also to

the reader, is something that perhaps remains mostly unspoken and assumed, especially after the review process ends and the actual human research begins. The fact that research subjects are real humans with real feelings and futures weighs heavily, when the instinct may have been to think of them only as far as their interview data allowed. By trying to remain honest to the participants, any urge to oversimplify them, to label them due to their interview responses becomes harder. This tenet also provides for the researcher to care about/ feel responsibility toward the future of the participants. There is a distinct tension between providing a safe harbor of anonymity for participants, while at the same time offering them an opportunity to have ownership over their comments. Many of the interviewees requested that I use their first names, but I have decided not to do so in light of their comments, and how those may be taken up and interpreted.

Humility is primarily about acknowledging the messiness of human relations, while eschewing the utopic goal of critical methods. Humble research praxis is an open one, a praxis that isn't destroyed by disappointing research data. This is a praxis seemingly absent in the competitive University environment, one that doesn't require specific answers, but it is one in which the researcher may come to the realization, as I did, that they were looking for specific answers all along. The humble researcher acknowledges this, and moves forward in a self-questioning way. In terms of how this affects the data, and its' interpretation, it is similar to the idea of reflexivity. Altheide and Johnson (2011) state, "Good qualitative research… shows the hand of the ethnographer" (p. 591). In this case, the willingness to document process 'shows the [my] hand.'

Humility and autoethnography may be seen as living in direct opposition to each other, with the focus of autoethnography often being thought of as the self in relation to other (Chang, 2008). Madison (2012) offers a more nuanced interpretation stating, "Instead, we attend to how our subjectivity in relation to the other informs and is informed by our engagement and representation of the other" (p. 9).

Delgado-Gaitan (1996) further complicates this notion wherein:

> Critical theorists argue for the importance of wrestling with the artificial dichotomy of self, other, and we/they boundaries between the researcher and culturally diverse communities which face constant scrutiny from academics. Such divisions... have forced us to think about the autonomous versus relational self. In some instances, reflexive research in anthropology has been pejoratively labeled narcissism. But self-adoration is quite different from self-awareness and critical consciousness of the relational self.

Both Chang (2008), and Delgado-Gaitan (1996) invoke the importance of relationships within autoethnography. This is similar to Wilson's (2009) notions of relationality where individuals are not so much "in relationship" but "are the relationships" themselves, are constituted because of the relationships (p. 80), and relational accountability where individuals have expectations because of and for group members. I suggest reifying this in terms of humble praxis by thinking in terms of Brayboy's (2011) "stewardship" wherein he calls for researchers and academics to think of both who we are responsible *to*, as well as who we are responsible *for*.

Research being *rooted in a critical heart* stems from Freire, embraces what I see are the positive and transformative aspects of criticality, and takes into account relationships, and equity. It also provides a place for the intense emotions that come from both the researcher, as well as those that come from the research participants, both of whom are invested in the topic at hand. Why provide a specific place for emotions? When talking about or thinking about, doing and being 'culture' and 'cultural,' one cannot avoid emotions. The critical heart provides a safe space for emotions that come from this project, including guilt, anger, hurt, disbelief, and hope.

This project is highly *situated.* I knew the population, knew their behavior in class, and this figured into how I interacted with them both in and out of the classroom. It would be disrespectful and nearly impossible to treat this project in a way that did not recognize the small, close, relational nature of it. The autoethnographic work serves as a guide on how to dissect complex relationships, how to get the most out of the experiential data, the data gathered in my daily living with research participants, my thoughts about the process itself, without being exploitative. It also provides for the highly contextualized nature of the study, giving a snapshot of a specific place in time, with specific people, gives them faces and works against the generalizability of the study. The setting and context of the project are not easily duplicated, but are quite real and important to education at UAF.

Being *reflexive* is about a Constant checking-in with self, questions, and others. Reflexivity provides for the fine-tuning of questions along the way. It recognizes the humanity in the project, the ways in which we process information, and how our thinking

evolves. Partner to this is the awareness of being *consciously incomplete.* I think of this in terms of a dual approach to gain understanding of the situation as well as my own complicity as a student and researcher. This is done by asking, "what is my place in all of this?" and "Where does this get us?" This orientation possibly stems from listening to Zeus Leonardo at the annual meeting of AERA in 2011, speaking about how White people can not own 'whiteness studies,' thinking about where my own place is, asking "Where do I fit?" and "Where do people like me belong?" What are the roles for White allies, or those interested in culture and cross-cultural studies, and anti-racist pedagogies? The tension caused by feeling academically homeless, at odds with or not fully welcomed by certain discourse groups lends a feeling of incompleteness. The catch is to not become paralyzed, resentful, whiny, or spend a career writing about the feeling, but acknowledge it, and move on, consciously.

Michelle Fine (1997) suggests that perhaps those interested in studying "race" have too long "Focused fetishistically on those who endure discrimination" (p. 57). She posits that we should instead attend to how "Protective pillows of resources" are accrued by Whites (p. 57). While Fine is making a point about race in relation to whiteness studies, this quote works equally well when thought of in terms of the power relationships between those pushed to the margins, and those within the body. Conscious incompleteness allows for the positioning of oneself in the borders, a place where we see our positions in the margins, our positions in the main body, and realize that just as we may not fit tidily into either, neither do our research participants. Rosaldo furthers this by explaining that, "When in doubt, people find out about their worlds by living with

ambiguity, uncertainty, or simple lack of knowledge until the day, if and when it arrives, that their life experiences clarify matters" (1994, p. 92).

By lining out the guiding principles to my methodology, I am explaining a way of thinking, while I am also creating a certain amount of accountability for the remainder of this project. It is my hope that the above mentioned philosophical principles also acts as a guide to the reader, allowing access to my thought process and idea development. As I shift gears and move forward into the project specifics, these guides should act as buoys, holding up and holding together the relationships between myself as the researcher, the actual research methods, as well as the research participants.

Population

I have two small groups of research participants[15] from a larger population of just over 5,000 undergraduate students based in Fairbanks, and enrolled at UAF. In the first group, I was not specifically targeting Education majors, although some of the students did happen to be elementary education majors. In the second group, I specifically targeted Education majors. For ease, I will differentiate between the two groups as A and B.

Group A

Group A consisted of 22 undergraduate and two graduate students enrolled in a 300 level (typically taken by those with junior class standing) English course taught by

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[15] The samples are comprised of students in two classes. The first class had between 11 and 24 students, and the second class had between 25 and 30 students at any single class meeting.

Faculty member 1. Students were from various departments on campus. The class took place in Fall 2011, and met three times a week for an hour and fifteen minutes. Attendance was not consistent throughout the semester, with several students dropping the course mid-way. The course focused on traditional narratives from specific Alaska Native cultural groups. Student age ranges varied from traditional to non-traditional, the students were racially and culturally varied as well (I base this on how students identified themselves in class. While I intentionally did not collect certain demographic information in order to protect my research participants, I do feel comfortable reporting the ways that the students described themselves, see Table 1 below. The professor is a non-Native man, whose areas of expertise include both traditional English literature, as well as Native American literature, specifically that from the American Southwest.)

Group B

Group B is a 300 level (typically taken by those with junior standing) Education course with 28 undergraduate students and two graduate students taught by Faculty member 2. Students were primarily Elementary Education majors, although several were from related fields, and several were graduate students. Students were less varied in age than Group A and were mostly traditional students, although there were several older students, a high number of military-related students, and Fairbanks locals. This class was held in Spring 2012, and met two days a week for an hour and thirty minutes. Attendance was fairly steady for this class. Course content focused on multicultural issues related to the classroom. Again, I did not collect certain ethnographic data, but feel confident in

relaying the self-identified racial or ethnic makeup of the class in Table 1 below. The professor was an Alaska Native woman, whose areas of expertise include Indigenous language, culture, and identity in relation to education.

Table 1 Group Demographic Information

Group	Students officially registered	Students interviewed	Male	Female	Interested in education	Self-identify as "White"	Self-identify as "other," "Alaska Native," or "non-White"
A	24	7	4	3	3	6	2
B	30	11	3	8	11	10	4

Setting

Both Group A and Group B classes were held in classrooms on the UAF main campus. This is where my autoethnographic data was recorded. I maintained a full participatory presence in both classes; completing all assignments, participating in group work and classroom dialogue, and my note taking and self-reflection was not likely evident to my classmates. My classmates knew that I was a full participant in class, a graduate student, that I was working on research related to the class, and that I would be asking to interview them at some point in the semester. I also made clear to the students that my research had nothing to do with their grade, or how the instructor would assess any of us.

The interviews themselves were conducted in my office, a small windowless interior space in the Gruening building, a bulky 1970s era cement tower on lower campus. The participants and myself sat across from each other at a library-style study table. The table was relatively clear, save for my small digital recording device, consent paperwork, and interview protocol. The lighting was kept low for interviewer comfort, and to maintain some level of informality and intimacy within the hulking structure of the building.

Criteria for Selecting Participants

I employed self-selection for the interviews, which entailed passing a sheet of paper around the classroom after going over (briefly) the purpose of my study. I did this toward the beginning of the semester, with permission of the instructors, and while they were not in the classroom. Some students wanted to know what the questions were going to be a head of time, and I did not share the exact wording, this decreased participation from Group A. One student was outspoken about wanting to have the questions before hand, and this caused other students to not trust the research process. While I did provide information about the nature of the questions, I felt that disclosing the actual questions to the students ahead of time would have changed the responses I received during the interviews themselves.

Since this research was done in a small, situated and close proximity, I did not collect non-observable identifying data such as age, although in order to better understand the perspectives of the interviewees, I do provide age ranges for those whom I interviewed. I allowed participants to choose the name by which they would be referred

to. Some picked a pseudonym, and some chose to use their first name. By giving them the choice, I felt that I provided opportunities for them to show ownership of their thinking, ownership of the process, yet protect their identity if they chose to do so. Since conducting the interviews, I have gone back and given all students pseudonyms (if they did not choose one for themselves).

Description of Methods

In terms of method, looking to understand the complex issues outlined above, I chose qualitative analysis through reflexive interviewing greatly influenced by Archibald's research within her own community (2008), and an auto-ethnography inspired by Ellis and Bochner (2000) and reflective of my position as a participant-observer. The autoethnographic data was used to inform narrative passages, focusing "...on the self in interaction with others in a situation where there are conflicting emotions or cultures," which will act as informative intermissions (Grbich, 2007, p. 57). In order to set apart the purely self-reflective passages, they have been italicized. In this way, I hope to show how my internal dialogue comes to bear in the research and writing process. That being said, some of this data undoubtedly makes its way in to the main body of the project.

Interviewing

The Interview contained a series of semi-structured, open-ended questions, which served as a guide for conversation. The questions asked about knowledge, personal

experience, opinions, and feelings regarding culture, and cross-culture. The questions were as follows:

- The first question is about culture. What do the terms 'culture' and 'cross-cultural' mean to you? Let's take "culture' first.
- Do you think cultural difference exists in our class?
- Do you think about our class being a cross-cultural activity or event?
- Does that affect the way that you relate to other students, or the text?
- Can you think of a particular topic/discussion, day, or reading from class that stands out as an example of cultural difference or a cross-cultural event? Can you describe it for me?
- Is there anything else that you would like to talk about?

For a copy of the interview script in its entirety please see Appendix D

As previously mentioned, I used a digital recorder to capture the audio portion of the interview. Consent documents were developed to ensure that all participants were protected, and that they had a sense of ownership of their responses, and our conversation. For a copy of the consent documents, please see Appendix E. Since all of the interview participants were classmates, I had an established relationship with them, as we knew each other in that specific setting. This fact made establishing rapport relatively easy. I engaged the participant in conversation, and did my best to be non-judgmental of their responses. This is tricky when framing interviewing as a directed conversation.

At times interviewees made statements that I found repugnant, or just simply disagreed with, but my seeming acquiescence to their statements had an effect in later

classroom behavior. If they had espoused a controversial position to me during the interview, which went unchallenged, they were likely to strongly re-state that position in class, then look to me for reassurance. This unintended consequence weighed heavily upon me, and highlighted one of the difficulties of doing situated research when the researcher has multiple roles. I also shied away from doing a lot of probing. In hindsight, if I were to undertake a similar project, I would do more, although the participants were somewhat resistant to the questions and subject matter already. By asking too many additional probes, they may have become frustrated, or shut down entirely. I am unconvinced that additional questioning would have provided much clearer results.

Autoethnography

Chang (2008) describes culture as the "bones" of autoethnography, while Spry (2001) suggests that narrative "comprise the autoethnographic bones of [a] chapter" (p. 497). In terms of this specific project, autoethnography perhaps does some of both. Using Chang's idea of three interconnected concepts, self, other, and culture (2008, p. 29), culture and story function as my framework.

Autoethnography generally falls into two categories, one being evocative, and the other being analytic or that of the "Chicago School" (Denzin, 2006). I think both perspectives are equally valid, and both have pieces that are quite usable or applicable. Evocative autoethnography that purely focuses on trauma or pain is not terribly helpful in this specific context, nor is that which is devoid of emotion. In this project, I am using autoethnography as a way to highlight the vulnerability of the researcher, as well as

create a place for the data that doesn't easily fit into other categories. This process mirrors my philosophical principles, and the research process itself.

In terms of conducting this type of research, Leon Anderson offers five features of the autoethnograpy wherein the researcher, "Is a full member of a group, uses analytic reflexivity, has a visible narrative presence in the text, engages in dialogue with informants beyond the self, and is committed to an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings" (2006, p. 419). Anderson does suggest more of an analytic or diagnostic focus rather than a reflexive and relational approach, but he does provide a starting place.

Chang (2008) suggests that "The benefits of autoethnography lie in three areas: (1) it offers a research method friendly to researchers and readers; (2) it enhances cultural understanding of self and others; (3) it has a potential to transform self and others to motivate them to work toward cross-cultural coalition building" (p. 52). Chang's framing is more helpful in that it lends itself to relationships and reflexivity. Chang also provides warning against possible pitfalls including, "Excessive focus on self in isolation from others; (2) overemphasis on narration rather than analysis and cultural interpretation; (3) exclusive reliance on personal memory and recalling as a data source; (4) negligence of ethical standards regarding others in self-narratives; and (5) inappropriate application of the label "autoethnography" (2008, p. 57).

Holman Jones (2005) goes a step further and frames autoethnography in a performative way, as "A performance that asks how our personal account counts" (p. 764). Rosaldo (1994) adds to this stating that, "performative autoethnography is a

critically reflexive methodology resulting in a narrative of the researcher's engagement with others in particular social contexts" (p. 498). By setting aside some of my autoethnographic notes in either italics, or as poetic interludes I hope to further maintain a "story-culture" connection, while allowing myself to think of my own frameworks, and more importantly to deal with the sometimes disappointing nature of some of the interview and class experiences. Furthermore, it enables me to sort through my own relationships with the interview participants/ my classmates.

Data Analysis

Silverman (2009) suggests an approach to interview data analysis wherein the interviewer is accessing "...various stories or narratives through which their people describe their worlds" (p. 823). This is how I am choosing to think of my own interview data, and this approach meshes well with relational aspects, and also how I am thinking about culture.

For the coding process, I employed a data sheet which allowed for multiple listenings of each interview, emergent coding, but also a space to look for certain things that were alluded to in previous study, as well as the literature review. For a copy of the coding sheet, please see Appendix F. To develop the coding sheet, I first fully transcribed four of the interviews to get a feel for what would be most helpful. Through this process I recognized the following themes (outside of answers to the actual primary questions): personal connections, distancing behavior, lack of familiarity with the concept, intelligible frameworks for understanding difference, effects of story and/or master narratives, validation and connection to the interviewer, overt racism, dysconsciousness,

and strong emotion. The coding sheets also allowed for selective transcription, wherein I transcribed highlights from most interviews.

Case Study Framework

Although I am not using a formal multi-case framework for this specific project, as there are only two data sets, I do believe that it is helpful to think about Group A and Group B as singular units that become richer because of their interplay. In order to bridge this disparity, I borrow from Stake's (2005) cross-case analysis and "invoke a 'case-quintain dialectic" (p. 39). By that, I mean I will look at each case individually, but also think about what the two cases have to say to one another. This will mainly come through in the final chapter, and will heavily influence the recommendations that come forth as a result of this project. What is similar about the individual cases, and what sets them apart? What can the similarities and differences tell us about how students are talking about culture and cultural difference?

