

RACE IS A VERB:

AN EFFECTIVE HISTORY OF YOUNG ADULTS SUBJECTED TO RACIAL VIOLENCE

By

VIOLET. R. JOHNSON JONES

(Under the Direction of: Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre, PhD.)

Abstract:

This study uses poststructuralism, Michel Foucault's "Effective History," and Africanist epistemology to examine ways in which scholars in k-16 schools perpetuate subjugation by using Eurocentric and other discourses. This study focuses on an interview study I conducted with three students I taught as a high school literacy educator. I use effective history to examine a racially motivated shooting event in which these one sixteen-year-old African-American male, three fifteen-year-old African-American females, and one fourteen-year-old African-American male shot at by a white security guard while attending a field trip in the southern United States. I examine reasons why these students were more afraid of revealing the fact that they were violated to their chaperones than in demanding the justice they deserved. As a participant as well as researcher, I enlist a qualitative researcher and university professor to conduct an intrasubjective interview with me. As a result of this interview, I discovered ways that my discourse as an African-American female educator reflected discourses characteristic of white supremacy. Using effective history, I examined events in the lives three of the young people involved and disclosed how their lives did not always circulate around race issues. This methodology revealed discourses participants used to resist effects of the shooting and other events in which they were raced or subjugated. Participants used Africanist, Eurocentric, and other discourses to negotiate their lives and challenges. I analyzed how discourses often oppressed them and spawned resistances or capitulation. In addition to the shooting, students experienced black-on-black violence, physical injury, abuse by collegiate athletic apparatuses, and efforts to diminish their scholarly achievements by professors. The methods of

resistance they engaged in tandem demonstrated the array of discursive tools needed by young people of color in order to succeed in secondary and postsecondary institutions. It also shows how poststructuralism, particularly “effective history,” is used along with race theories, Africanist epistemology, and Eurocentric discourse for qualitative studies.

INDEX WORDS: African-American athletes, African-American students, Africanist Epistemology, Bricolage, Discourse, Gossip data, Effective history, Eurocentrism, HBCU, Higher Education, Interviews, Panopticon, Postmodernism, Poststructuralism, Racial violence, Secondary schools, Student resistance, Subjectivity, Surveillance, Aristotle, Molefi Asante, Patricia Hill Collins, Jacques Derrida, Rene Descartes, Cynthia Dillard , Cheikh Anta Diop, Michel Foucault, Lewis Gordon, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Thomas Jefferson, Immanuel Kant, Abraham Lincoln, Fredrick Nietzsche.

CHAPTER 3

FINDING *PARRHESIA*⁵

Introduction

At this moment when I begin to explain details of conducting research with my former students, issues such as research site, methodology, subjectivity, and analysis become troubling. Consequently, I will first explain how I operationalize effective history (1985) in my study and analysis. I will then explain why I decided that I must study the Event and those victimized by it in spite of my earlier reluctance as well as how I obtained entrée, selected participants, and other issues related to sample selection criteria. Subsequently, the research schedule will describe this one-year process. Following the research schedule, I will explain the difficulty I have employing the term “site” as it is traditionally used in qualitative research. I will explain why I chose to focus on nomadic site, sites that are sometimes physical, but many times psychic. I will then give a description of those sites. Following the description of sites, both physical and psychic, I explain how my committee and I determined to deconstruct my subjectivity prior to the onset of data collection.

Michael Crotty (1998) suggests four salient questions any qualitative researcher must answer prior to embarking on the research project. The first question asks what methods will be used to gather data. In other words, what are the techniques, procedures, and devices used to gather data. The second question relates to the first. It asks what methodology the researcher will use. Crotty describes methodology as the strategy, plan of action, process, or design underlying the methods used and linking them to the desired outcomes. The third question is the theoretical perspective that provides the context for and grounds the methodology, its logic, and criteria. Finally, Crotty suggests that the researcher must

⁵ In *Fearless Speech*, a collection of Michel Foucault’s lectures of the subject of free speech, Foucault focuses on the Greek word *parrhesia*. According to Foucault, *parrhesia* is speech that speaks what an individual views as truth. This truth is spoken in a particular situation in which the speaker expects no reward, and does not feel the audience will be receptive to the words he or she speaks.

answer the question of epistemology. Epistemology is the theory of knowledge imbedded in the other research processes.

Operationalizing “Effective History”

First, I will explain the dilemma facing me as I endeavored to research a racializing incident. One of the problems with some research into these types of events is that it couches the “victim” in a way that discloses him or her as a subject incapable of resistance and action. In my experience, readings and studies about the victimized usually evoke reactions of pity on the part of the reader or listener. Since pity does no service to the victimized (1996), I have chosen a type of data analysis that does not represent the participants in such a way.