Conclusion

It is my hope that by laying bare the assumptions I am working with in terms of what is considered good research and worthy data, as well as creating philosophical research guidelines, I am preventing what Eber Hampton (1995) warns of, becoming "dangerous." Because of the type of research I am doing for this project, that which is close in nature, highly situated, and at times personal and vulnerable, interviewing and autoethnography have provided me a way to make data richer, more meaningful, while building and maintaining relationships with invested parties.

In the following two chapters I will present and provide analysis of the two groups, A and B. There will be subtle differences between the two chapters, both in terms of structure and content, but it is my hope that by remaining true to my guidelines the differences will only serve to help illuminate possible answers to my research questions.

Chapter Five Interviews and Experiences With Group A

Introduction

In this chapter, I will be focusing on several excerpts from the seven interviews conducted with classmates from the undergraduate course: Narrative Art of Alaska Native Peoples in English Translation (henceforth NAANP). Also woven through the chapter are my own experiences in the class, as a participant observer, thinking about the questions I asked, and how those answers about culture intermix with the classroom performances or interactions I witnessed. I am focusing on what happened when I asked students to think and speak about "culture" using the term less as a discreet descriptor and more as an entry point to discussing human relationships; ways of knowing, being, and doing, as well as thinking about how those play out in the social context of higher education. This served as an entrée of sorts to discourses surrounding not only culture, but also cultural difference, and how that difference manifests in the classroom, an integral part of my research questions.

The Classroom Setting

This course convened Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in a University classroom within the Gruening Building, an average sized classroom for campus which had the benefit of a window to the outside. As previously mentioned, this building is largely concrete, and has many dark corners. The instructor generally arranged the tables of the room into a large square, open in the middle. He would sit on the side at the front of the square, with the blackboard directly behind him. Students sat on all sides of the table,

including next to the instructor. As seems the norm, the other students and I generally sat in the same location. My chosen seat was opposite the instructor, and usually in the middle of the backside of the square.

At times, I felt as though my classmates were teamed up into factions on the sides of the square. Often, the Alaska Native students sat together on the corner of the square closest to the instructor and the door, although one Alaska Native student regularly sat to my right. To my right was generally the other graduate student taking the course, and then around the corner from her were what I would consider the more conservative students. By this I mean that not only were they religiously conservative, I felt as if they were politically conservative as well.

Once in a while, five times over the course of the semester, the instructor would come to class early and sit in a different seat. This would serve to throw-off some of the students, but after time it made little difference.

Pedagogically speaking, the class was repetitive. We would go over a selected reading, reading passages aloud, and the instructor would briefly ask for comments and questions. Priority was given to formalist-type critique, centered around elements of the texts and tropes, although cultural differences when apparent were also discussed. In the syllabus, the instructor writes:

> The instructor tries to approach the material not as an authority on each cultural group, but rather as one who has learned much and is trying to learn more about it. The classes will involve both lecture and discussion, with informed

discussion encouraged, particularly by students who come from or have had direct contact with Alaska Native cultures. (Ruppert, 2011)

The above description is in line with how the instructor engaged with students in class. The instructor set aside 'informed discussion,' I found this to be evident in his privileging of formalist literary critique, as well as responses from the Alaska Native students.

Course objective from the syllabus include:

1. To serve as an introduction to and a survey of the narrative art of the Alaska Native Peoples – the Tsimshian, Haida, Tlingit, Eyak, Athabaskan [sic], Inupiaq, Yup'ik, and Aleut.
2. To present some of the ways of classifying (and thus of studying) the stories which have been used by the linguists, anthropologists, folklorists and literary critics, but also to emphasize the ways that Native peoples thought of (and thus classified) the stories.
3. To provide a basic bibliography of published works in which Alaska Native narratives have been preserved.
4. To realize some of the problems of attempting to understand Alaska Native stories read in English translations and some of the obstacles to such study; but to suggest some ways of viewing, comprehending, and appreciating the stories. (Ruppert, 2011)

Course readings included: Qanemcikarluni Tekitnarqqelarrtuq: One Must Arrive With A Story To Tell, Traditional Narrative by the Elders of Tununak, Alaska; Haa Shuka' Our Ancestors: Tlingit Oral Narrative, edited by Nora Marks Dauenhauer and

Richard Dauenhauer; The Longest Story Ever Told: Qayaq, the Magical Man by Emily Ivanoff Brown (Ticasuk); and Our Voices: Native Stories for Alaska and the Yukon edited by James Ruppert and John W. Bernet.

Tense Moments in Class

Throughout the semester, there were several times the classroom discussions became awkward, problematic, and uncomfortable. These "problematic moments" as outlined by Kent and Cummings (2008) were passing instances where discourse became fraught, and opportunities existed to interrogate previously held assumptions about numerous subjects, including culture, cultural difference, and hierarchical valuations thereof. Below, I detail one example.

"There's no such thing as Native Science!"

Charles-- Fieldnotes, 10/22/10

Charles[16], a classmate and interview participant made this comment as an outburst which then started a particularly tense discussion over the works of Alaska Native author, elder, and Traditional Chief the late Peter John[17]. I characterize this as an outburst

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[16] All of the interviews conducted for Group A took place in late November of 2010. A list of interview participants, along with the interview date and observable/ participant offered demographic data is in Appendix G.

[17] The late Peter John is well known among residents of Alaska's interior for his dedication to living a traditional Athabascan life, pioneering the documentation of his language, and his roll in the original land claims meeting which preceded the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

because it was said in a raised or loud tone, and was made with more force than normal speech.

Charles disagreed with a comment that I had made regarding Chief Peter John's description of a process I took to be representative of Native science. My comment was in regard to a particular passage, was not inflammatory, and to me was a mundane aside. The comment barely qualified as a slight disruption from the professor's questioning of story chronology. I said something along the lines of "To me, this might be a good example of Native Science, or a similar process." The particular passage, "Try To Make Things" contains a paragraph detailing the process for examining wood for a variety of purposes:

> There's certain kind of trees you got to have. You got to understand how to get it. All the trees look the same but they are not. There's hard wood in there. Sometimes you get birch for a sled and hard wood in there will make it twist up. You have to choose it right. You can't tell just by looking at a birch if it's good. (Ruppert & Bernet, 2001, p. 270)

This passage is certainly not the best framing or example of Indigenous or Alaska Native Science, but I saw the passage as a good time to broach the subject. We had not spoken formally about Native Science in the class prior to this, and I felt that it was something to be added to the discussion. Whether or not this passage was a good example, Charles' framing of Native science as invalid, trivial, bothersome, or anything other than part of educational thought by Charles is akin to what King terms "dysconscious racism" (1991, p. 134). Much like the before mentioned comment "It's just a bunch of multi-cultural

crap and I don't care," (Participant Cindy, see Chapter One) Charles was invalidating epistemological traditions by refusing to question his assumptions regarding a western scientific master narrative. According to First Nations Blackfoot scholar, and previous Director of the Harvard University Native American Program, Leroy Little Bear, J.D. as written in the introduction to Gregory Cajete's book Native Science:

> Science has been and can be defined many different ways depending on who is doing the defining. But one thing that is certain is that "science" is culturally relative. In other words, what is considered science is dependent on the culture/worldview/paradigm of the definer. (2000, p. ix)

Charles' outburst about the existence of Native Science created an uncomfortable divide in the classroom, and also put forth an idea about official knowledge and truth (Apple, 2000), which left unquestioned (as it was), has the power to gain additional ground.

Edwin, a White classmate in his early twenties spoke about this class period during our interview. I asked Edwin to detail a time in class when he felt that there was cultural difference:

> Caitlin: Can you think of a specific incident, some showing of cultural difference in class?
>
> Edwin: Well the first thing that occurs to me is that long-winded debate we had one day about the nature of Native Alaskan [sic] science, I think that that was a particularly intractable problem because the people who were arguing about it were fixed into their own narrow cultural mindset. And, were unwilling to try and see the issue from the other side's perspective. I think that goes a long way

> towards illustrating some of the, uh, how different cultural mindsets can develop in people and how those aren't necessarily compatible with other people's points of view.

Edwin's memory of the incident is interesting to me. I do not believe he remembers me starting the conversation; rather he focuses on the exchange between Charles and Richard, a Yupik male in his forties. So, Edwin sees the divide between the two students as a product of culturally bound narrow thinking. Edwin also frames the problematic moment as a debate. To me this did not feel like a debate, it felt like an argument with spectators. Some classmates were interested, other appeared to tune it out, and the professor watched attentively without offering any moderation.

The culturally bound idea of 'science' proper is a western construct and signifies a master narrative, privileging western ontologies and either nullifying or refusing to acknowledge other ways of knowing, thereby creating a hegemonic system wherein western science must be used to "prove" any other thought claiming the same terminology. Again, Little Bear (in Cajete) acknowledges this, writing that, "Western paradigmatic views of science are largely about using measurement using Western mathematics. But nature is not mathematical. Mathematics is super imposed on nature like a grid, and then examined from that framework" (2000, p. ix). Stephens (2000) offers another perspective, wherein she provides a Venn diagram detailing the differences and

overlaps of what she terms "Traditional Native Knowledge" and "Western Science."[18] The overlaps happen in four key areas: organizing principles, habits of mind, skills and procedures, and knowledge. Empiricism, recognition of patterns, cycles, and properties, and inference and prediction fit within those four areas, and are easily recognizable as prevalent in both paradigms.

The Interviews

The interviews all took place in November (Fall Semester) when classes were more than halfway over. As I stated in Chapter 4, I entered into each interview by framing it for the participants as a directed conversation. This is echoed in the script I read, and also in terms of my demeanor. We met in my office, in which I had placed a table, with one chair on either side. I also placed floor and desk lamps around the office to create a relaxed atmosphere. I started discussions with each participant in the same way, by reminding the participant about the class that we shared together, and then by stating the following: "The first question is about culture. What do the terms 'culture' and 'cross-culture' mean to you? Let's take 'culture' first." By reminding the participants about our class together, I was offering them a starting place for responses. Although we had not formally discussed what culture is and is not during the course, we had talked about it implicitly many times.

[18] This diagram can be found in the Handbook for Culturally Responsive Science Curriculum at http://ankn.uaf.edu/Publications/Handbook/integrating.html

All participants were asked the following questions to guide the conversation although I felt that many of the participants were resistant, and wished to talk about other matters (Rose & Potts, 2011).

- Do you think cultural difference exists in our class?
- Do you think about our class being a cross-cultural event or activity?
- Does that affect the way that you relate to other students or the text?
- Can you think of a particular topic, discussion, day, or reading from class that stands out as an example of cultural difference or a cross-cultural event? Can you describe it for me?
- Is there anything else that you would like to talk about?

Participants displayed resistance through their demeanor and body language, with some of them giving short or snippy answers, and some of the participants ventured far off topic or focused on the instructor's teaching style.

What is Culture?

It was not necessarily the participants' definitions of culture that proved to be most interesting, it was the discussion that followed, and what that discussion yields in terms of thinking about how race, ethnicity, and culture play out in the classroom. The first question that I asked dealt with student definitions of culture. It was evident that not many had been directly asked about what culture is, and what it means. The responses that I received varied greatly, and were, for the most part, not well thought-out or developed in terms of recognizable theory. This is not surprising on one hand due to the

undergraduate status of the students, but surprising in that we were well into a semester-based course which dealt directly with a form of cultural expression.

'Sally,' a White, female elementary education major in her early-to-mid 20s offered the following example of a simplistic definition:

> Sally: Um, I think the best definition of culture is just everything around you,
>
> Caitlin: Um hm, can you maybe say some more about that?
>
> Sally: Hm. I mean I know it's the things that people do, in a group and there can be cultures within cultures. I was a foreign exchange student in high school, I went to Austria for a year, so I had to read up about what that culture is before I went, and then obviously I experienced a different culture being there. And, it's kind of hard, it's such a big concept that it's hard to narrow down into a few words, you know?
>
> Caitlin: So what does cross-cultural mean to you?
>
> Sally: Pretty much what it sounds like, like communication, or food, or relationships between people or things, from two different cultures.
>
> Caitlin: Do you think that cultural difference exists in our class? In our English class?
>
> Sally: Oh, yeah, definitely.
>
> Caitlin: Do you want to say anything more about that?
>
> Sally: You know, I noticed that from what I understand, um, you know, Native people often don't talk as much (she is timid about saying this). Like they think through what they are going to say a lot more. Before they say something, and

there might be a much longer pause, before they speak up. And, I know there are a few people in our class who are Native and they don't really talk that much (this is different from my interpretation) in class, and I was just thinking about that today in class, during... (She is visibly nervous about saying this.)

Caitlin: No, feel free to be however you want to be, this is all confidential so...

Sally: I mean I don't exactly speak up a lot in class either. I don't speak up because I don't want to just "say something" I guess it might be for some of the same reasons that I am attributing to them. I only want to say something if it is really significant. And, I don't know enough about any of the Alaska Native cultures to feel like I can make judgments or say statements about their stories. You know what I mean?

Caitlin: Yes, I see what you're saying. Can you think of any other ways that cultural difference presents itself in our class?

Sally: Other than like the speaking up in class?

Caitlin: Mm hm.

Sally: This is a more subtle thing. You know Edwin, you know, he was in AP classes, so he is more able than some people that I don't think had that kind of education, to just kind of speak up and start talking about anything. And have it sound intelligent. I don't know if that's so much about intelligence, or how he was raised in school.

Caitlin: So your ideas that you have about what culture is, where did those ideas come from, or do you know how you developed those ideas?

Sally: I think observing more than anything. You know, so I was in a foreign country for a year, I was 15, I was one of 112 exchange students, I think you just kind of cobble something together over the years.

Caitlin: so going back, do you think of our class as a cross-cultural activity or a cross-cultural event?

Sally: Not necessarily, it seems more like a bunch of White people talking about another culture. I know we have people from different cultural backgrounds in our class, but most of the people who do the majority of the speaking are just like the uh, stereotypical White college student.

Sally recognized that culture is "the things that people do," but she did not make the connection that it is also *why* they do the things they do, or what was specifically culturally different between herself and her the people she found herself surrounded by. Sally also speaks about the class in terms of "a bunch of White people talking." This is interesting on several levels, firstly that she mentions whiteness, and secondly, her interpretation that the Alaska Native students in class were, as a whole, quieter than the non-Native students. My own experience in class was a bit different. I felt that there was a wide range of student verbal participation from Native and non-Native students alike. Perhaps Sally's preconceived notion of Native students being "quiet" influenced her perception of the class. If so, this has important implications for her as a classroom teacher.

The theme of student exchange to Europe was echoed by several other interviewees and used as an example of learning and/or experiencing another culture.

When I asked Sally about the differences, in terms of specifics, her responses were centered on what is often referred to as surface culture, i.e. variances in food, language, and celebration. This particular experience with the 'other' is symptomatic of hegemonic diversity in that while Sally was in another country, with different habits of knowing, being, and doing, she was still in a "Western" setting, and the cultural differences were minimized by this (Swartz, 2009).

As the interviews progressed, I started asking the participants when they first began thinking of themselves as a cultural entity (I cannot take credit for this question, as it was asked of me by Ray Barnhardt, Ph.D. several years ago). Again, the direct answer is not necessarily the most interesting part, rather whether or not the interviewee has thought about this concept. Several things are operating here, and I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that in itself, the answer can have the effect of belying privilege, opportunity, biases, or a lack there of. What I mean is that the stereotypical White college student most likely has never confronted their own culture, unless they have had an experience in which they were required to do so, such as military service, travel, or Sally's journey to study in Europe. Inversely, those outside this class/racial distinction have likely been confronted with their culture in terms of otherness, thereby requiring their acknowledgement of self-culture.

Caitlin: Do you think about yourself as having culture, or being a cultural entity?

Sally: Everyone is, no one is untouched by culture. If you weren't you wouldn't say anything or do anything, someone in a coma who never talks, never does anything is, even then they are affected by the, um, whatever

cultural belief people have about people in comas, you know, like, if they pull the plug or something, if that's not part of the culture, if they don't have the technology to keep someone in a coma alive, sorry, I'm veering off...

Sally doesn't answer the question directly, even though she has previously talked about her experience in Austria, she is unable or unwilling to engage in a conversation about difference that begins by outlining her sense or understanding of her own culture.

Sally's definition of culture was rather short and to the point, the following excerpt of my conversation with Charlotte, a mid-to-late 20s White female graduate student enrolled in the course, highlights the sheer variety, wordiness, and circumlocution found in responses to my question about "culture;"

> Caitlin: The first question is about culture, so what does the term culture mean to you?
>
> Charlotte: Mmm, I guess it means more when I think about it and when I am not thinking about it, then it means less, which is to say some kind of, um, ambiguous agglomeration of characteristics shared over time and geography kind of, like some kind of moderately cohesive group. Characteristics, oh I don't know, involving art. Involving art and communication mores and norms.

Here, Charlotte is unsure of a specific definition, so she chooses pieces of the whole: art and communication norms. (*This conceptualization of culture is reminiscent of an umbrella to me; culture is an umbrella and many things fit inside. As the interviews progressed, I started to see this pattern emerge, and started asking students to list some other things that might also be under the umbrella.)* Charlotte was referring to culture in

what Rosaldo (1989) might term a "narrow" sense. He writes that, "culture lends significance to human experience by organizing it. It refers broadly to the forms through which people make sense of their lives, rather than more narrowly to the opera or art museums" (p. 26). This is also important in that my "mainstream" participants, and by that I mean White, middle class, traditional-age college students, have not had to think about how they, and certainly not 'others' make sense of their lives.

I proceed to ask her to detail how she came upon this idea:

> Caitlin: How do you think you, or do you, or are you conscious of how you developed that idea of what culture was, of the process,
>
> Charlotte: By growing up, by being three years old, just like, culture is imparted.
>
> Caitlin: But your definition of culture, how do you think you have developed that?
>
> Charlotte: Oh, I don't think it's a definition at all, I don't think of it as a definition, I don't think it defines culture, I don't think it really particularly illuminates culture, um, I think it's more like a way of brushing the word aside and saying like, after we've used it, we can go back and look at what we have meant by it, more so than deciding ahead of time what we will mean when we say it.

This is an interesting point and reflects the sentiment of Borofsky et al. (2001) wherein the question is in reference to the idea of when culture is best used. Is it worthwhile to define culture? In the grand scheme of things, there may be more illusory terms, there

may be better descriptors for human interactions and societal values, but in terms of my research, asking about culture sheds light on many other things such as the cultural and epistemological assumptions that we make when having this type of discussion. By wishing to possibly "brush [the word culture] aside," what is Charlotte hoping to gain? Her unwillingness to engage with the definition, or to push aside the need for a definition is in contrast to her earlier assertion of a narrow conceptualization of culture as being linked to cultural products, namely fine arts.

In Chapter One, I introduced Edwin, a White male in his early twenties. I think our conversation bears further attention, and so I am partially repeating it here. When I asked Edwin about his definition of culture, our conversation went thusly:

> Edwin: I think that culture is something that, which grows out of a, which develops organically from a particular society's historical background and its circumstances, something that's dependent upon how the culture views itself and how it perceives outsiders to that society. Um, I think that the term culture is not necessarily… well, let me rephrase that. I think, it's a hard question.
>
> Caitlin: I know it's a hard question. Don't try and say what I want you to say, say what you think. I want to hear what you think.
>
> Edwin: Well, I don't know what I think. I think one of the reasons that I'm struggling with this definition is that the term culture is a composite of so many different things that define a society that it's really hard to come up with some kind of umbrella description of it. I could name things that I think are components of culture.

Caitlin: OK, Yeah.

Edwin: Of course an artistic tradition, the sort of folklore that we've been studying in class is definitely integral to a society's cultural identity and also its, I suppose, whatever subsistence practices that it uses, the things that, like, in the stories we read in class we see repeated references to ways people obtain food, how they provide for themselves, and that's an integral part of any culture's identity, I think. Um, besides that, I suppose different, I suppose the social fabric of any individual society is also a component of its culture. Different societies have defined kinship differently, different forms of kinship bonds are more important in some societies than in another, and, of course that comes to the forefront in their artistic tradition as well. I mean, I think what Plato says about tragedy is probably relevant. He says that tragedy is a type of story which brings to the forefront of the mind kinship relations, reinforces them, for the listener. So, yeah I suppose those different things interplay with one another, uh, since this is a conversation, do you have any feedback or additional thoughts?

Caitlin: Yeah, well, um…

Edwin: Sorry if I'm a little incoherent…

Edwin provides a good example of exactly how complex of a question this was for my participants. However, unlike the previous students, Edwin ties his answers back to our class, and is likely thinking inside that framework when he uses the terms "folklore" and "subsistence."

Cultural Difference

Most of the students spoke about cultural difference, either through the prompting of my interview questions, or organically in conversation. In the next excerpt, Charlotte is discussing Benjamin, a Yup'ik male student in his early 20s. He was well respected in class, a vocal participant, and treated by other students and the instructor with a sense of reverence. During one class period, he briefly dramatized a reading, including traditional singing and dancing from his region (fieldnotes).

From our previous discussions, I feel that she and I are shared similar thoughts about class, and about the cultural and behavioral differences manifesting on a daily basis, such as who feels comfortable engaging in discussion, who takes notes, and whose comments hold water with the other students and the instructor.

Caitlin: Do you think that cultural difference exists in our class?

Charlotte: Uh, Yes. (Laughs)

Caitlin: And, how do you see that manifest?

Charlotte: this is really sticky for me to stick with culture, as opposed to 'social,' and I might be thinking more about social differences.

Caitlin: OK, you can say social differences then, that's fine.

Charlotte: OK, um, if I'm trying to stick with cultural differences, then I see, like, I mean, I talked with, I had this conversation with Benjamin about how he learns by hearing, he's like "you see me, I don't write anything down, I don't" He didn't say exactly that, but he said, "you see me in class." I was like, yeah, I've seen you in class, he's telling me that he doesn't take notes, but that he remembers things.

> Because I was telling him "No I have no idea what the readings are, I would have to look at what I wrote down, like, do you have anything to write with, even if I told you, you know, we were outside the Pub (a campus tavern at UAF), it just seemed like a silly time to be talking about the assignment.

The variance between cultural difference and social difference may or may not be important to the meaning of her comment, it could be that she is using "social differences" as a code word, or a way of avoiding culture, but Charlotte alluded to the cultural/racial stereotype that Alaska Native students are primarily auditory learners, which in this case happened to be true, as Benjamin was clearly demonstrating that as a learning preference. The difficulty comes in Charlotte acknowledging this difference in Benjamin, but as I will discuss later, makes use of a similar stereotype to classify another Alaska Native student as "not a thinker."

Culture and Valuation

Paul, a mid-to-late 20 year old male who self-identified in class as "White," "Southern," and a "Man of God," but when interviewed also brought up a Cherokee relative, was one of the more outspoken members of class. The excerpt which follows, part of the conversation between Paul and myself, is interesting on several levels; first, Paul prescribes and assigns an identity and moral position to Native students, while at the same time remaining unaware or disinterested in the actual and material ways that Native students express themselves or perform their identity in class (Alexander et al., 2005).

He also outlines several conflicting positions:

> Paul: Um, I'd say most of our discussions are cross-cultural events, um, because you know, I wouldn't say I'm the most tolerant person in the world, but I love to hear new ideas and sometimes, you'll just throw an idea out there because you know it's going to get conversation, and you know, there's people in our class that are well educated, I mean very well educated, and uh, you know, they come, their ideas are well formulated, and you know, have lots of back-up to see, to hold them up, but then also we have, you know, very… you know, people who come from a very Native background, and theirs are more, their morality is more important than the knowledge…
>
> Caitlin: So, let me, like, so what I think I heard you say is that people from a Native background, their comments come from a moral place?
>
> Paul: Yeah, more of a moral place, uh not so much "so and so said this, in this book, and so and so said this in this book", so this is the idea, with all of this background knowledge. Theirs is, "Well, my grandfather told me that this is the way the world works," more from you know, "From the stories we've heard, this is what we believe," and then also, you have Christian spirituality coming through saying "Well you know, the Christian viewpoint is this," and you have other viewpoints coming in, you know, "This is what I think," so, you know, it all comes together and we are able to formulate.

Paul makes some critical distinctions here. Although Paul has likely not thought about where knowledge comes from, or who gets to decide what is considered knowledge, he is conflating the idea of morality with that of an oral tradition. At the same time, he may be

engaging in what I would categorized as a lessening discourse in terms of knowledge valuation.

By playing the Native students against the "well educated" students, he was, in effect, letting me know that Native students, aside from being heavily moral, are also not considered well educated, and further, that possibly two systems of knowledge are operating here in a definite duality if not hierarchy. This is an example of hegemonic diversity (Swartz, 2009) wherein difference is stratified with the 'self' holding a higher place than the 'other' in terms of value and power. This could also be a statement about access and equity of formal schooling for Alaska Native students, although formal schooling does not always equate to being 'well-educated.' This also comes through in his last comment about ideas "coming together." This is not a given, and I wonder if the other discussion participants feel as if their ideas are valuable to him.

Paul also talked about his own culture and learning in terms of morality as defined what culture was to him:

> Caitlin: So, what does the term 'culture' mean to you?
>
> Paul: Uh, well, it can be a lot of things, ah, I guess, mostly for me, it's a, what your family teaches you, what your family brings you up to learn, um, that becomes your culture, and of course, its different for every person, because we all have different parents. But, um, I think that that ultimately is your culture, what your parents bring you up, and then as you leave your parents house you kind of develop your own ideas. You pass those on to your children.
>
> Caitlin: So, do you mean, like, rules for how we behave?

Paul: I wouldn't say so much rules, because rules are a part of it, but it's more our, uh, morality, um, what governs how we act, and sometimes that's rules, and sometimes its, um, like personally for me, it's my spirituality, that's what governs how I act, not a set of rules.

Paul and I went on to talk about voices in class, and he offered a different perspective from what he had previously stated:

Caitlin: So what do you think are the loudest viewpoints in class?

Paul: The loudest viewpoints? Well, being a Native class (the class we have together), [of] course the Native viewpoint is going to be the loudest because it holds the most weight, um, if...

Caitlin: To you, or to the class, whom do you think it holds weight to?

Paul: Um, I hope I hope it holds weight to the rest of the class, and I know for me it holds a lot of weight because I'm observing their culture, um, I'm taking a class to learn about them. So, when the people we're learning about speak up, their opinions hold a lot of weight to me, because they've lived the culture. I've never lived the culture. Also, their opinion on what something means, um, they have a lifetime's of experience, so that opinion holds a lot of weight.

It is extremely interesting that Paul labels our English class a "Native" class, and that his interpretation of the purpose was to learn about Native students. Edwin also labeled the class, referring to it as a "Native Folklore Class." Paul's comment is somewhat like Lather's (1998), and Jones (1999), talk of the white desire to fully know

the other, to think of the other as a discrete unit for consumption, or in this case, study. This also shows Paul's assumption that the Alaska Native students in class have strong cultural ties to the stories we read, which was not always the case.

The course, while its focus was centered on traditional oral narratives, for the most part, used a purely "Western" analytical lens as its tool of textual analysis, as is evident in the excerpt from the syllabus at the beginning of the chapter, as well as the pedagogical style of the instructor being one of privileging story recall. Paul alludes to this and frames the Alaska Native students in class as token tradition bearers. He does not liken them to scholars by privileging their knowledge, and further develops his lessening discourse by labeling talk from Native students as "opinion" rather than framing it as truthful or valuable knowledge. That being said, the instructor did not provide an adequate alternative model during class periods, as he refrained and even shied away from making any sort of valuation or judgment.

Again, Paul shows confusion, which could also be symptomatic of what Solomona et al. (2005) term ideological incongruence, where "people can engage in and/or reinforce racist/sexist practices while simultaneously making claims to racial innocence," (p. 154), wherein he labels the other students' knowledge as "opinions" but also states that that "opinion holds a lot of weight." This is also evident in his treatment of the importance of "morality." He uses the term in a positive way when describing his spirituality and how that affects his decision-making and the ways in which he lives his life, but then uses it in a lessening way when he is talking about knowledge production, casting Native students against those he deems "well-educated."

My conversation with Edwin was also thought provoking in terms of valuation. In the following excerpt, I probe him further about his definition of culture, and we discuss how or if he sees himself as a cultural entity:

> Caitlin: No, no, it's all interesting to me, and I am interested in how you have come to that definition, 'cause I'm wondering if you, do you see yourself as a cultural entity?
>
> Edwin: That is a difficult question to answer nowadays I think, because, I mean we're supposed to be living in the age of postmodernism which is like some kind of big cultural vortex which sucks all of these different cultural ideas into it, and composes them into this big conglomerate idea about, postmodernism is a concept which absorbs so many different culture that it… and it doesn't seem to create any hierarchy with them, to give any preference to one over another. It's difficult when you are living in the age of postmodernism to define yourself by a particular culture, you can, I think perceive different cultures that you have parts of different cultures that you have absorbed into your personal identity, but I don't think that the idea of personal identity as something which emerges from a single cultural context is necessarily as defined.
>
> Caitlin: Hm. That's uh, that's an interesting idea.
>
> Edwin: At least in an age before globalism…
>
> Caitlin: The idea of globalization and…

Edwin: And also the recent advent of the idea that all cultures are equal and it's impossible to create some sort of hierarchy between civilized and barbaric cultures. We're supposed to perceive them as equal.

Caitlin: Do you think that… so do you think that we should…um. Ok. Personally, since this is a conversation, I look at culture as being not on an up and down scale, but on a parallel course, where it's, things are just different. One isn't necessarily better than anything else, um, but they're just different. Different ways of looking at the world, different ways of viewing problems.

Edwin: And I think that's core to our philosophy nowadays, at least most people's. That's the most socially acceptable way of perceiving different cultures, I think.

Caitlin: What about you, what do you think? Or, you don't have to tell me if you feel uncomfortable…

Edwin: Um, no, I tend to, I tend to view different cultures, I tend not to mentally place different cultures in a hierarchy, depending on their level of sophistication or development, it's, I like to perceive them as equal, but I suppose since I can identify with the Western tradition more, since that's where I am rooted, I, that's more, central to my personal identity than a number of other cultures, which I would say, or argue are still equal to the on I've been um, defined by.

Although I believe that Edwin is being honest about his own feelings of cultural parallelism, it is worth noting that he is using a binary of "civilized" and "barbaric," and also refers to levels of "sophistication." By using these terms, consciously or

unconsciously he is inherently ascribing value through connotations and loaded meanings. He also ties a parallel perception of cultures to what is socially acceptable.

Marking Cultural and Racial Difference

Problematic moments arose several times when cultural assumptions about knowledge production, value, and display made by white students in the class caused those who overheard them to stop, to pause, and then to move forward without much thought. Sally remarked to me one day outside of class about the inability of a classmate Bernadette, a female Yup'ik student in her 30s, whom she labeled "Yup'ik girl," to know or tell a traditional story, or to speak about storytelling to the class (Field notes 10/12/10). Charlotte made similar characterizations, again outside of class, of Bernadette, a quiet student, declaring her "Not a thinker" (Field notes 10/22/11).

During our interview, Sally also spoke about cultural difference, albeit in a way that was timid, fearful, and stifled, and unwilling:

> Caitlin: Um, do you think that cultural difference exists in our class? In our English class?
>
> Sally: Yeah, definitely.
>
> Caitlin: Uh huh, you want to say anything more about that?
>
> Sally: Well, I noticed that, um, from what I understand, um, Native people often don't talk as much, like they think through what they're going to say a lot more, before they say something, and there might be much longer pause before they speak up, and um, I know there are a few people in our class who are Native, and they don't really talk that much in class, and I was just

> thinking about that today in class. Wondering if it's a cultural thing or if they don't approve of the class? I'm not being critical or anything of them, I was just wondering.

Again, a difference is marked, and a classroom/ behavioral identity is prescribed. While Sally is seemingly displaying her 'understanding' of cultural difference in the classroom, it is a somewhat essentialized, un-nuanced and stereotypical version of that socially constructed difference (Castagno and Brayboy, 2008). By which I mean cultural difference is equated to the need for wait-time, rather than a transaction across cultural, epistemological or ontological divides. Sally mentions that she is unsure if the Alaska Native students in class approve of the instructor. This could be for several reasons, namely that the instructor is a White male, but she may have also wondering how the Alaska Native students in the class felt that the instructor treated the material at hand. I felt like she was looking for my opinion on the subject, but by couching her statement, stating, "I don't want to be critical..." Sally is distancing herself from any sort of critical engagement that would move beyond attacking the instructor, and might prove beneficial in addressing issues of authenticity, or cultural and intellectual ownership.