After reading several of Foucault’s (1972, 1976/1978, 1977, 1977/1995, 1997/2003) works and others including Arac(1988), Agnello (2002), and Rella (1994), I found that Foucault’s “effective history” best fitted the type of research and analysis that I desired because Foucault critiques the purposes and effects of traditional historicizing. According to Foucault, traditional history, or what Nietzsche calls *Ursprung* (Foucault, 1977) is linear, reductionist, and heavily concerned with utility. Likewise, traditional history focuses on static discourses as if they have not changed over time, and it ignores the “invasions, struggles, plundering, disguises, ploys” (Foucault, 1977, p. 139) that have disrupted the spoken word. My participants’ lives and their resistances to efforts of subjugation were not linear and were irreducible to a moment, an outcome, or an essence that was progressive, rational, or liberatory. Therefore, focused on what the participants saw as important in their effective histories.

Furthermore, Foucault (1977) describes effective history as focusing not on the normal, but on the aberration. Again, using Nietzsche’s terminology, Foucault, opposes *Ursprung*, a type of historicizing that focuses on “the exact essence of things, their purest possibilities, and their carefully protected identities” (p. 142) to two other German words used to denote origin, *Herkunft* and *Entstehung*. *Herkunft*, “seeks the subtle, singular, and subindividual marks” (p. 147), that describe one person’s subjective actions, their effects, and the resistances to them. Since this term relates to “affiliation to a

group, sustained by the bonds of blood, tradition, or social class” (p. 145), its application in the analysis of my data fitted nicely with my desire to use Africanist epistemology and Eurocentric discourse in analyzing my participants’ daily existences. Effective history also considers the participants as a part of the various cultures through which they move. The product of this type of analysis becomes evident in this and the next Chapter. Again, I remind the reader that within this analysis, Africanist Epistemology and Eurocentric discourse are just two of myriad players in the events, resistances, and effects described herein.

In talking about effects, the term *Entstehung* (Foucault, 1977) approximates the type of analysis I used. *Entstehung*, according to Foucault, designates “emergence, the moment of arising” (p. 148). It disavows the search for “descent in uninterrupted continuity” (p. 148) and instead focuses on the participants’ “attempt to avoid degeneration and regain strength” (p. 149). It also focuses on how the participants act against themselves “at the moment when [resistance] weakens,” and “inflicts torments and mortifications” (p. 149). Consequently, I have conducted an effective history analysis that examined emergences of the subject as agent, resistances of the subject against harmful forces, and unintentional acts of the subjects against themselves followed by their emergence from these acts.

Research Schedule

April-August 2003	-	Contact Participants/Parents and obtain verbal consent
October 2003	-	Defend Prospectus
October 2003	-	Submit IRB Application
October 13, 2003	-	Participate in Subjectivity Interview
November 15-30		Contact Participants to determine where they would like to be interviewed.
November 1, 2003	-	Transcribe and analyze Subjectivity Interview
November 12, 2003	-	Received IRB Approval
December 2, 2003— February 22, 2004		Transcribe, code, and analyze data.

December 1, 2003	-	Travel to Sandpiper and interview Caroline Chastain
December 15, 2003	-	Interview Amari at my home
December 29, 2003	-	Interview Stephanie at my home
November 1, 2003 – January 31, 2004	-	Write Introduction and Review of Literature
February 4, 2003	-	Interview Michelle at my home
February 22-March 12, 2004	-	Conduct follow-ups via telephone with participants
March 12, 2004	-	Send Data stories to participants for member checks
March 12, 2004	-	Send Data to peer debriefer
March 12, 2004 – April 5, 2004	-	Write methodology, data analysis, and conclusion
		Make revisions to Introduction and Review of Literature
		Evaluate and Incorporate feedback from member checks and Peer debriefer.
April 15, 2004	-	Meet with reading committee
June 15, 2004	-	Defend Dissertation
		Entrée

In March 2003, I telephoned Caroline to discuss the possibility of studying her son and the other participants for my dissertation project. Caroline was the best person to get a pulse of the attitudes of families in the six years since the Event occurred because she remained somewhat socially connected with most of the participants' families. During this conversation, Caroline gave me an update using what she knew about things that had occurred in participants' lives since I left Murphey East in 2000.

Leaving Murphey East was one of the hardest career decisions (and maybe one of the most misguided) I have taken. In good and bad, I was at home at Murphey East High School. My problem was that after what I perceived as a failure to protect the young people whose parents trusted me to keep them safe, I never recovered from the fallout of that phantasmal Event. I thought I could continue after first sharing academic and debate team coaching duties with a peer, then relinquishing my role in quiz

bowl altogether. One of the new coaches was a white male and the other was a white female. Although I believe both genuinely cared for their students, both of them had to tread lightly in this brown territory. First, the male coach could not take young girls home from practice because doing so might place him in what appeared to be a compromising position. This would be true even if he were African-American, but as a single white male, his position was even more suspect. The female coach also nurtured and cared for her students and team members, but her youth belied her shrewdness in these situations and caused her to be more cautious in dealings with students. They needed me as the face of quiz bowl and debate at Murphey East, but I could not take the constant reminders of my own failures. Therefore, I left for an integrated high school in a nearby rural setting. Although I again embraced quiz bowl in this school and even developed a middle school program, the long commute coupled with the obvious racial tension played out in overt acts of power from both black and white educators set me again on a hunt for a less politically charged school.