This lack of critical engagement, or the challenging of pop-cultural stereotypes was a common thread through to the last day of class when another student, Charles, asked "Don't we need tea with a lot of sugar in it to sort of go with all the Native food?" (field notes 12/13/10) while helping himself to a plate of pilot bread, smoked salmon, and cookies brought in by the instructor.

Also a thread in terms of being in class was my feeling somewhat uncomfortable. I think my background as a teacher in rural Alaska makes me extra sensitive to cultural and racial stereotypes because I have known and felt a deep responsibility for my students. Perhaps if I did not have relationships with children it would not have mattered so much to me when those problematic moments arose. But, I think that once one develops a sort of social justice consciousness, or cultural consciousness, it acts as your conscience.

During various class periods I heard classmates say things that were hurtful. I don't think it appropriate to identify who said them, but I do think it appropriate to mark what was said and the effects it had on me. Once, I heard a joke about Manifest Destiny and small pox. What does a joke like that sound like? It sounds nervous, it sounds tentative. I thought to myself "who tells a joke like that? Who laughs? Who is allowed to tell, and who to laugh?" Myself, a listener, I felt complicit. Like my mere presence in the room made me guilty, my being there was in bad taste. I felt a sense of violence in the telling, violence in the laughing. Could this joke create a space for learning? I am unsure.

While discussing a reading that was written in English, but maintained a dialect commonly and casually referred to as "Village English" a classmate suggested that we "ghetto-ize" our minds in order to understand it. Rural Alaska, cast as the ghetto. What similarities was the speaker getting at? Should we do the same when reading other dialects, would the same be said in another English class, when reading Twain's Huckleberry Finn, *or* Trainspotting *by Irvine Welsh?*

Frequently another classmate would use slang and profanity to refer to characters and plot events in traditional narratives. It was not uncommon to hear words like crap, piss, shit, junk, douche, and fuck, spoken out loud, in reference to the day's readings. I would sit in class and think about all of the words that could be used, all of the words that we have at our disposal, and this is what is chosen? My comments about culturally embedded themes in the literature such as intimacy and violence were taken by classmates to only mean weapons and sex.

These comments, these words, as they were spoken became real and entered into the minds of those who may become teachers. These comments with their inappropriateness, they express an inherent valuation of what is worth respecting, and what is not, and that is greatly troubling.

Conclusion

Culturally embedded power (through knowledge classification, labeling, and valuation), hegemonic diversity, constructed binaries of "White" and "other," the creation and manifestation of difference, and the experiential nature of discovery of the cultural self all signal an over-arching or umbrella theme of a lack of critical engagement between the participants and their notions of and frameworks for understanding culture and cultural difference. The concepts with which students were willing to engage signals several things, namely the importance of the master narrative in framing the ways they think about difference, the things that the participants feel comfortable talking about, and the ways that a conceptualization of culture as knowing, being and doing would greatly facilitate cultural competency within the participant population.

Perhaps the most striking implication from this section of the project is that students have real, different, and deeply held convictions, in culturally bound ways but no consistent framework for critically defining culture as habits of knowing, being, and doing. It seemed as if most of the students were not thinking about culture or cultural difference, even though they we actively participating in a course where culture, cultural difference, and material effects of culture were being discussed in implicit and explicit ways every single class period, three days a week. Also, I prefaced each interview by reminding students about the classroom context, asking them questions directly about class itself. If they did not choose to think or speak within that context, as many of them did not, it was not due to me leading them astray. As I mentioned in Chapter 4, I did not utilize many probes, as I felt that the participants would not have responded in a positive manner.

In the next chapter, I will provide data and analysis for the second group of interview participants. Their responses are somewhat similar to Group A, although important difference are also marked.

Chapter Six Interviews and Experiences with Group B

Introduction

In the coming chapter, I offer an analysis of the interviews from Group B, students from the School of Education class "Communication in Cross-Cultural Classrooms[19]" (henceforth CCCC). Commentary will be offered contrasting Group A with Group B, as it is beneficial to further understanding the similarities and differences important to the two populations. I will again provide a narrative account of my experience interwoven through the formal analysis, similar in format to the previous chapter.

The Classroom Setting

CCCC met Tuesdays and Thursdays in a basement classroom of the Brooks building, a recently remodeled structure on lower campus which houses programs and services directed toward the needs of Alaska Native and rural students including Rural Student Services. The classroom was average size for this University, and had a bank of windows along one side. The desks were generally arranged in rows, with just enough desks for the number of students. The instructor sat or stood at a long narrow table at the front of the room, utilizing both of the dry-erase boards, as well as the LCD projector, and TV/VCR, which were all located on the front wall. Students generally picked an area

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[19] The course description is "Interdisciplinary examination of communication and language in cross-cultural educational contexts, including language, literacy and interethnic communication related to classrooms in Alaska" (UAF Course Catalog, 2011-2012).

within the room and always sat within the same 4 or 5 desks/spots. I chose a desk in the rear corner, near the windows.

Students in CCCC showed much more collegiality with one another than did the participants in Group A (those in NAANP). This is most likely due to my classmates having taken quite a few courses together previously, as well as concurrent to CCCC. Occasionally for group work, we would move the desks into small groupings of between four and six.

Pedagogically speaking, the class was varied. The instructor lectured, we discussed the readings, watched pertinent videos, listened to guest speakers, and undertook group projects and presentations.

The course goals, as listed by the instructor in the syllabus include:

> Through readings, audio-visual materials, in-class activities, and guest presentations, students will explore historical and contemporary issues in cultural/ethnic diversity and classroom communication. Course materials focus on a range of topics including language and identity, language and literacy, bilingual education, and indigenous language revitalization efforts.
>
> This is a seminar style course – I will encourage you to take a critical approach in reviewing course materials and during class discussions. Please come to class prepared to discuss readings and audiovisual in respectful and cooperative ways. I do not expect students to always agree with me, with each other, or with any/all of the course materials; however I expect you to be respectful of other's ideas even if you disagree with them. Course activities will include small group

> discussions around topics and issues, two short Blackboard discussion forum assignments, one group/panel presentation and a final paper. (Leonard, 2010)

The above description is in line with how the instructor interacted with and engaged students, specifically the "right" of each class member to have opposing viewpoints. The following readings were used during the semester: The skin that we speak: Thoughts on language and culture in the classroom, edited by L. Delpit and J. K. Dowdy; To remain an Indian: Lessons in democracy from a century of Native American education, edited by K. T. McCarty, and T. L. Lomawaima; With a vision beyond our immediate needs: Oral traditions in an age of literacy, by E. Mather; Diversity vs. white privilege, by C. Sleeter; and The language we know, by S. Ortiz.

Looking back, few problematic moments happened during my time in this class, save for the specific experience which I will detail in the section "Responses," surrounding the discussion of a book chapter on anti-racist education. My lack of recognizing tension in class could be from several things, namely that after NAANP my sense of what exactly constituted a problematic moment had become dulled or de-sensitized. As I will further detail in the coming sections, my experience in class, the relationships I had with other students, and the interviews themselves were qualitatively different from Group A.

The Interviews

Interviews with this group of participants were conducted in the same setting and manner as those from the previous group, Group A. After reading from the script, and

asking the participants to think inside the context of CCCC, the following questions were asked of the participants[20]:

- What do the terms culture and cross-culture mean to you?
- Do you think cultural difference exists in our class?
- Do you think about our class being a cross-cultural event or activity?
- Does that affect the way that you relate to other students or the text?
- Can you think of a particular topic, discussion, day, or reading from class that stands out as an example of cultural difference or a cross-cultural event? Can you describe it for me?
- Is there anything else that you would like to talk about?

Relationships and Initial Differences

The following two statements were made in response to an interview follow-up question about self-culture.

"I'm Vanilla"

Interview participant Larry, April 2011[21]

"Average people don't think about those types of things."

Interview participant Daniel, April 2011

[20] For a copy of the complete interview script, see Appendix D

[21] The interviews discussed in this section took place in early May of 2011. To ease readability, the interview dates will not be listed after each quote. A list of all interview participants, along with the interview date, and observable demographic data is located in Appendix G.

Larry, a middle-aged White male, replied in a frank but joking way, and Daniel, a Latino male in his early 20s replied in what I took to be a somewhat puzzled manner. Both quotes foreshadow the remaining responses in several ways. Firstly, they show an unwillingness (whether it be inability, ignorance, or naïveté) to engage in a discussion about culture, and secondly, they signal a framing of what is ordinary, "vanilla," "average," or as Ladislaus Semali (1998) states, "familiar notions" which he argues are often the "least examined" (p. 177).

These interviews were, on a whole, qualitatively different from those conducted with Group A. The relationships that I developed with this group were far more adversarial in nature. I struggled to gain trust with the participants, as well as classmates that did not choose to become interview participants.

Reflecting upon my time in class (as the interviews themselves were conducted toward the end of the semester), I have tried to pinpoint why this was, to pinpoint why the relationships felt strained, and have come to the following conclusions; the difference in terms of experience between my classmates as preservice teachers, and myself, as someone who has spent time in a classroom as a certified teacher; and my positioning as a graduate student perhaps creating a perceived and uncomfortable power differential. The other event that influenced this discomfort or tension came about from a class discussion I facilitated, wherein the other students and I read and discussed the article "Taking Multicultural, Anti-racist Education Seriously: An interview with Enid Lee" (Lee, 2009).

The article was not well received by a majority of the students, and several of them voiced the opinion that they felt as if Lee was attacking them personally. The students expressed a dislike of the word "racism," and openly wondered if there was another term that didn't have such negative connotations. Lee uses the term "anti-racist education" rather than "multicultural education" (2009, p. 10). She argues that, "if you don't take multicultural education or anti-racist education seriously, you are actually promoting a monocultural or racist education" (Lee, 2009, p. 10). Although some students were mildly inspired, in written responses to me required by the professor, some made troubling comments.

Stella, a White female in her mid-20s, remarked upon the experience during her interview as a time in class that felt cross-cultural, or where she felt cultural difference. Stella stated, "I felt like White people were being attacked...I feel like she's portraying us negatively." I felt as if the above quote from Enid Lee's piece is where some of the students stopped reading, or stopped listening. Students were unwilling to think of themselves as promoting racist education and did not react well to Lee's assertion that teachers are either one thing or the other, someone who takes multicultural education seriously, or one who promotes monoculture, and therefore a form of racist education.

The students' negative reactions to the Lee piece, as well as to my class facilitation as a whole affected me deeply. I wanted to provide a stimulus to the other students, to slightly push them out of their comfort zone, and to provide an opportunity for them to confront their own ideas and stereotypes; I did not want to alienate them during this process. As someone looking forward to many years of class facilitation in the

future, I felt like a failure, it made me sad and frustrated, and like I had something to prove. That being said, I do feel that the participants were frank and honest with me during the interview process, but some if not most were unwilling to engage in the type of lengthy rich dialogues associated with Group A.

Beyond those differences, I conducted several more interviews (a total of 11, compared to 7 with Group A) with this group, as the class size was larger. Although the same interview questions were used, different themes emerged, and the quality of the interviews was different. This was not only because students were thinking about our relationship, being in the same education course together, but also how course readings and class discussions influenced their interview answers. Categorically, the interviews were less conversational in nature as well. Often the participants were short with me, uncomfortable or unwilling to provide detailed responses to my questions yet wanting to talk in detail about seemingly loosely related matters.

The safe space provided in the interview context allowed for previously unspoken ideas to be said, to enter the world and to hold space. I envisioned them as the boiling undercurrents beneath the clear and predictable waves of classroom discussion. There were several instances where an interview participant was curt with me during the recorded portion of the interview, and then once I finished asking questions, and they signaled they were done answering them, I would turn off the recorder only to be bombarded and blindsided by inflammatory comments. One participant in particular, spent fifteen minutes after the interview belittling me, degrading the SOE program, and

providing me with his/her version of negative commentary provided by other classmates to him/her about the nature of the class, and multicultural education in general.

This type of exchange was prevalent with other members of Group B, although not to the same extent. I had several encounters with interview participants outside of the classroom and the interview, such as in other buildings on campus, on the campus parking lot shuttle, etc. Knowing my interview participants, having relationships with them, and also with the SOE added complications to presenting the interview data, as well as providing additional information anecdotally about outside interactions with the participants. My fear is that by providing the "extra" information, I would be exploiting the relationships that I had and continue to have with the interview participants. Of course, some of this comes through in my writing and analysis, as the interactions I had, and continue to have with the participants inform the ways in which I have approached the data.

Participant Responses

The focus of participant response during these interviews was centered on difference and race. Culture was either non-existent in the discussion, or minimized by the participants into a binary of same/different, as everyday, commonplace, or unimportant. Short answers were prevalent, such as a person's "upbringing," "background," and being from a "certain area," which were mentioned by nine of the eleven participants. It was in this way that the discussions became polarized into the ordinary and the exotic, reminiscent of the romanticizing mentioned by Tanaka (2009). A

binary likely already existed in the participants' minds between White and Alaska Native students, or between themselves and all others, and this was quite evident in their interview responses, as I will outline in the pages to come.

A subtle undercurrent of willingness and unwillingness flowed through the interviews. By this I mean a feeling for what was proper, what participants were scared of in terms of engaging difference and talking about culture, and more specifically the ways in which my questions about culture were seen and taken to be questions about race and ethnicity (Hytten and Warren, 2003). The ways in which race and racial stereotypes got in the way of culture was at times surprisingly overt. Little of the conceptualization of culture as habits of knowing, being, and doing came through in these interviews, and that was a large disappointment to me.

Unlike Group A, the responses from this group fit into several categories established by the interview questions themselves. The responses also fit well into the categories established by Rose and Potts (2011) of colorblindness, race being unimportant in the classroom, and culture as equating to a specific geographic area. Also relevant in this discussion is the work done by Tanaka (2009), specifically the effects of mainly White students lacking a way to acknowledge and name their own culture, in reference to what the students see and label as the exotic culture of the other.

Taking into account the above, the following themes emerged from the interview data; 1) Diversity and binary categories; 2) Outside influences; and 3) Cultural difference. Within these categories, I will also discuss the participants' responses

surrounding class itself, whether they felt it was a cross-cultural event, and their other responses about class that don't fit easily into established categories.

Diversity and Binary Categories

When asked about whether or not cultural difference existed in class, the interview participants provided a wide variety of answers. Stella remarked, "Most of us have common beliefs, there's not a lot of diversity in class." Stella assumes that diversity is based upon observable characteristics only, makes the connection between cultural difference and beliefs, and invokes the idea of diversity, which turns out to be a contentious term for this group.

Mary, another White female in her mid-20s states, "it doesn't seem like there's that much diversity, oh I hate to use that word." Mary was uncomfortable, and unwilling to use the word "diversity." To her, it had a negative connotation, and was "not specific." Mary also stated, contradictorily, that, "There's a bunch of Alaska Natives in this class." This was equally surprising and baffling to me. As previously mentioned, there were only a couple of students who self-identified as Alaska Native in class. At one point, speaking about prospective students, Alaska Native children she may some day have in her class as a teacher, she remarked, "wow, I am so different from what these people are like." But, Mary identifies strongly as "Alaskan." She maintains an Alaskan identity, while at the same time distancing herself from an Alaska Native other, whom she sees as remarkably dissimilar. To me, this points to the larger divide in the state itself as mentioned in Chapter Two.

Mary's comments were somewhat similar to those of Millie, who as I will detail below, remarked, "it's a nice balance!" in a conversation about classroom diversity. For Mary and Millie, the number of Alaska Native students in class was enough to count, enough for them to take notice and to make the class feel somewhat diverse, but for both women to remain comfortably in the cultural/racial/ethnic majority.

Some of Mary's behavior is also similar to that detailed in Rose and Potts (2011) wherein preservice teachers were interested in creating a "colorblind sameness," and with the preservice teachers "only willing to confirm 'difference' between students in terms of human individuality and 'personality" in the classroom setting (p. 8). On the other hand, once Mary got past the idea of having to think about and use the word diversity, she did acknowledge the idea of difference, albeit in a peculiar and contradictory way, similar to the idea of ideological incongruence mentioned by Solomona, Portelli, Daniel, and Campbell (2005), and defined and used in the previous chapters.

The cultural, ethnic, and racial make up of the class was a "hot" topic for the interview participants. Millie, a White female in her early 20s, when asked whether or not she saw CCCC as being cross-cultural in nature replied as follows:

> Caitlin: So do you think that cultural difference exists in the class that we have together?
>
> Millie: I think so…
>
> Caitlin: Yeah, I think so too.
>
> Millie: People have different beliefs.