At the end of my initial year at the rural high school, the principal at the lone high school in the county where I reside recruited me to replace another black teacher who was moving to a middle school in the same district. Again, I was not mindful of the question this teacher's abrupt departure raised. In addition, I was flattered by the way this principal singled me out to recruit me to his school without my even having applied. Consequently, I accepted the job. I taught there for one year—the worst year in my teaching career. This school climate rubbed salt into the wounds caused by all of the racial dilemmas I had faced since returning to the South in 1994. Students freely and proudly wore Confederate flags, the community was xenophobic and highly socialized hierarchically, and my challenges to the Eurocentric literature selection were poorly received.

In the meantime, I began the doctoral program at the University of Georgia in 2001, shortly after leaving Murphey East. I attended the spring of the year in the rural school in 2001 as well as the entire year that I taught at the school in my county. No matter where I went and what I studied or taught, the Event lingered somewhere on the periphery of my brain. I could not let it go, so I went around to come

around. I went around Murphey East, literally, moving to schools that sandwich it in adjacent counties. I moved around the Event by studying the Neo-Confederate child and white supremacy. The Event was asleep in my bedroom and I did not wish to awaken it.

Caroline was my connection to the world I left at Murphey East. Even though she had moved to a coastal city I call Sandpiper, she stayed in touch with school officials. As Amari lived in our house, Caroline made sure she kept abreast of his academic and extracurricular activities by contacting teachers and coaches. Caroline agreed that Amari and Stephanie were in a position in their lives where they could participate in the study. She had no information about Michelle's life since graduation, and she expressed concern about including Josh and Rosanna because of what she knew from talking to their family members.

I contacted Stephanie via e-mail and explained what I was thinking of doing. When she responded, we agreed to talk by telephone within the next week. In early April, Caroline called me to tell me that Amari had been shot by a young black man during while attending a fraternity party. She explained that he was not critically injured and I spoke with Amari via telephone to assure myself of his condition. I also called Stephanie who expressed concern because she believed this study might violate the agreement they signed upon settling with the hotel lawyers.

In April 2003 I contacted Caroline because she led the parents in pursuing the lawsuit. I asked her if they had signed a nondisclosure agreement when they settled the suit. Caroline told me that the original offer included this caveat, but in her words, "I told them they couldn't pay me enough money not to talk about what happened." She further stated that all five families had to sign the same agreement; therefore, she knew the nondisclosure was not in the settlement. At this point, I felt I could pursue the study without risking ramifications for at least two participants. My next step was to contact Michelle and continue to find out what was going on with Josh and Roseanne.

In April 2003 I telephone Amari at his school (Weldon University) and he agreed to participate. We decided to discuss my study when he visited at the end of spring semester. I was continually trying to

find Michelle's address or telephone number at her university (Gulf State). First, I tried to locate her through the college's online directory. I found a name that matched hers and sent an e-mail to that address that read:

Is this the Michelle who was a track star and scholar at Murphey East High School? If so, this is Mrs. Jones and I am getting a PhD at the University of Georgia. Please let me know if this is the right person.

I telephoned Michelle's home in Murphey and left several messages on her mother's answering service asking her to contact me. My first few messages elicited no response. I contacted Stephanie by telephone and told her what Caroline said about the settlement. She agreed to participate in the study. Stephanie also gave me information about Josh and Roseanne that corroborated with Caroline's concerns. I decided not to ask them to participate.

From March to May, 2003 the war in Iraq begins and activities there occur at a feverish pitch. My only child is there. I am extremely distracted.

In June 2003 I received a call from Michelle's mother. She told me that Michelle was living at home permanently. I told her about the study and she agreed to do whatever she could to help. She also said she would have Michelle call me. Amari came for a weeklong visit at the end of Spring Semester. We discussed the shooting. This was the first time I had seen Amari since he was shot in April. I saw his scars (at least the physical ones). This is the point at which Amari made the statement that the 1997 shooting was more traumatic for him than this most recent one. This was the turning point at which I realized that I had to do this study.

In August 2003 Michelle finally called me and told me about the sports injury she sustained at Gulf State. She was obviously traumatized by the fall out from her injury, and we talked at length about her options for finishing her education. Even with all that happened at Gulf State, Michelle managed to leave there with a 3.8 grade point average. I explained the study to Michelle and she agreed to participate.

On October 9, 2003 I defended my prospectus and submitted the IRB application. On October 13, 2003 I traveled to Athens to meet with Dr. Grantham for my subjectivity interview. We had arranged to meet at 10:30 at Vonelle's. After I arrived in Athens, I went to the restaurant where I thought we were supposed to meet. It was closed. I called Dr. Grantham on his cell phone and we agreed to meet at the International House of Pancakes. I had tapes and a recorder, while Dr. Grantham brought a list of ideas and questions that have occurred to him since my prospectus defense and during the conversation we had a few days prior to this interview. The interview lasted about three hours. Other than the explanation of what it means to be an African-American teacher from the "old school" (explained later in this chapter), Dr. Grantham cited these as themes and concerns he thought I should address: (1) privileging the young men in my discourse; (2) possibly recounting the court case and its results; and (3) my feelings of guilt because I hardly ever talked to the students about the shooting after we returned to Murphey East

On November 12, 2003 my IRB application was approved. I telephoned Caroline and we agreed that I would visit Sandpiper the weekend after Thanksgiving to interview her. I telephoned the other three participants and talked more extensively about how I envisioned effective history interviews. I told them to think about important events in their lives, how those events affected them, and how they resisted the effects. Michelle spoke extensively about her sports injury, so I told her to think about it more and be prepared to talk about it if she thought it was important and was willing to share it. Stephanie and I talked about her involvement in school governance and her weight. I told her that I thought the weight was an issue we need to explore during the interview.

On December 1, 2003 I drove to Sandpiper to visit with and interview Caroline at her home. It was in the mid-afternoon when I arrive and Caroline was in her pajama pants and a tee shirt. We exchanged our usual jokes aimed at one another, our way of grounding ourselves in the reality of our friendship. We must always keep laughing, else we would cry far too much. Caroline talks about going to church earlier that day with her husband and his elderly aunts. The three of us talked about these two extraordinary women and how one aunt who is visiting from Philadelphia was introduced during the

church service. We also had a conversation about how those who come back to their home church, the church of their childhood, after living away were introduced as visitors. In this unspoken tradition, the person who formally welcomes visitors during the church service asks for visitors to stand. The returning member does not stand because she does not consider herself a visitor. After prodding by relatives and friends, she stands and talks about what has happened in her life since she last visited the home church. This is a ritual in predominately-black churches throughout the South. Revisiting it with Carolyn and her husband reconnected the three of us with our roots.

Carolyn and I retire to the family room and catch up on gossip until bedtime. We agreed to conduct the interview first thing Monday morning. The next morning I interviewed Carolyn at the table in her breakfast room. Actually, since I gave Carolyn the same briefing about my study that I gave the students, she already had a picture of what she wanted to say. Consequently, I ask her one question and from that question she talked for about two hours with little interruption from me. Occasionally, I stepped into the kitchen to freshen my coffee or onto the patio directly adjacent to the table to smoke a cigarette. In the meantime, I could hear Carolyn talking about her past, the mother who was absent as often as she was there, the breakup of her first marriage, and the 1997 shooting event. She also discussed the most recent event in which her son, Amari, was shot.

After we finished the interview, we took a ride in Carolyn's new SUV to the neighborhood Kroger and Walmart. We picked up items to supplement the shrimp her husband has so meticulously cleaned and frozen for this special occasion when his two favorite aunts will dine with us later that evening. We then picked up the aunts from the senior citizens' facility where the elder aunt resides. We had dinner with the aunts and Carolyn's brother-in-law, and after they left, we debriefed (as we always do when one of us spends the night with the other) and retired for the night. The next morning I left for my home in Yargary. I immediately began transcribing Carolyn's interview. Carolyn's story could make a research study in its own right. I decided that I did not want to include her effective history in this study

because it would not do her justice. After talking with my committee chair, we decided to use her data for validation and informant purposes in this study. I plan to write about Carolyn singularly at a later date.

On December 3, 2004 I called participants and asked them where and when they would like to be interviewed. All three agreed that they would like to come to my home for their interviews. I would interview Amari when he stayed with us during Christmas holidays. I would interview Stephanie on December 29 at 12:00 P.M. and she requested that I prepare lasagna for lunch. I would interview Michelle on February 4, 2004, at 1:00 P.M. and I agreed to prepare lobster linguini for her lunch.

On December 15, 2003 I interview Amari early in the morning. This interview was part interview, part discussion, and part debate. This occurred in most of my conversations with Amari. I believe one of the reasons our relationship is so strong is that Amari and I can disagree, clash, and argue; yet, we leave the conversation with stronger mutual respect and love than when we began. Amari's interview lasted about ninety minutes. On December 29, 2003 Stephanie arrives right on time and we talk in my living room. Like Amari and Carolyn, Stephanie did not need much guidance to discuss her effective history. Occasionally I asked questions, but mostly she described and analyzed events in her life without much help from me. Stephanie's interview also lasted about ninety minutes. I made Stephanie a pillow in the colors of her sorority and nestled a bit of lavender essential oil in the middle of the filling. As Stephanie leaves, she yelled out of her car window that her car smells "so good!"