Caitlin: So then do you think of our class as being cross-cultural in nature, or being a cross-cultural activity or event?

Millie: I think so, cause we have people from all different backgrounds and, like, we've got a lot of, I think we have Alaska Natives, and Caucasians, so it's kind of that nice balance, between, you, cause if we're all one group, then it would be kind of teaching to that one style, but... I think its kind of fun.

Caitlin: Yeah. So, do you, since you think it's sort of a cross-cultural space, which I do too, does that sort of change the way that you act, or do you think about that when you're going to that class?

Millie: Kind of in the class, and going to my field work too, since I'm at Effie Kokrine[22], I definitely, when I'm in the classroom I talk differently than when I'm in my field work where we're close together, and it's kind of uncomfortable at times because you're so close. But, I guess that's part of the setting, the style, is they all are close together, and they are used to working that close together.

In this section of transcript, Millie echoes some of Mary's sentiment about the perceived niceness, or comfortableness of the racial make-up of class. Again, the students have created an oversimplified racial binary between a (mostly) White self, and Alaska Native other (simplifying whiteness and Alaska Native-ness into discrete racial categories

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22 Millie is referring to Effie Kokrine Charter School, where many of the students in CCCC did required fieldwork. Effie, as it affectionately know was begun through a collaboration between the local school district, UAF, the Alaska Native Knowledge Network, and several Alaska Native organizations including Doyon Foundation, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Fairbanks Native Association, and the Association for Interior Native Educators. Effie is seen locally as a small school, as well as being referred to as a "Native School" although all students grades 7-12 are welcome. For more information, please see http://ekc.k12northstar.org

rather than piecing each out into more meaningful subcategories or thinking in terms of culture), as well as keeping themselves in a comfortable racial majority. Millie does not, however, answer the question posed to her. This may be attributable to many things such as her not understanding what the term cross-cultural means, that she thinks race and culture are the same thing (something perpetuated by a multitude of factors in our society including government and other forms), or it may be that she was waiting for an entrée to talking about race.

A response by Roland, a White male in his early 20s who considers himself White, and also self-identifies as German, Japanese and Scotch Irish complicates the idea of the White/Alaska Native binaries. He remarks that, "you have Native, White, and then the White kind of divides up in different actual ethnicities." Roland can see how whiteness is an oversimplification of his own identity, but does not further extend the thought into how other categories such as Alaska Native (in this case) may signal similar oversimplification.

As is noted above, my desire to engage in dialogue about cultural difference was effectively shifted by the participants toward talking about racial, ethnic, and cultural binaries of White and Alaska Native. Interview participants both constructed this difference, and then subsequently worked toward minimizing it by thinking only in terms of race, and by simplifying culture into the afore mentioned essentialism of place-based upbringing. Several of the interview participants were hesitant or resistant toward using the phrase "diversity," which is interesting when contrasted with the variety of responses regarding whether or not class was a cross-cultural event or place. All but one participant,

Larry, thought that class was at least 'maybe' a cross-cultural event or activity. Perhaps students are not linking the two concepts of diversity and cross-culture together, it could be that they think of diversity outside the boundaries of culture, and more in terms of gender, age, race, etc.

Outside Influences

Tan and Lefebvre (2010), in their study of preservice teachers in Quebec, Canada detail the ways in which outside ideas of culture and society influence how preservice teachers take up and internalize efforts of faculty to promote multi-cultural education. Not surprisingly, outside influences are at work here as well. SOE students bring with them all of their lived experiences with diversity (cultural, racial, ethnic, ability, gender, etc.) to the university classroom, just as the students that they will someday teach will bring their own. Several key things are operating within this specific population of teacher candidates, namely the influence of the military, and also ideas of Alaskan and U.S. American identity.

Helen, a White female in her early 20s, and self-proclaimed life-long resident of North Pole[23] stated in reference to her classmates, that regardless of cultural difference, "they are just classmates, they're not foreigners!" This comment illustrates several things, namely that Helen believes things like culture, race, and ethnicity are not as important as nationality, and that some how our unity and sameness provided by being U.S. Americans trumps other forms of difference. Also tied up in this statement are Helen's

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[23] North Pole, Alaska is a small city to the east of Fairbanks. The socially conservative and Christmas-themed city is home to two oil refineries and is located between Eielson Airforce Base and Fort Wainwright Army Base.

possible beliefs about who is an American, who is foreign, and that she would be able to easily tell who is and is not "foreign.[24]"

Cindy, a White female in her mid-40s, and also a resident of North Pole was my most resistant participant. She was at times defensive, and at other times acted in what I perceived as a strangely mothering way toward me. She would attempt to establish rapport by touching my arm near the elbow, whilst in class, and then at other times say biting remarks, such as she did after our interview had ended. She also dominated the beginning of the interview before I attempted to get the conversation back on track;

> Caitlin: I want to kind of shift gears now and think about the class that we are in together. So, do you think that cultural difference exists in our class?
>
> Cindy: Within the students... I kinda feel like within our class there's a cultural difference because there's so much attention pointed to Alaska Native. Um, and I get the influence there because we are in Alaska. I think that's where the difference comes. I don't think within our students there necessarily is a cultural difference. I think the common theme of education, and what we're all going toward, even though we have the three music majors, there's still an element of education. We've... I think that common goal or common theme, unites us. I do think that the class has had quite a bit of tension, or... a lot of kids have just felt it's kind of a waste of their time. They feel like they've probably gotten all of what's there, and that two Saturday classes would be sufficient for what was

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[24] During the course of the class, one student shared that they were an international student from Canada. Helen knew this, yet still did not think of this student as a foreigner in the context of our interview.

covered. And, so, how they apply that in the classroom is more up to them. I think there's good and bad to do with the whole thing but, they wish that there would have been more cultures talked about, than just specifically spotlighting Alaska Natives so much.

Caitlin: I think the way, uh, and I don't want to talk for the instructor, but the way that I kind of think about it is, that, uh, that's the context that we're in, you know, and I think it's more about consciousness raising. Because it's so hard to cover every single culture, I mean I don't think we could, so it's like let's cover one thing, or a set of related things, in depth, so then we know what kinds of questions to ask when we are faced with other types of difference.

Cindy: Yeah, and maybe if was illuminated more that way. You know? I don't know. I think though, with as much emphasis as has been put on in the school systems, you're getting a whole new group of students at that level that have already had Alaska Studies. They've already done the Alaska Room[25] since they've been in Kindergarten, they're coming out, and they are asking themselves "really? We know about Alaska Natives, we're here, we deal with it every day. It's part of our being." Maybe some of the kids from, you know, other places that are coming in, that's a new experience. I could see how that class would be very relevant to the teacher that comes from the lower 48, and is applying for the

[25] What Cindy is referring to is a resource room in a local school that acts as a place for teachers to procure resource materials, and for students to come to learn about Alaska Native cultures.

district here, and is just needing, you know, to get those extra certifications[26]. And they would probably get more out of it than your kids that have been here, since the beginning of time. (she laughs)

Caitlin: Yeah, but I think too, you can live in Fairbanks, and live in Alaska and not critically examine race, critically examine difference.

Cindy: True.

Caitlin: So, I think that is the piece that a lot of students are missing. *(Here I was internally conflicted. I felt like I needed to provide a response to her, to refute her statements, but at the same time, I felt that the purpose of the interview was not to win her over).*

Cindy: Maybe.

Caitlin: It's that, like, "oh yeah, I see Alaska Native people all the time, I have Alaska Native friends, and you know, I'm not racist," but there's not that critical examination of, like, the historical stuff, or language, because we just don't think about that stuff [on a daily basis] unless someone asks us to think about it, or we have some type of event.

Cindy: Yeah, that's true.

Caitlin: Yeah, so that's how I kind of try to phrase it, but um,

Cindy: it's a good point. [I felt like this sentence was insincere.]

Cindy states, "we know about Alaska Natives, we deal with it every day, it's part of our being." This begs the questions: So—what do they know? What are we 'dealing'

[26] To obtain a professional teaching certificate in the state, applicants must have 6 credits of multicultural and Alaska studies.

with? Although Cindy states that she possesses an understanding, not once during the interview did she talk about what she knew about any Alaska Native group, or how this knowledge related to the classroom. I tried to get this across to her in my comments, although she was relatively uninterested in my interpretation.

Cindy did shed light on an interesting aspect of the interview population and how their unique experiences outside of UAF SOE inform their thinking about culture, multicultural endeavors and cultural difference. As Tan and Lefebvre write, the ways in which students interpret outside societal factors "complicate their negotiations" of multicultural themed coursework (2010, p. 379.) Cindy moved to the area because of the military and has military connections within her family, as do many of my interview participants from Group B. During her interview she shared that in the military "everyone is working toward the same goal." In this way, individual differences are minimized in favor of getting the job done.

Daniel, a Latino male in his early 20s, self-identified as racially Mexican/Spanish but culturally as Texan/American. He described himself as a "military brat," having grown up in the military environment, and having been moved around a lot by his parents as a child. When asked about culture, he contended that, "average people don't think about those types of things." In response to the follow-up question about self-culture, or one's own cultural identity he states, "obviously I'm ethnic, [but] it's not a huge part of what I am, it doesn't inform me." Daniel does think about himself insofar as his "ethnicity," and it would be interesting to know exactly what counts as an average person to him. His comment is also a remarkable indicator of the ordinariness, the pervasiveness

of dysconsciousness. By stating what ordinary people don't do, he normalizes the uncritical. By affirming the non-influence of his ethnic background, he also works to possibly delegitimize those that are informed by their ethnicity.

Helen, Cindy, and Daniel all bring their life experiences to bear in the classroom, and their experiences, specifically those related to living in North Pole and their military backgrounds appear to heavily influence the way that they are thinking about and describing culture in ways that are not as easily apparent with the other participants.

Cultural Difference and Self-Culture

While participants appeared relatively unwilling to engage in a discussion of what culture was, per se, some did offer their ideas of cultural difference outside the constructs of a binary opposition between White and Alaska Native. Most of these responses were in reference to follow up questions regarding the culture of the self.

Lorene, a White female in her late teens or early 20s, grew up in rural Alaska, and sees herself as culturally Iñupiat, but racially White. As she explained in her interview, her mother "packed [them] up" from where they were living in the lower 48, and moved to northwest Alaska. Lorene told me that, "it's the same; *people* wherever you go, they just live differently." Her thinking that 'people are people' is related to the idea of being "colorblind," but it also is related to the popular notion that culture in and of itself, as well as how it operates in our daily lives is primarily tied to a specific geographic place (Rose and Potts, 2011). I believe what Lorene was getting at is that people are united by their humanity but slightly separated by the characteristics influenced by geography. Seemingly, this is a place-based assertion of culture. Meyer (2001) and others might

agree with this place-based assertion of culture, but it is not unproblematic. Culture is tied to place, but by essentializing culture to only place provides, as Rose and Potts (2011) suggest, "justification for [the] notion that culture [is] not significant" (p. 10).

Looking back on my own experiences in a teacher preparation program, particularly one that focused on diversity and equity in education, I can't remember if I ever felt this same way, although I do remember a time when I was thinking about "not seeing color" as a way to make sure that I was being thoughtful about diversity. As Rose and Potts (2011) note, this may be a developmental stage for those acquiring a critical multicultural consciousness. This may be a common way that cultural relevance is taken up and used by teacher candidates.

Interestingly, Lorene spoke from a bicultural point of view, mixing her "southern upbringing" with her experience in bush Alaska, and speaking interchangeably as a cultural insider from both a "southern[27]" and Iñupiaq perspective. At the same time, she offered a very essentialized and stereotypical view of both, speaking in terms of "city schools," being a place for White children, and then stating that in rural Alaska "children run around half-naked, even in winter." Lorene is also providing another example of dysconscious racism and ideological incongruence with her comments (King, 1991, Solomona et. al, 2005). She makes what could be, at best the repetition of an ugly stereotype, and at worst a racist comment in one sentence, but then she made habit of

[27] Lorene described herself in terms of both being from "the South" as well as being female, so as a southern woman. To her, this indicated a certain sense of morality and demure comportment.

using "we" when speaking about Alaska Native issues during the interview itself, signaling an emotional and cultural connection and investment.

Mary also made an interesting point about culture. She stated, "you don't think about your culture until you see other people's." This reflects some of the interview data and experiences from Group A, wherein students used the knowledge gained during study abroad, or as foreign exchange students to frame their own culture, and to get a first-hand understanding for how cultural difference manifests itself. The sense of difference may also be heightened due to linguistic difference as well.

Several participants echoed Tanaka's (2009) assertion of the dissolution of the White subject; students do not have adequate ways of thinking and talking about their own cultural identity, how that identity functions on a large scale in everyday life, and on a small scale, in classrooms.

Elaine, a White female in her early 20s, self-identified as culturally Italian, and explained how this plays out, singularly, in terms of the "importance of families." In the end, when pushed to offer a more concrete example, she stated, "I'm just me." This is similar to the responses by Larry, a White male in his 40s-50s, who exhibited no concept of cultural self, only the absence of culture. Larry stated, "I'm Vanilla."

Larry was also the only student in Group B who verbally and explicitly expressed the idea of being jealous, or that 'culture' and its various habits and products can be framed as a competition, which is an important distinction. The idea of seeing oneself *without* culture and the other *with* culture, would naturally create a sense of longing for the other, the desirous relationship outlined by Jones (1999). I was surprised that of the

Group B participants, only Larry made this distinction. The desire to consume, to know, or to have the material effects of culture such as food, clothing, and visual art products, or the non-material parts such as oral traditions and specific kinship beliefs was not mentioned as often as I had suspected it would be. Rather, participants were more likely to show resistance to multicultural endeavors, and attempt to minimize not just cultural difference, but the *importance* of cultural difference.

Resistance to the Focus of the Class

As I mentioned earlier, several of the interview participants made comments about the course itself after the interviews were over. Most participants made at least one comments about class itself, generally in response to my question about whether or not they felt that class was cross-cultural in nature. As previously mentioned, Cindy stated that, "the Alaska Native focus causes more difference in class. There is no difference between students; we have a common goal, the tension is a waste of time." Cindy was categorically opposed to recognizing any type of difference. She believed that tension exists, but did not find it meaningful, only destructive. Also, she signified no way of understanding or coping with difference other than to pretend that it does not exist. This is not helpful or promising in terms of creating preservice teachers with any type of cultural competency.

Cindy went on to say, "it's just a bunch of multi-cultural crap and I don't care." I wonder if this part the backlash that critical scholars and activists such as Michael Apple (beginning with his book Education and Power in 1995) or Tim Wise (most recently in Dear White America; A letter to the new minority in 2012) write about. I also wonder if

this is due to her military background. In thinking back over the entire project, this is one of the moments that stood out the clearest in my mind, and one that troubled me greatly at the time. That she would be so resistant was upsetting to me as a teacher, and also as someone tied to the SOE.

Roland also spoke to me about CCCC during his interview. He added, "I think we go into 'Native' a lot because it's really accessible, but if you live in any other part of the country you're going to have to deal with 'others." This is an interesting detail because the SOE prides itself on producing educators who understand the Alaskan context. A course on cross-cultural communication, taught at UAF, in Fairbanks Alaska, by a Deg Hit'an Athabascan professor, should naturally start and find grounding in Alaska Native ways of communicating. Likely, the connection that Roland was not making, was in seeing the "go[ing] into Native" as a starting place, a pedagogical tool to provide frameworks for other situations where cross-cultural communicating is necessary and applicable. Roland's comment may also be attributable to his not taking the course readings seriously, as the assigned readings came from culturally and linguistically varied sources.

Participants aside from Roland and Cindy showed resistance to the course materials and subject matter. Many of the comments in the above sections also show a troubling covert resistance to multicultural educational practices, and more than that, they show a shallow understanding of the importance of culture and cultural difference, especially in regards to the educative process.

Conclusion

Participants in Group B show both resistant and confused behavior when confronted with the task of defining and talking about culture, cross-cultural activities and cultural difference. The students were reluctant to talk about culture and favored talking in terms of race, and specifically in terms of the racial binaries of White and Alaska Native.