On February 4, 2004 I interviewed Michelle at my home. She arrived at about 1:00 P.M. Our interview was a bit more formal than the other three. Michelle talked about college and sports first, and then she discussed the 1997 Event. Since she was a bit late, we conduct about 30 minutes of the interview during lunch. This interview lasted over ninety minutes.

Types of Data

Quilting Lives

I perceived my function in this study as that of *bricoleur* or "quiltmaker" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The term *bricoleur* activates the noun *bricolage*, which describes "something made or put

together using whatever materials happen to be available” (“Yourdictionary.Com”, 1996-2004). Denzin and Lincoln use this French term interchangeably with the term “quiltmaker,” implying improvisational research in which “many different things are going on at the same time—different voices, different perspectives, points of view, angles of vision” (p. 7).

My data is like the pieces quiltmakers or the tinkerers use in their crafts. The researcher as *bricoleur* or quiltmaker never knows exactly how the innovation will appear visually. Similarly, as I tinkered with pieces of cloths (I know I am mixing my metaphors), some bought for this purpose and others left over from some other sewing project, I discovered how they could be pieced together to form a tapestry, a quilt that is different from all others created before it.

Also like the quiltmaker (a group of craftspeople to which I belong) I first pinned these pieces together to see if they made visual meaning. If they did not, I put away pieces that did not fit and saved them for some other use. Sometimes the pieces did not fit because I needed to clarify their visual appeal by adding transition pieces between them and the pieces beside them to enhance elements I wished to highlight while backgrounding those I wished the viewer to perceive subliminally. Once I had a block or design that satisfied the purpose of the quilt, I sewed them together.

In comparing these processes, quiltmaking and the bricolage, to collecting, sorting, analyzing, and reassembling data, first I determined what I wanted my data and analysis to do. As Mary Leach (Leach, 2000) suggests, I wished to “create new lines of flight, fragments of other possibilities, to experiment differently with meanings, practices, and our own confoundings” (p. 223). Having been in communication with these participants in the years since 1997, I determined to first foreground the Event, its effects, and their resistances to those effects; then I used other events in their lives to demonstrate how people who are raced do not always live their lives with race at the center. Again, Leach suggests similar objectives in regards to feminist research—as she says, following Foucault, Deleuze, and Irigaray, “and their suggestions of routes of escape, moments and practices to refuse what we are, to contest the [dominant] in order to move toward some place that might be called a counterdiscourse” (p. 223).

This counterdiscourse serves different purposes for those outside the particular group or individuals raced than it does for consumers of data about those people. For those raced it discursively liberates their documented representation. In other words, it helps decolonize them from those who race them. For those who are raced, it will help them mentally actualize these participants as far more than what they are when they are raced. It forces all of us who consume literature like this to see young black people as making meaning of their lives through many epistemological and axiological views.

The strips I used to make this quilt included autoethnographic data in which I recalled my journey through segregation in the same community where the participants attended the school I call Murphey East in the city I call Murphey. This impressionistic data represents a limited version of the social reality that formed Murphey East and its mostly African-American student and teacher populations.

Reflexive Ethnography

Within this autoethnographic data as well as in the memory data specifically related to the 1997 Event, I used what Ellis and Bochner (2003) call “reflexive ethnographies” (p. 211). Ellis and Bochner emphasize that reflexive ethnographies “focus on a culture or subculture” in which “authors use their own experiences in the culture reflexively to bend back on self and look more deeply at self-other interactions” (p. 211). I used reflexive ethnography to deconstruct and critique my role in the lives of the participants, especially the period during and immediately after the 1997 shooting Event. These data also constitute “complete-member research,” in which the “researcher explore[s] groups of which they already are members or in which, during the research process, they have become full members” (p. 211).

My journey into, out of, and through this culture is *nomadic* (Braidotti, 1993; Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987; St. Pierre, 2000). I believe this because I began my life in the town where two of the participants were born and all three lived large portions of their lives. On the other hand, I left and traveled around the world as a military person during the time when they were children. Whenever I returned to Murphey during this period, I felt as if I were in an alien land. In 1994, my family and I returned to Murphey to live permanently. After obtaining a position at Murphey East, I easily became an

insider once I demonstrated my desire for permanence in the East Murphey community by residing there and involving myself in community and school activities. This nomadic movement is key in deconstructing the discourses I employed with my students as a teacher and coach at Murphey East High School.

Researching the “Hows” through Intra Views

Another type of data I used is the interview. Fontana and Frey (2000) emphasize the fact that “qualitative researchers are realizing that interviews are not neutral tools of data gathering but active interactions between two (or more) people leading to negotiated, contextually based results” (p. 62). These authors emphasize the way interviews are now focusing as much on the “*hows* of people’s lives (the constructive work involved in producing order in everyday life) as well as the traditional *whats* (the activities of everyday life)” (p. 62).

People like me who were not aware of what qualitative research does until entering graduate studies are sometimes unaware of how recently this type of data collection came to the research scene. For instance, Bogdan and Biklen (1998) explain how qualitative research in general was characterized as “soft” early on because it was “not easily handled by statistical procedures” (p. 2). These authors further examine how qualitative researchers “are concerned as well with understanding behavior from the subject’s own frame of reference” (p. 2). Accordingly, Bogdan and Biklen believe that participant observation and in-depth interviewing “most embody [these] characteristics” of qualitative research (p. 2). I chose qualitative research, particularly, interviews, as a method because it does precisely what Bogden and Biklen say it should do.

Within interviewing as a method of qualitative research, Bogden and Biklen (1998) assert that researchers “spend considerable time in schools, families, neighborhoods, and other locales learning about educational concerns,” and that “mechanically recorded material [collected at these sites] are reviewed in their entirety by the researcher with the researcher’s insight being the key instrument for analysis” (p. 27). Additionally, Kvale (1996) posits that the interviews allow the subjects to “not only

answer questions prepared by an expert, but themselves formulate in a dialogue their own conceptions of their lived world.” Kvale also explains that this method must be “neither a progressive nor an oppressive method,” but in the postmodern approach, it must “emphasize the constructive nature of the knowledge created through the interaction of partners in the interview conversation” (p. 11).

In interviewing within postmodern efforts to avoid essentializing (Britzman, 2000), postcolonial efforts to decolonize (Smith, 2002), and the ethnographic mandate for “thick description” (Geertz, 1973), I focus on Kvale’s (1996) figuration of the interview as literally “inter view, an inter-change of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest” (p. 14). Kvale gives a visual representation of the interview through a drawing that depicts two silhouettes facing each other. The silhouettes are shaded in dark gray while the space between them is light gray. Kvale explains how the two faces of this “ambiguous figure” (p. 15) represent the interviewer and the interviewee as they face one another in the interview process. When one looks at the figure and foregrounds the light gray space between the two silhouettes, the outline of a vase is visible (assuming one has the cultural referent that allows the visualization of a vase that looks like the one in the picture). Within this caveat, the vase could contain the “knowledge constructed *inter the views* of the interviewer and interviewee” (p. 15).

Interviews: Or Growing Love Food

Although Kvale’s figuration helped me think more clearly about the interview process, to internalize this metaphor and (re)present it in a figuration that incorporates my Africanist views, I thought of the garden. Specifically, as a gardener, I thought of the way my spouse and I grow collards and okra.

My spouse loves okra, while I tolerate them only mildly; but I prefer collards. On the other hand, we both love tomatoes. In every location we have lived since we first married, we have built a garden. The garden is like a sacred space that allows us to stay connected to our roots and to each other. Because my spouse loves okra, I love collards, and we both love tomatoes, we communally prepare a raised bed and use our individual horticultural gifts to make sure it is the most nurturing ground for our vegetables.

My spouse is very good at tilling the earth to aerate it and make it ready to receive the seed. I, on the other hand, have become an expert at recycling household and yard refuse, allowing the worms and the natural environment to do their work and create compost that makes this garden soil optimally receptive and nurturing to the plants once the seeds germinate and begin to grow. In my figuration, our love of various vegetables and our divergent skills are like the views each of us brings to the interview.

The garden is one product of our mutual interchange on the field of our private lives and the space in which we have chosen to produce. However, this figuration goes even further. The harvest its yields are an evolved product of our mutual effort to recreate.

As I stated earlier, I mildly tolerate okra, we both love tomatoes (and hot peppers), and my spouse likes greens, but I really love them. In order for us to be mutually satisfied at what we produce together, we have to bring the harvest in and use it to create love food. Love food comprises collards cooked to a tender perfection with a smattering of the onions and jalapeño peppers that we also grow, and small diced pieces of flavorfully cured ham. Love food also includes the gumbo that I carefully prepare by simmering flour in olive oil to the perfect brown roux color, adding peppers, onions, celery, and other Creole vegetables until they begin to sweat, and then pouring in the flavorful seafood stock and spices to cook the gumbo sauce for hours to perfection. After adding the ham, shrimp, crawfish, and other meats and seafood items, I must crown this gumbo with the okra that we have harvested from our love garden, rinsed, and sliced to the perfect size for a spoonful of flavor. Finally I sanctify the gumbo with a dusting of filé powder to make it rich and thick. Although the word *gumbo* literally translates as “okra,” what my spouse and I make from it is much more, much richer, and more valuable than the sum of any of its parts.

I think of gumbo in the way I think of intersubjectivity. Wertsch (1985) explains that when [I]nterlocutors enter into a communicative context, they may have different perspectives or only a vague interpretation of what is taken for granted and what the utterance are intended to convey. Through semiotically mediated ‘negotiation,’ however, they create a temporarily shared social world, a state of intersubjectivity. (p. 161)

Gardening, greens, and gumbo are the expressions of mediation between my spouse and me. Even though I do not care for okra, I have learned to appreciate its presence, even its necessity, in gumbo. Not only that, but as we commingle the seed, soil, air, and water that make this key ingredient possible, we also create a new space of intersubjective joy, consumption, and love food.