When we view the above through a lens focused on valuation of culture, and evaluation of difference, a continuum is present suggesting a hegemonic view of cultural diversity wherein the following occurs:

- Difference is ignored or minimized.
- Racial binaries are constructed as an easier way of thinking about difference, rather than engaging the notion of culture. In this instance, it becomes White/other, ordinary/exotic, with the exotic being minimized, lessened, and seen at times as irritating.

The outside influences of the military, as well as the ideas, cultural stories and stereotypes the participants brought with them about Alaska, and Fairbanks specifically, manifest themselves as resistance to multiculturalism, and overpower the efforts of SOE to foster cultural competence in this specific group of preservice teachers.

Chapter Seven Conclusions and Thinking Forward

Introduction

In order to focus purely on UAF undergraduates, school children and their families and communities have largely been left out of this specific project. Aside from being integral to the mission of the UAF SOE, the effects of multicultural training, or the lack thereof, directly affect school children. Indigenous scholar Gregory Cajete writes that, "there is a shared body of understanding among many Indigenous people that education is really about helping an individual find his or her face, which means finding out who you are, where you come from, and your unique character" (2000, p. 183). Finding one's face also centers on relationships, and the learning of one's place within relationships in terms of who a person is accountable *to*, and responsible *for*.

While education is arguably about much more than finding one's place within relationships, Cajete provides a starting place for making education meaningful and relevent. At the SOE, the trick is to not only help college students see their own face, but to also teach them the importance of helping young people to do the same. Integral to this are several things; first, the ability to recognize culture and cultural difference in themselves, and second, the ability and willingness to think about how cultural difference manifests inside their future classrooms.

Summary

What do these two seemingly discrete cases say to each other? The students in Group A after all, were not in an education class, per se. I began this project by detailing

a "problematic moment" (Kent and Cumming, 2008), wherein research participant Cindy described multicultural education as "crap." Cindy, like many of my interview participants in both courses, lacked any impetus for understanding the role of culture, or how the ways in which knowing, being, and doing are culturally bound. Her interview response foregrounded my research questions of how assumptions about culture and frameworks for understanding culture are demonstrated at UAF, what influences these frameworks, and most importantly, how culture and cultural difference are being constructed by the education majors at UAF SOE, who are a part of the University as a whole.

Outside my research questions, I also began by asking several guiding questions prompted by two scholarly pieces written about the School of Education by former UAF faculty: one by Lisa Delpit (1995), and the other by Perry Gilmore, David Smith, and Larry Kairaiuak (1997). I asked what has changed and what has remained the same. Delpit wrote about the faculty dispositions as a simple binary between those who accept teacher candidates from outside the traditional mainstream, and those who do not. She speaks in terms of Alaska Native and White teacher candidates, as do Gilmore, Smith and Kairaiuak; the latter group focusing on the destructive damage done by a former School of Education faculty member in directly calling into question the grading policies of the University as they pertain to Alaska Native students.

Delpit, Gilmore, Smith and Kairaiuak are not constructing a racial binary, they are illustrating that one already exists in the minds of those at UAF, and, really, in the surrounding setting of Fairbanks, Alaska. The ways in which the Alaska Master Narrative

permeates the cultural understandings of my participants are vast, but mainly manifest as cultural and racial stereotypes, remnants of colonialism and symptoms of whiteness.

Participants from Group A, those in the English class on traditional narratives, also responded with binary categories. They spoke in terms of self and other, although they had, generally speaking, a difficult time engaging in a meaningful conversation about cultural difference aside from essentializing comments. Participants in Group A also showed a lack of critical engagement with their assumptions about culture, cross-cultural situations, and cultural difference.

Participants from Group B, students in the Education class on multicultural communication were even more preoccupied with answering questions in terms of racial binaries. Their focus was diverted away from culture, and was, instead fixated on creating space between White and Alaska Native. Students worked on creating separation and difference, and then worked equally hard on minimizing the effects of that difference as it applied to classroom situations. For the participants, their responses about culture were simplified into answers about upbringing, background, and geographic area.

Culture as habits of knowing, being, and doing was not a conceptualization offered by the participants from Group A or B. However, this is not surprising when taken up with the fact that many of the participants felt as if they themselves were without culture, or that culture itself is not important. If students can't find meaning or value in their own culture, how are they then supposed to find it in the culture of others? All in all, the participants appeared confused; they showed both dyconscious racism outlined by King (1991) as well as ideological incongruence outlined by Solomona,

Portelli, Daniel, and Campbell (2005). Many participants made contradictory statements when probed about their understanding of culture, their ideas about the importance of multicultural education, and the ways in which they spoke about cultural groups, including their own.

Throughout this project, I have been desperately looking for hope, or for hopeful elements. As should have been evident through the autoethnographic parts and pieces, this has been a difficult research journey for me. The interviews wore me down, and the data analysis made any type of emotional healing gained through time and distance fragile again. The problematic moments in class, the awkward responses during the interviews, and the interactions that happened outside of either of those two situations weighed heavily on me. My intermingled roles as UAF student, SOE staff, graduate research assistant, adjunct faculty, and elementary school teacher with memories of classrooms full of children have created a deep investment into not only teacher education, but also, specifically, the School of Education at UAF.

The suggestions that I will put forth below for both story-based, and heavily structured, experiential pedagogy, are borne of this investment and the relationships that I have with SOE students, staff, and faculty. The suggestions that I make for future research and projects come from my desire to see SOE engage its full potential.

It has become apparent to me that students need structured experiences to help them understand not only what culture is, but also the importance of culture and cultural diversity in regards to education. In the next section, I will provide some recommendations on how create these experiences.

Thoughts for the Future

Moving to a school-wide conceptual framework that privileges story based-pedagogy holds significant value as a way of learning the above. Rosaldo (1989) and Bruner (1968) both suggest that recognizing what seem like small cultural variances is best approached through a narrative framework, and by thinking about habits of knowing, being, and doing.

Author and Indigenous scholar Greg Sarris (1993), in using story in the college classroom promotes what Richard Paul terms "strong sense critical thinking" wherein "teachers must enable students to 'see beyond their world views that distort their perception and impede their ability to reason clearly" (p. 152). This type of critical thinking is different from the idea of criticality which Sarris links to "interpretive acts depend[ing] largely on the thinker's tie to a given knowledge base" (p. 153). "Strong sense" thinking allows for the culturally bound nature of critical thought, and opens up story and course materials for interpretation and discussion outside cultural or educational norms. This also provides a type of framework for engaging problematic moments, dysconscious racism, and ideological incongruence, interrogating the worldviews and stories that undergird students' comments and reactions to educational experiences.

Story-based pedagogy and strong sense critical thinking allow for students to think about what stories are being told through our teaching, through the course materials, and by the students themselves. Further, it allows students to make sense of their world, their previous experiences, and the impact of their own worldview on the

way they interpret course materials. A story-based pedagogy that does not give preference to a specific set of stories, a specific worldview, but recognizes and affirms difference would also go a long way in terms of evening out the power differential in the classroom. As to how these ideas can work to negotiate systemic power structures, I am unsure other than to suggest that for both Sarris as mentioned above, and Tanaka (2009) with the idea of intercultural story-telling, an effective praxis seems to rise above systemic structural barriers. As Marilyn Cochran-Smith writes:

> Indeed it has been pointed out that it is contradictory to the concept of cultural diversity itself to expect that educational experts can enumerate specific practices that teachers should learn and then apply across schools and communities with different histories and different needs. (1995, p. 494)

While it may not be entirely appropriate to provide a completely explicated pedagogical framework, as each and every situation in the classroom is different, and cultural comings-together vary based upon many factors, it is helpful to put forth some ideas that may prove helpful in such pedagogical development. The first of which is a sensitivity for how knowledge and knowledge construction are culturally bound and framed in the classroom. The second is that unless instructors explicitly make cultural difference and cross-cultural work a priority in the classroom, students will not likely examine their own thinking, which may cause awkward and problematic moments, as well as to propagate misunderstandings.

Beyond thinking in terms of the above-mentioned story-based pedagogy framed by the work of Sarris and Tanaka, consideration should be given to expanding the reach

of multicultural education throughout all coursework in meaningful ways. Outside of the courses that purely focus on culture and multicultural pedagogy, instructors in all SOE core courses should carefully craft student experiences. My data shows that students need and respond to scaffolded experiences that allow them to talk about and live cultural difference in safe and meaningful ways. This means that we need to foreground the experience, create the experience, and then talk about the experience in reasonably comfortable ways.

As to what this might look like for instructors at UAF, I suggest that the SOE take a good hard look at how cultural standards are being integrated into university-level coursework. Are they truly woven throughout each course? Do instructors know how to recognize and address the above-mentioned problematic moments? Are instructors heavily invested in making cross-cultural work a priority? If so, then steps should be taken to guarantee that every student in the SOE, across the board, is receiving high-level detailed instructions and modeling on culturally responsive, relevant pedagogy. This means that all lessons and lectures given by faculty, as well as all student interactions with SOE staff members, are rooted in culturally-aware practice.

This careful crafting means a multi-layered, multi-pronged approach wherein instructors purposefully set up experiences for students wherein the students can recognize their own culture, see how their own culture affects the ways in which they are accessing and teaching each subject, and develop an understanding of how to distinguish the manifestation of cultural difference in classrooms. Ideally, these experiences would be foregrounded with both theoretical background knowledge in the form of multicultural

and pedagogical readings, as well as allowing time for the preservice teachers to discuss the activity.

The activity itself such as classroom observations, role-modeling, watching an instructional video, listening to a guest speaker, etc., should also be carefully structured by the course instructor in collaboration with the involved parties, i.e. classroom teachers and guest speakers. Below, I provide several concrete examples.

Firstly, an example specifically in the area of creating an understanding of the role of culture can be found by looking at Jerome Bruner's work in the 1960s on an upper elementary level social studies curricular project titled "Man: A Course of Study" (hereafter called MACOS). Although a bit outdated content wise, and not without detractors, structurally and pedagogically it has much to offer. The core question that guides MACOS is "what is human about human beings?" (Bruner, 1962, p. 4). Bruner identifies five factors of being human, which I take to be habits of knowing, being, and doing, and are a good way of getting at the culturally bound facets of human life. He uses the ideas of "tool-making" which I take to mean the ways in which we manipulate the world around us; "language" which gets at communication, both verbal and non-verbal; "social organization" which includes how social labels are created and applied, as well as family and kinship relationships; "child rearing" which focuses on child development and education, both formal and informal; and finally "the urge to explain" which covers worldview, science, religion, and the ways in which people go about understanding the world around them (Bruner, 1962, p. 4). These five ideas then become units of study, and provide a framework for discussion.

A structured project such as MACOS lends itself well to story-based pedagogy and provides a way to further explain and reify culture as habits of knowing, being, and doing. By incorporating a curricular project such as MACOS into an already existing course framework, the UAF SOE would be able to ensure that the goal of creating culturally competent educators was being met.

A second example is to create partnerships between students in the elementary program, and classroom teachers in diverse settings. This could include rural schools, as well as schools outside of the Fairbanks area. I envision this as an expanded pen-pal style interaction with either entire classes at UAF, or small groups of students having an opportunity to interact with teachers and classes through written communication in emails, and possibly through Skype. On the UAF side, course instructors could offer an introduction to the activity by carefully framing the endeavor, asking UAF students what they are expecting from the experience, examining stereotypes about rural and urban schools, while at the same time directing students in the types of observations they should be making. Both UAF students, and elementary students (in conjunction with their teachers) could prepare a list of questions to ask each other, with each group cast perhaps, as an expert in their area; elementary students in their school context, and UAF students in a chosen field of interest. Experiences like this should be front-loaded into the course line-up so that students are consistently encountering differences in education from the beginning of their program.

The third suggestion is to echo what is happening in the field, and shift the dialogue within SOE in a powerful and meaningful way by moving our focus away from

cultural relevance and towards a critical multicultural and anti-racist stance. As Enid Lee describes, this means:

> Use[ing] the term 'anti-racist education' because a lot of multi-cultural education hasn't looked at discrimination. It has the view 'people are people and isn't that nice,' as opposed to looking at how some people's differences are looked upon as deficits and disadvantages. (2009, p. 10)

In a practical way, this means changing more than the words we use, but also taking a look at what we allow to be said (unchecked) in UAF SOE classrooms. This means laying bare our expectations for how students engage with difference, and using teaching materials that promote a critical look at race and multicultural education such as the Rethinking Schools texts. Kumashiro (2000) also provides direction in the way of what he calls "anti-oppressive education" wherein educators are directed to use an amalgam of approaches including education for the other, education about the other, education that is critical of privileging and othering, and education that changes students and society.

Earlier in the text I posed a question in response to a conference session about Whiteness studies by Zeus Leonardo, asking, "where do White people fit?" A danger exists in moving too hastily toward an anti-racist stance. Tensions exist not only in whiteness studies, but also for those who classify their work as anti-racist. For White teacher candidates, this can be tricky ground. Understanding one's whiteness, and/or finding a place or role as an ally is not always easy, and I worry about overzealous anti-racists stepping on the toes of people of color who are also engaged in this type of work.

The above being said, I do not know if either the school itself or the students within are ready for the shifting I describe above, some forms of racism, including internalized racism in the University writ large are likely to be unaffected by any of the above. A long hard look at both sites and motivation for student resistance is warranted in this area.

Part and parcel to this change in stance is work within the faculty to build shared understandings of the intersections of culture, race, and schooling. This may include using the scheduled staff and faculty meeting times, faculty colloquia, as well as the large whole-group meeting held at the beginning of the year to engage in the difficult dialogues surround such. Frameworks for these types of conversations could come from a variety of sources including the Start Talking handbook published by the University of Alaska Anchorage in partnership with Alaska Pacific University, or Paul Kivel's Uprooting Racism (2002).

Future Research Directions

In terms of a specific research project, it would be beneficial to conduct a longitudinal study of the development of cultural consciousness of our preservice teachers, charting students from entry into the program until exit. This would add to the body of literature surrounding the development of cultural competency, as well as provide an analytic tool for School of Education to gauge the efficacy of its programs in terms of the cultural components. Students are already assessed using the FOFF's, SOFF's, and PCFF's mentioned in Chapter 2, in fact many of my research participants

likely have several in their files. These forms have components and competencies based on the preservice teacher's cultural awareness and experiences. These forms should also be looked at for their efficacy and rigor in judging the above.

The PCFF's themselves should be used in a more open and transparent way. If the forms could be made anonymous once in the system, or if copies could be made semi-public, faculty and those interested in research would have access to this important data set.

Beyond Alaska

Perhaps the most important and transferable information gathered during this project is a collection of words and behaviors of preservice teachers. This composition of both language as well as behavior functions as a type of vocabulary then used to not only describe, but also interact with or ignore culture: one's own and that of the cultural 'other.' The research participants' apprehension (both fear and understanding) of culture, race, and difference shows a sense of general dysconsciousness, as Pewewardy (1991) suggests, an "unconscious acceptance of dominant norms and privileges," that extends well beyond culture (pg. 176). It is in this way that resistance to diversity, both as a discrete term as well as an ideology; a minimization, misunderstanding or the absence of an understanding of culture, cross-culture, or the importance of cultural difference; the lack of a positive way to frame the White subject in relation to society and culture; and the relative inaccessibility of a framework for approaching worldview create vocabularies of dysconsciousness.

These vocabularies of dysconsciouness have been well charted by those in whiteness studies, in multicultural education, in critical race theory, and others, but are critical for those interested in educating students who will become teachers. If anything, the prevalence of these vocabularies in a program with such a rich history of cross-cultural education should shock to action those who have thought critical and multicultural education best left to certain professors, and certain courses. Clearly, it is an issue that need be addressed through the educational process.

In Closing

Bruner, in discussing the teaching and the importance of cultural understandings writes that "we must solve a formidable intellectual problem ourselves in order to be able to help our pupils do the same" (1962, p. 5). In light of this, and to bring about a process of change, I suggest the first and most singularly important step in addressing the results of this project is the need for a series of frank discussions at the faculty level to talk about how race and culture are playing out in the SOE courses themselves, and to provide support for strong, real, and non-negotiable multicultural curricula and pedagogy.

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Appendix A

IRB Documents

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Institutional Review Board

909 N Koyukuk Dr. Suite 212, P.O. Box 757270, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7270

November 12, 2010

To:	Beth Leonard, PhD Principal Investigator
From:	University of Alaska Fairbanks IRB
Re:	[196103-1] Student Constructions of Culture in a Cross Cultural Literature Environment

Thank you for submitting the New Project referenced below. The submission was handled by Exempt Review. The Office of Research Integrity has determined that the proposed research qualifies for exemption from the requirements of 45 CFR 46. This exemption does not waive the researchers' responsibility to adhere to basic ethical principles for the responsible conduct of research and discipline specific professional standards.