Like our gardening endeavors, the interviewer and interviewee each bring something to the discursive space where the interview resides. Intersubjectivity allows them to acknowledge what is alien or gaps in their communal knowledge. The prefix “inter” indicates occurrence among or between, “in the midst of,” or “reciprocal” (Soukhanov & Ellis, 1984, p. 635). The prefix “intra,” on the other hand, implies “within” (Soukhanov & Ellis, 1984, p. 639). Accordingly, the properly conducted interview is a method that explores spaces and discourses by creating new knowledge among, between, and in the midst of interlocutors. This knowledge is reciprocal and intersubjective.

On the other hand, I visualized the product of the interview as a new discourse that is within its own psychic and discursive space. I make this statement based on the assumption that one cannot completely capture the ontology, epistemology, and axiology of the person or group one interviews. Knowledge created between or among two or more participants in this method is always partial and always incomplete as far as the referents are concerned. Nevertheless, the representation is also a complete discourse in that it stands as a new intersubjective representation. Therefore, representations of data in the form of interviews could be called (intra) views because they exist as extant discourses somewhat independent of the separate knowledge participants bring to the interview.

Since the interview in Kvale’s (1996) assessment forms new representations in what he calls “the vase” between interlocutors, how I as the interviewer conduct, analyze, and represent the “intra view” becomes important in terms of both ethics and validity. First, I will discuss the exigencies I had to resolve prior to beginning this project. I will follow this with a discussion of the process of conducting these interviews. Finally, I will examine the types of data I used and their purposes in this study.

Gossip Data

In addition to searching for new figurations, Leach (2000) seeks to foreground gossip as a legitimate form of discourse and data. After reading Leach's essay, I realized that I used gossip data significantly in this study. Gossip, according to Leach, pejoratively connotes as a female form of discourse. Leach seeks to trouble this view by highlighting the patriarchy exhibited in this view of gossip as feminine while demonstrating the legitimacy of gossip as a method of discourse. Leach also critiques the logocentric view of language as the imparting of knowledge in the male-gendered public sphere. She cites theorists like Aristotle, Aquinas, Kierkegaard, and Heidegger as espousing this pejorative view of gossip. She concludes that although no form of discourse can operate outside the power relations within which we operate, gossip "shows us an alternative space in which to find the actual *conditions of possibility* for both the creation and examination of differences" (p. 234).

The way I used gossip in this study was to avoid hurting someone by raising a subject that was not only painful for him or her but unproductive for the purposes of my study. Obviously, many issues suggested in the interview data are painful for the respondent, but this pain was the product of the participant's singular decision to take the risk and speak about it. In other words, although I believe I can assist in the decolonization of representations of people like my participants, the participants must choose to decolonize their minds by revisiting the pains of their past.

Simulacrum, Simulation, Representations, and Decolonization

Spivak (1999) gives a timely warning about the role of writing the world and its colonizing effects when she discusses the East India Company's representations of themselves and the Indians. She notes that the, "colonizer constructs himself as he constructs the colony. The relationship is intimate, an open secret that cannot be part of the official language" (p. 203). This tendency to write the world around myself, thereby minimizing the effects and subject position of the researched is a colonial tendency that I must be wary of as I (re)present my participants. My research methodology comprised a "decolonizing methodology" (Smith, 2002).

I talked to my former students and their parents, and they all must love me tenderly, else they would not agree to relive such horrendous times in their lives. Nevertheless, I had a problem—it is a “crisis of representation”(Marcus & Fischer, 1999). I asked myself what would be the effects of (re)presenting their subjectivities from the time the incident occurred to the present. One answer is that this displaces the effects of this incident on their overall subjectivities. In effect, it denies or excludes all the ruptures and resistances that took place prior to the event and places the event at the center of all future actions related to their subjective formation. It discursively places the subjects within a space that privileges their being raced above all other events that create their subjectivities. It also discursively colonizes their adult lives by ignoring the ruptures, discontinuities, and resistances that constructed their subjectivities prior to and after the incident.

My solution was to examine how power traverses throughout their young lives, focusing, as Foucault (1977) suggests on the, “plurality of resistances, each of them a special case: resistances that are possible, necessary, improbably; others that are spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial” (p. 96). In this model, I endeavored to begin somewhere on the space of their continually changing lives—a space that was suggested by each participant according to where his or her mental plane was at the time that the interview took place.

For some participants, the interview began at the incident, because the Event brought singularity to the participants in spite of their various lives before and after the Event. Others had catalogued the Event along with other experiences in their life’s landscape, and in doing so wanted to proceed from some other juncture in their past. Some felt more comfortable speaking about more recent events, such as those that had occurred since they entered college. Whatever their choice, I attempted to travel with the subject wherever they choose to go.