Title:	Student Constructions of Culture in a Cross Cultural Literature Environment
Received:	November 2, 2010
Exemption Category:	2
Effective Date:	November 12, 2010

This action is included on the December 9, 2010 IRB Agenda.

Prior to making substantive changes to the scope of research, research tools, or personnel involved on the project, please contact the Office of Research Integrity to determine whether or not additional review is required. Additional review is not required for small editorial changes to improve the clarity or readability of the research tools or other documents.

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Institutional Review Board

909 N Koyukuk Dr. Suite 212, P.O. Box 757270, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7270

March 9, 2011

To:	Beth Leonard, PhD Principal Investigator
From:	University of Alaska Fairbanks IRB
Re:	[196103-2] Student Constructions of Culture in a Cross Cultural Literature Environment

Thank you for submitting the Amendment/Modification referenced below. The submission was handled by Exempt Review. The Office of Research Integrity has determined that the proposed research qualifies for exemption from the requirements of 45 CFR 46. This exemption does not waive the researchers' responsibility to adhere to basic ethical principles for the responsible conduct of research and discipline specific professional standards.

Title:	Student Constructions of Culture in a Cross Cultural Literature Environment
Received:	March 8, 2011
Exemption Category:	2
Effective Date:	March 9, 2011

This action is included on the March 24, 2011 IRB Agenda.

Prior to making substantive changes to the scope of research, research tools, or personnel involved on the project, please contact the Office of Research Integrity to determine whether or not additional review is required. Additional review is not required for small editorial changes to improve the clarity or readability of the research tools or other documents.

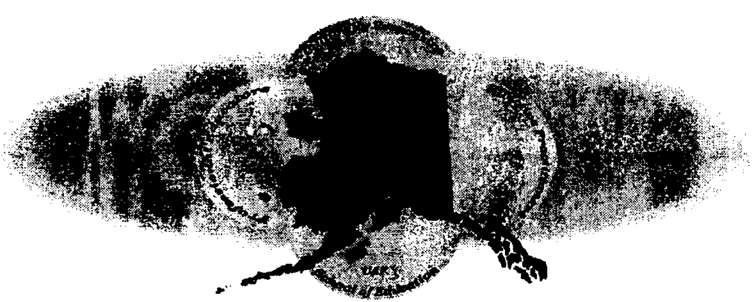
Appendix B

SOE Conceptual Framework

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

School of Education

Preparing culturally responsive, effective practioners



Vision

The School of Education's vision is one of schools that function as integral parts of their communities. Such schools consist of highly qualified educators who have deep understandings of:

- Academic and pedagogical knowledge;
- The cultural, environmental and emotional contexts of children; and
- The cultural and linguistic backgrounds that reflect the diversity of the students in the community.

Mission

The School of Education's mission is to prepare professional educators who are culturally responsive, effective practitioners for Alaska's Schools. Such educators:

- Respond to the individual needs of the child;
- Seek to develop the classroom as an inclusive community of learners;
- Work collaboratively within the community; and
- Affirm the varied cultures and languages of Alaska's children in the learning environment.

NCATE

www.uaf.edu/educ/home/conceptual_framework.html

Appendix C

Assessment Forms

Elementary Teacher Education Programs, School of Education, University of Alaska Fairbanks,
FOFF (Formative Observation Feedback Form)
Developed from <u>Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching</u> by Charlotte Danielson

University Intern:

Name of Person Completing This Form:

Role of the person completing this form (Please Specify): Mentor Teacher or Liaison /Supervisor

Grade Level(s):

Date(s) of observation:

Period of Time Covered in Observation (i.e., 1 hour, 1 month):

Unit Focus or Unit Title (If observation is directly related to teaching a unit):

Alaska Teacher Standards and Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

1 Philosophy & Application to Practice

2 Learning Theory & Application to Practice

3 Integration of Community & Cultural Diversity in Alaska Context

4 Knowledge of Content Area & How to Teach It

5 Multiple Assessments Linked with Variety of Instructional Strategies & Resources

6 Effective Learning Environments Created

7 Partnerships with Parents, Families & Communities

8 Participation in & Contributions to the Teaching Profession

DIRECTIONS: For each of the competencies below, in the comment section ***<u>please include some suggestions on ways the student might improve</u>***. If possible, this assessment should be done with the student, or discussed carefully with him or her.

1. Organizing Content Knowledge for Student Learning (i.e., Planning & Preparation)

- Becoming familiar with relevant aspects of students' background knowledge and experiences
- Articulating clear learning goals for the lesson that are appropriate for the students
- Demonstrating an understanding of the connections between the content that was learned previously, the current content, and the content that remains to be learned in the future
- Creating or selecting teaching methods, learning activities, and instructional materials or other resources that are appropriate for the students and that are aligned with the goals of the lesson
- Creating or selecting evaluation strategies that are appropriate for the students and that are aligned with the goals of the lesson.

Comments:

2. Creating an Environment for Student Learning (i.e., Classroom Environment)

- Creating a climate that promotes fairness
- Establishing and maintaining rapport with students
- Communicating challenging learning expectations to each student
- Establishing and maintaining consistent standards of classroom behavior
- Making the physical environment as safe and conducive to learning as possible.

Comments:

Date: **Intern Name:**

Mentor / Supervisor Name:

Alaska Teacher Standards and Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

1 Philosophy & Application to Practice

2 Learning Theory & Application to Practice

3 Integration of Community & Cultural Diversity in Alaska Context

4 Knowledge of Content Area & How to Teach It

5 Multiple Assessments Linked with Variety of Instructional Strategies & Resources

6 Effective Learning Environments Created

7 Partnerships with Parents, Families & Communities

8 Participation in & Contributions to the Teaching Profession

DIRECTIONS: For each of the competencies below, in the comment section *please include some suggestions on ways the student might improve*. If possible, this assessment should be done with the student, or discussed carefully with him or her.

3. Teaching for Student Learning (Instruction: Teaching & Assessment)

- Making learning goals and instructional procedures clear to students
- Making content comprehensible to students
- Encouraging students to extend their thinking
- Monitoring students' understanding of content through a variety of means, providing feedback to students to assist learning, and adjusting learning activities as the situation demands
- Using instructional time effectively.

Comments:

4. Teacher Professionalism (Professional Responsibilities & Reflection)

- Reflecting on the extent to which the learning goals were met
- Demonstrating a sense of efficacy (i.e., persisting in searches for effective approaches so that all students can learn)
- Building professional relationships with colleagues to share teaching insights and to coordinate learning activities for students
- Communicating with parents or guardians about student learning.

Comments:

Intern Name:
Mentor/Supervisor Name:

Intern's Strengths:

Intern's Challenges-Concerns:

Action Plan for Intern:

Important Note to Mentors and Liaisons:
Please be sure to complete this Oral Communication Rubric as part of each FOFF that you complete. After you have completed the rubric below, please complete the summative rubric on the next page.

ED 466/468 Formative Oral Communication Rubric

Criteria	Target	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Style: Engagement and vigor (holding audience's attention) Confidence of manner Responsiveness to audience's questions Spontaneity (sparing use of notes, no reading unless appropriate or required for understanding) Ability to foster collaborative communication in the classroom Ability to respond appropriately to verbal and non-verbal communication differences based on cultural differences among students and/or classroom contexts.	The intern teaches with energy and confidence, and the students appear engaged and interested. The intern notices questions from students and addresses them in a timely manner. The intern speaks naturally, with few notes. The intern is able to encourage participation, collaboration and risk-taking through the use of carefully considered questions and thoughtful facilitation of oral interactions. The intern recognizes and responds appropriately to verbal and non-verbal communication differences among students and/or classroom contexts.	The intern teaches with energy and confidence most of the time, and most of the students appear engaged and interested. The intern notices questions from students and addresses the majority of them in a timely manner. The intern usually speaks naturally, with few notes. Intern is able to engage students in an acceptable level of participation through appropriate questions and facilitation of group and individual conversations. The intern provides some evidence of ability to recognize cultural communication differences.	The intern teaches in a lackluster way and without confidence, and/or finds it necessary to refer to notes often. Students' attention wanders often and they do not appear interested in the lesson The intern overlooks questions from the students or else does not address them in a timely manner. Intern makes questionable choices when facilitating classroom or individual student discussions. Intern does not encourage student collaboration or risk-taking during oral interactions. Intern does not appear to recognize communication differences based on cultural differences among students and or classroom contexts
Mechanics: Eye contact with entire audience, facial expressiveness Fluency (minimal use of filled pauses (uh, like, well, okay?) Hand and arm gestures, body movement, with no fidgeting Voice control (pitch, loudness, speed, clear enunciation) Follows grammatical rules appropriate for academic/school contexts Use of visual aids and media as appropriate (chalkboard, computer graphics, etc.)	The intern makes eye contact with the students and is engaging, speaks in a fluent and expressive manner, and uses appropriate but not distracting gestures. The intern's voice varies in pitch and is loud enough to be heard by everyone, and words are enunciated clearly. The intern speaks using grammatical rules appropriate for academic/school contexts Relevant visual aids and/or other media enhance communication of lesson expectations and/or content.	The intern makes eye contact with the students most of the time The intern usually speaks in a fluent and expressive manner, is engaging, and some gestures are used, although the intern may fidget occasionally. The interns' voice varies in pitch and is loud enough to be heard by everyone most of the time, and words are enunciated clearly most of the time. The intern speaks using grammatical rules appropriate for academic/school contexts with only a limited number of minor inappropriate forms. Relevant visual aids and/or other media support the communication of lesson expectations and/or content.	The intern does not make eye contact with the entire audience, and his/her facial expressions do not vary much. The intern's speech is not very fluent and he/she pauses often (using uh, like, well). There are few appropriate hand gestures or the applicant fidgets often. There is little use of visual aids. The intern's voice does not vary in pitch, the words are not clear, and/or it is hard for all of the students to hear. The intern frequently does not follow grammatical rules appropriate for academic/school contexts and is not aware of this. Inappropriate or missing visual aids and/or other media interfere or detract from the communication of lesson expectations and/or content.
Organization: Purposefulness, clear identification of topics to be addressed Logical order of key points Clarity of key points Smoothness of flow, good tempo	Teaching is purposeful and the lesson's main ideas are clearly identifiable, following each other in a logical order, and they are clear and memorable. Teaching moves along smoothly at a good pace for the students, thus holding their attention.	The intern teaches purposefully most of the time, and the main ideas are clearly identifiable and memorable, and they follow each other in a mostly logical order. Teaching moves along smoothly and keeps the students' attention most of the time.	The organization of the lesson is not very evident and the lessons main ideas do not follow each other in a logical order, and/or it is hard to identify the main ideas. The pace of the lesson is not smooth or well-paced, and students lose their focus and attention often as a result.
Content Relevance and accuracy of information	The information presented is accurate and relevant.	The information presented is accurate and mostly relevant.	The information presented is inaccurate and it is often hard to understand why the information is included.

Please complete summative rubric on next page.

Important Note to Mentors and Liaisons:
After you have completed the rubric on the previous page, look at the holistic rubric below and mark the level that you feel most appropriately describes your intern. Completion of these two rubrics at multiple times throughout the internship year provides interns and our program with ongoing and useful feedback relative to communication skills and relative to interns' performance in three ESSAP competencies.

Summative Oral Communication Rubric

Overall Assessment of ESSAP Competencies	Target	Acceptable	Unacceptable
4-7 The intern demonstrates a proficient level in speaking			
6-8 The intern understands and applies knowledge of effective methods of verbal, nonverbal and media communication techniques to enhance student learning and foster a safe, positive and collaborative classroom environment.			
3-4 (cross-listed with 6-1) The intern demonstrates an ability to establish a positive classroom environment that accepts, affirms and constructively builds upon the diversity of the students			

Name and role of person completing this form:______________________________

Intern **Mentor Teacher** **University Liaison/Supervisor**

My intern has been provided with a copy of this Formative Observation Feedback Form:

Yes_____ No_____ Date: _________

lease email this form

School of Education

474-7

Name of Student: ______________________________ Date: __________________________

Course: ________________ Instructor/Person completing this form: __________________________

PCFF: Professional Characteristic Feedback Form for UAF Education Students

This form is intended to allow individuals who interact with education students to provide feedback on a student's overall disposition in relation to whether or not it is in alignment with those characteristics typically found in effective professional educators.

- How do you know this student? (e.g. cooperating teacher for short term observation, mentor teacher, principal, UAF instructor, UAF supervisor/liaison, etc.):

  ____

- Context of interaction with student (e.g. elementary classroom, UAF course, etc.):

  School: ________________________ Grade Level: ______________

Listed are characteristics commonly found in effective professional educators. For each characteristic, please provide a rating between 0 and 3 based on the following criteria.

0 = individual does not exhibit this characteristic
1 = individual rarely exhibits this characteristic
2 = individaal sometimes exhibits this characteristic
3 = individual typically exhibits this characteristic
N/O = the characteristic was not observed during your time with the individual

I observed this individual to be . . .	Rating (see above criteria)	N/O
Respectful of an committed to meeting the needs of individual from diverse backgrounds • Promoting equity in learning environments • Incorporating the diverse backgrounds, knowledge and learning styles of the students into the classroom • Assuming personal responsibility for student learning		
Reflective and open to feedback from others		
Motivated to become effective practitioners and committed to their decision to teach • Dedicated to being a "lifelong learner" • Eager to learn from others		
Flexible in their thinking and creative in their ideas • Willing to try new things • Adapting instruction as situations change ("thinking on their feet") • Looking for creative resolutions to problems		
Professional and ethical in their behavior • On time • Professional in appearance • Responsible for his/her own actions • Respectful of colleagues, children and families, and the professionals with whom he/she works		

If you have marked any area with a "0" or "1" please provide a brief explanation on the following page indicating specific behaviors, actions of language that contributed to that rating.

PLEASE E-MAIL COMPLETED FORM TO:
pcff.SOE@alaska.edu UAF School of Education

Date: ______________

Intern Name: ______________ Person Completing this Form: ____________________ Role: ______________

Please Comment Here as Needed:

Appendix D

Interview Script/ Protocol

Thank you again for agreeing to be a part of this study, which is part of my doctoral research at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Please keep your copy of the release form, as well your copy of the statement of informed consent. If you should have any questions regarding your participation, at any time, do not hesitate to contact me.

For the purpose of this study, I will be asking you several questions about your ideas of culture and how those relate to our class. I like to think about interviewing as a somewhat directed conversation; our dialogue will start out with the questions themselves, but may organically progress to other related topics.

If at any time you wish to stop the interview, please alert me, and we will stop immediately. You may stop the interview for any reason. You may also withdraw from the study at anytime, even after the interview is finished. If you have questions at any time, please ask them and I will answer to the best of my ability.

Do you have any questions now?

What name would you like to be referred to for the purposes of this project?

Thank you, let's begin.

The first question is about culture. What do the terms 'culture' and 'cross-cultural' mean to you? Let's take "culture' first.

Do you think cultural difference exists in our class?

Do you think about our class being a cross-cultural activity or event?

Does that affect the way that you relate to other students, or the text?

Can you think of a particular topic/discussion, day, or reading from class that stands out as an example of cultural difference or a cross-cultural event? Can you describe it for me?

Is there anything else that you would like to talk about?

Thank you for your time in participating in this interview.

Appendix E

Statement of Informed Consent
Student Constructions of Culture in a Cross-Cultural Literature Environment

IRB # 196103-1 (196103-2)
Date Approved: 11/12/2010 (3/9/2011)

Description of the Study:
For my dissertation research at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, I am asking you to take part in a research study about constructions of culture in cross-cultural literature environment. The goal of this study is to learn about how students think of their own culture, the culture of others, and the culture being "performed" in required reading (texts). You are being asked to take part in this study because you are a student in the same class as the researcher. Please read this form and ask any questions before you agree to be in the study.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
The risks to you, should you take part in this study, are minimal. Your identity will be protected; your name will not be used during the interview itself, nor listed in any transcription. The interview may take thirty minutes to one hour, time that you will not be compensated for.

This is an opportunity to inform scholarly discourse surrounding the aforementioned issues. There is no guarantee that you will directly benefit from taking part in this study.

Confidentiality:
Any information obtained about you from the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will have an opportunity to choose a pseudonym that will be used for transcription, and any further products.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Your decision to take part in this study is voluntary. If you choose to not take part in this study you can stop at any time or change your mind and ask to be removed from the study. There are no foreseen consequences from withdrawing from this study.

Contacts and Questions:
If you have any questions, please ask them now. If you have questions later, you may contact Caitlin Montague-Winebarger at (907) 374-2831, or by email at cnwinebarger @alaska.edu, Beth Leonard at (907) 474-1588, or by email at brleonard@alaska.edu, or Maureen Hogan at (907) 474-6474, or by email at mphogan@alaska.edu.

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you can contact the UAF Office of Research Integrity at 474-7800 (Fairbanks are),

1-866-876-7800 (outside the Fairbanks area), or 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. I have been provided a copy of this form.

Interviewee Date

Interviewer Date

Appendix F

Interview Coding sheet

Date of Interview:
Group A Group B

Recording/
File#:____________________
Participant
Name:____________________
Q1 Part 1: Define "culture"
Themes:

Significant Quotes:
Time:

Q1 Part 2: Define "cross-culture"
Themes:

Significant Quotes:
Time:

Q2 Cultural difference in class: Y N
Themes:

Significant Quotes:
Time:

Q3 Is class a cross-cultural event? Y N
Themes:

Significant Quotes:
Time:

Q4 Does that affect student behavior? Y N
Themes:
Q4 Significant Quotes:
Time:

Q5 Particular event or story
Themes:

Significant Quotes:
Time:

Q6 Anything Else
Themes:

Significant Quotes:
Time:

Notes on participant demeanor/ behavior:

Participant mentions/exhibits:
Personal Connections
Distancing
Lack of familiarity with concept
Intelligible framework
Story/ Master Narrative
Validation/ connection with interviewer
Racism
Dysconsciousness
Emotion (which)

Appendix G

Interview Participants

Below is a list of interview participants by group. Included are pseudonym and descriptive characteristics found in the body of chapter 4 and 5, (I am using self-ascribed labels used by the participants to describe their own race or ethnicity), as well as the length and date which the interview was conducted. I have indicated their interest in education. If the participant mentioned they were an education major, I have noted that as well.

Group A

Sally, 11/15/10, 19:54, early 20s White female, Elementary Education major

Edwin, 11/17/10, 33:09, early 20s White male

Charles, 11/17/10, 22:45, early 20s White male, interested in the "sciences"

Charlotte, 11/18/10, 36:17, mid to late 20s White female graduate student

Richard, 11/19/10, 13:19, mid 40s, Yup'ik male, interested in education

Paul, 11/29/10, 11:14, mid 20s White Christian southerner with Cherokee ancestry.

Margaret, 12/3/10, 14:29, early to mid 20s, White female, English major, interested in Secondary Education program

Group B

Stella, 4/25/11, early to mid 20s White female with Native American grandmother, Elementary Education major

Lorene, 4/26/11, 27:47, White southern female, culturally identifies as southern and Iñupiat, in her late teens or early 20s, Elementary Education major

Roland, 4/26/11, 38:58, early to mid 20s, White male, but also identifies as Japanese, German, and Scotch Irish, interested in education

Mary, 4/26/11, 12:54 early to mid 20s White female, interested in education

Elaine, 4/27/11, 10:03, early 20s White Italian female, Elementary Education major

Katya, 4/28/11, 10:12, early 20s White female, interested in education

Larry, 4/28/11, 15:44, mid to late 40s White male, Elementary Education major

Millie, 4/29/11, 8:56, early 20s White female, Elementary Education major

Daniel, 4/29/11, 14:44, early to mid 20s Latino male, interested in music education

Helen, 4/29/11, 10:13, early 20s White female, interested in education

Cindy, 5/6/11, 26:00, mid 40s White female, interested in education

Appendix H
Course Syllabus

ENGLISH 349 / ANS 349 -- NARRATIVE ART OF ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLES
(in English translation) 3 credits

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION REMOVED

1. **Course Description**

Survey of traditional and historical tales by Aleut, Eskimo, Athabaskan, Eyak, Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian storytellers. Attention to bibliography, Alaska Native genres and viewpoints, and structural and thematic features of tales. An introduction to the study of traditional oral material and the art of storytelling with an emphasis on folkloric and literary approaches.
Prerequisite: English 111 or permission of instructor.

2. **Texts**

1. Qanemcikarluni Tekitnarqqelarrtuq: One Must Arrive with a Story to Tell, Traditional Narratives by Elders of Tununak, Alaska.

2. Haa Shuka', Our Ancestors: Tlingit Oral Narrative, ed. Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer.

3. The Longest Story Ever Told:Qayaq, The Magical Man Emmily Ivanoff Brown (Ticasuk)

4. Our Voices: Native Stories for Alaska and the Yukon. Ed. Ruppert and Bernet,

5. Plus readings available from Electronic Reserve

RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND MAP:

Alaska Native Languages: Past, Present, and Future. #4 in Alaska Native Language Center Research Papers. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Language Center, 1980.

Native Peoples and Languages of Alaska (a map). Compiled by Michael Krauss. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Language Center, 1974.

Ugiuvangmiut Quliapyuit: King Island Tales. Ed. L. Kaplan. A.N.L.C. & U. of Alaska Press, 1988.
Traditional American Indian Literatures: Texts and Interpretations, ed. Karl Kroeber.

Cev'armiut Qanemciit Qulirait-llu (Eskimo Narratives and Tales, Told by Tom Imgalrea, Jacob Nash, Thomas Moses, Leo Moses, and Mary Kokrak. Trans. Leo Moses and Anthony Woodbury. Ed. Anthony Woodbury.

Sitsiy Yugh Noholnik Ts'in' (As My Grandfather Told It):Traditional Stories from the Koyukuk, Told by Catherine Attla, Trans. Eliza Jones and Melissa Axelrod.

Bakk'aatugh Ts'uhuniy, Stories We Live By: Traditional Koyukon Athabascan Stories. Told by Catherine Attla, Trans. Eliza Jones and Chad Thompson.

In Honor of Eyak: The Art Of Anna Nelson Harry, edited by Michael Krauss.

Engithidong Xugixudhoy: Their Stories of Long Ago, Told by Belle Deacon, trans. by Belle Deacon and James Kari, ed. James Kari.

3. **Classroom Work**

The instructor tries to approach the material not as an authority on each cultural group, but rather as one who has learned much and is trying to learn more about it. The classes will involve both lecture and discussion, with informed discussion encouraged, particularly by students who come from or have had direct contact with Alaska Native cultures.

4. **Requirements**

There will be a two short essay papers and final essay test. A research paper of 5 - 7 pages discussing one or more of the works read in class, or an oral report is also required. Each short essay paper will be worth 25 points, the research paper will be worth 30 points, and the final is worth 20 points. Extra credit will be given for consistent attendance and significant class participation. Plagiarism or cheating may result in expulsion from class.

The research papers may compare versions of a story or may follow an established analytical style in discussing one story, explore genre, context, or any other significant aspect of the narratives and the art of storytelling. An oral report may be substituted for the paper, but the report should be a serious, researched effort to inform the class about the cultural background and overall oral art of one of Alaska's Native cultures, or a specific genre or oral tradition.

Attendance will be taken and will influence the student's grade. Students 194 are expected to act in a respectful manner towards other students and the instructor. Disruptive or discourteous behavior may result in a lower grade or expulsion from class. Please turn off all cell phones.

5. **Course Objectives**

1. To serve as an introduction to and a survey of the narrative art of the Alaska Native Peoples -- the Tsimshian, Haida, Tlingit, Eyak, Athabaskan, Inupiaq, Yup'ik, and Aleut.

2. To present some of the ways of classifying (and thus of studying) the stories which have been used by the linguists, anthropologists, folklorists and literary critics, but also to emphasize the ways that Native peoples thought of (and thus classified) the stories.

3. To provide a basic bibliography of published works in which Alaska Native narratives have been preserved.

4. To realize some of the problems of attempting to understand Alaska Native stories read in English translations and some of the obstacles to such study; but to suggest some ways of viewing, comprehending, and appreciating the stories.

6. Course Outline

9/3 Orientation

9/6 Haa Shuka' 1-33, 73-83

9/8 " " 83-109, 139-153

9/10 Haa Shuka' 109-139

9/13-9/17 Haa Shuka' 167-311, 63-73.

9/20-9/24 "Poetic Retranslation," Our Voices ix-67, 69-89

9/27-10/1 90-107, 109-127, 129-145 1st essay due 10/1

10/4-10/8 147-168, "Story of Asdiwal" 169-186, 187-220

10/11-10/15 229-260, 261-276, 277-296

10/18-10/22 296-384, electronic reserve readings

10/25-10/29 <u>One Must Arrive</u>, readings TBA

11/1-11/5 " "

11/8-11/12 electronic reserve readings, 2nd essay due 11/12

11/15-11/19 electronic reserve readings

11/22 Videos

11/24-11/26 Thanksgiving

12/29-12/3 <u>The Longest Story Ever Told</u>

12/6-12/10 <u>The Longest Story</u>, electronic reserve
Research Paper due 12/10

12/13 review

12/17 Final Examination 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Appendix I
ED 350: Communication in Cross-Cultural Classrooms
Spring 2011
Brooks 103
Tues/Thurs 3:40-5:10 pm

Instructor: INFORMATION REMOVED

Credits: 3

Course Description:
Interdisciplinary examination of communication and language in cross-cultural educational contexts, including language, literacy and interethnic communication related to classrooms in Alaska.

Prerequisite: ED 201

Course Goals:
Through readings, audio-visual materials, in-class activities, and guest presentations, students will explore historical and contemporary issues in cultural/ethnic diversity and classroom communication. Course topics/themes include:

- Language Ideologies: Understanding Socio-Historical Factors
- Language, Identity, Culture: Critical Connections
- "Culturally-Responsive": Challenges in Bilingual/Multicultural Education

This is a seminar style course. I encourage you to take a critical approach in reviewing course materials and during class discussions. Please come to class prepared to discuss readings and audiovisual materials in respectful and cooperative ways. I do not expect students to always agree with me, with each other, or with any of the course materials; however I expect you to be respectful of other's ideas even if you disagree with them.

Overarching questions we will address over the course of the semester:
- What does it mean to have a "different" worldview and ethnic/cultural identity?
- What factors influence how we perceive linguistic and cultural/ethnic differences?
- How do these perceptions affect communication within and outside the classroom?

- How do these perceptions affect content, teaching methods and assessment within the classroom?

Course activities will include small group discussions around these questions, one Blackboard discussion forum, one group presentation and an in-class (open book/note) final exam. I will post announcements on Blackboard and have these sent to your 'alaska.edu' e-mail account; please make sure you check these regularly.

Required Texts:

Delpit, L., & Dowdy, J.K. (Eds.). (2002). *The skin that we speak: Thoughts on language and culture in the classroom.* New York, NY: The New Press.

Lomawaima, K.T., & McCarty, T.L. (2006). *To remain an Indian: Lessons in democracy from a century of Native American education.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Supplementary Readings - available via e-reserve (password '350') or hyperlink:
At the instructor's discretion there may be changes (additions/deletions) to this list.

Alaska Native Knowledge Network Publications:
Alaska Native Values
http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/ANCR/Values/
Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools
Guidelines for Nurturing Culturally-Healthy Youth
Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages
http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/publications/#standards

Ash, S., & Ash, S. (2003). Bilingual multicultural education and equity conference keynote address: Leave no language behind. *Sharing Our Pathways, 8*(**3**), 1-4. http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/SOP/SOPv8i3.html#language

Cummins, J. (1986). Empowering minority students: A framework for intervention. *Harvard Educational Review, 56*(1), 18-34.

Dyc. G. (1993). Navajo discussion style: A cultural map for the interethnic classroom. *Journal of Navajo Education, 10(2),* 19-25.

Foster, S. et al. (1989). Describing the language of Navajo children. *Journal of Navajo Education, 7*(1), 13-17.

Mather, E. (1995). With a vision beyond our immediate needs: Oral traditions in an age of literacy. In P. Morrow & W. Schneider (Eds.), *When our words return: Writing, hearing and remembering oral traditions of Alaska and the Yukon* (pp. 13-26). Logan: Utah State University Press. (e-reserve)

McIntosh, P. (1990). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Independent School, Winter, 31-36.*

McGroary, M. & Beck, A. (1993). Language as tested and taught: Some overlaps, some gaps. *Journal of Navajo Education, 10*(2), 3-11.

Naske, N. (1996). Bad latitude: Preservation or embalming. *Sun Star, 15*(13).

Okakok, L. (1989). Serving the purpose of education. *Harvard Educational Review, 59*(4), 405-22.

Sampson, R. (2002). Bilingual multicultural and equity conference keynote address: Native languages in Alaska. *Sharing Our Pathways, 7*(2), 1-5. http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/SOP/SOPv7i2.html#ruthie

Sampson, R. (2002). Bilingual multicultural equity and education conference keynote address: Native languages in Alaska, part ii. *Sharing Our Pathways, 7*(3), 6-8. http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/SOP/SOPv7i3.html#languages

Sleeter, C. (2001). Diversity vs. white priviiege. *Rethinking Schools 15(2),* 4-5. http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/15_02/Int152.shtml

Ortiz, S. (1993). The language we know. In P. Riley (Ed.), *Growing up Native American: An anthology* (pp. 29-38). New York, NY: William Morrow & Company, Inc.

Videos:

Booth, M. (2009). Pidgin: The voice of Hawai'i [DVD]. Harriman, NY: New Day Films.

Jarmel, J. & Schneider, K. (2009). Speaking in tongues [DVD]. San Francisco, CA: Patchworks Productions.

Oleksa, M. (1994). Our world - the global-literate culture. On *Communicating Across Cultures* [Videorecording]. Juneau, AK: Capital Community Broadcasting.

Oleksa, M. (1994). The clash of worlds. On *Communicating Across Cultures* [Videorecording]. Juneau, AK: Capital Community Broadcasting.

Course Requirements:

Attendance & Active Participation in Ciass Discussions

Students wiil be expected to come to class regularly, on time and prepared to discuss the week's readings. Handwritten comments, responses, and questions wili be required at the end of selected classes in order to receive full participation credit. If you must miss more than one class (one grace class will be allowed), please try to contact me as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to research and complete any missed assignments during the time you are absent. As noted in the schedule, you will need complete the readings for Week 2 during Week 1, etc.

I expect you to put away computers, cell phones, etc. during most class activities (if computers/internet are needed, I will let you know in advance).

Fieldwork Journal & Presentations

Students will conduct 15 hours of fieldwork over the course of the semester. Patt Caldwell, SOE Elementary Program Faculty, will explain more about these required field assignments, including how to coordinate your visits with the school. You will be required to keep a log of days/time you attended (initialized by your mentor teacher) and a journal recording your observations during these site visits. You will make one individual presentation to the class summarizing your observations. I will post journal guidelines on

Blackboard for fieldwork activities. **Per SOE requirements, you must complete the fieldwork assignment in order to pass this class.**

Mid-Term: Group Presentation

Groups will choose readings based on similar topics or themes and present a summary in one panel discussion during the course of the semester. This summary should include the main points, as well as participants' comments and personal opinions of the readings. Group members should also provide questions for further class discussion. We will discuss this exercise in more detail during Week 3 and I will post guidelines on Blackboard.

Blackboard Discussion Forum

Your post should include your reactions, comments, and questions to selected readings and/or in-class discussions. This is not an exercise in "right or wrong answers," rather you will be graded on the degree to which you are willing to explore course topics.

Final Written Exam

The final exam will be open-book, open-note reflective short essay (guidelines and questions TBD).

Grading Policy	Points	Grade %
Attendance & Active Participation	200	40
Fieldwork (15 hours-completed log **initialed by mentor teacher**, journal, and short oral presentation)	100	20
Mid Term: Group Presentation	100	20
Blackboard Discussion Forum	50	10
Final Written Exam	50	10
Total	500	100

450-500	A
400-449	B
350-399	C
300-349	D
under 300	F

SPECIAL NEEDS: UAF is committed to providing equal access for students with disabilities. If you experience a disability and need special accommodations, please contact me at the beginning of the semester.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: All students are bound by the UAF Student Code of Conduct. Breaking this code will result in an 'F' for the course and possible additional disciplinary

penalties. See http://www.uaf.edu/catalog/current/academics/regs3.html#Student_Rights for more information.