Finding Me: Revisiting the “Testimonio

As the writer of ethnographic research, I realized that I had a great deal of power in shaping the (re)presentations of these research subjects. In some ways my oral narratives resemble the “testimonio,” a form of oral history in which one person speaks of experiences, but in which those experiences can be generalized to an entire culture (Tierney, 2000). One preeminent, though recently challenged example of this genre is *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala* (Menchú & Burgos-Debray, 1984). Tierney uses this testimonio as an exemplar. In *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, the title character narrates her life-story and tells of the atrocities and events that occurred during her 23 years as a Guatemalan woman.

The testimonio narrative strategy, according to Tierney (2000) lets the subject speak without the interference of a researcher/narrator. In other words, it assumes a researcher who is invisible in the representation of the data. Although I see how this genre works for certain consumers of qualitative research, the idea of the absent researcher is contrary to methods for writing within a poststructuralist framework. Contrary to Tierney’s definition of traditional testimonio, within poststructuralism researchers change and create the researched reality as they document it. This changing and creating is not a conscious effort on the researcher’s part, instead it is an inevitable product of coming into contact with others. In other words, one can never be outside the representation, and the best and most valid research documents how and where we are “in” the research process and the data we collect and represent.

Another aspect of the testimonio is that it is designed as an appeal from, “those who have been silenced, excluded, and marginalized by their societies” (Tierney, 2000, p. 140). Since I studied a group of people with whom I share a common racializing experience, one might assume that the testimonio would be an appropriate genre, but I did not think it was. Again, terms like “silenced” and “marginalized” must be troubled within the poststructuralist critique because the reiteration of this center/margin binary perpetuates discourse and knowledge construction along those lines. Instead of center/margin or “marginalized” people, I think of myself and my subjects as being “subjugated” and

having resisted. I must think in these terms because I love these young people; therefore, I do not want them living on anybody's "margins."

In addition, as Tierney (2000) suggests, this type of representation falls decidedly within the hermeneutic/interpretive paradigm, even though it assumes the researched as author and has a critical appeal to justice. One of my concerns was that I was not interested in (re)presenting my subjects as authors. I was not even sure this was a possibility. Secondly, as I stated earlier, I was not interested in locating them in the margins of society (there is no margin). Consequently, I used some of the techniques of the testimonio without framing my questions or (re)presentations in a way that appeal to a social justice agenda.

Tierney (2000) suggests problems with the traditional testimonio as defined above. He then develops methods for using similar devices while changing them to fit a postmodern methodology. One problem with the traditional interpretive testimonio is the idea of it representing a "portal." The idea of a "portal," or "a method by which a reader understands a culture different from their own" (p. 545) does not reflect the goals of my own research. One objection with understanding as an epistemological endeavor is impossible from the standpoint of the outsider (and perhaps even the insider). The idea of understanding seems to me to relate to closely to the idea of "meaning," a discursive construct that suggests totalizing, discovering the "essence" of something, or in the case of the narrator, being able to "speak for" (Alcoff, 1991) others. I believed that the most I could hope for was to allow the narrator/researched to speak in the text.

If researchers do our job, the narrators, in the case of testimonios, or the participants in the case of ethnographic effective histories will represent their subjectivities during the interview. Even the representation given in the dialogic moment is already always changing, shifting, and being repositioned. This may occur because the interviewer/researcher unknowingly changes the nature in which the subject presents their story. By Tierney's (2000) own admission:

The portal approach exoticizes the Other and tries to enable the reader to understand the life fantastic. An undertaking of this kind inevitably privileges the researcher and reinforces social relations circumscribed by power insofar as a dynamic is created in which the author has control over the final production of a text about someone else's life story. (p. 545)

The second way that Tierney (2000) envisions testimonio is by use of a "process" model. In this model, "the researcher and reader come to understand the semiotic means by which someone else makes sense of the world" (p. 545). He continues by explaining that the researcher and researched "reflect on their own lives," and they "achieve some understanding of one another and of the multiple realities involved in the creation of meaning" (p. 545). This approach, according to Tierney, is more commensurate with the postmodern approach to ethnography. Although I agree with the idea that viewing the testimonio as a process rather than a portal better fits the postmodern critique, I am still uneasy with the idea that testimonio is a suitable method for conducting poststructural research. I mentioned the testimonio because the methodology seems to be effective as an interview technique; nevertheless, I did not think it was suitable as the genre for representation of the complete data story.

Tierney's (2000) warning of the possibility of colonizing the subject by use of the testimonio served as an adequate warning for me as I endeavored to seek interviews about people's lives. Tierney also warns the researcher against "authorial narcissism" (p. 547) that causes the writer to overpower the text, thereby creating another imperialist discourse. Tierney challenges the postmodern researcher to "accept the multiple mediations at work in the creation of the text and expose them, rather than try to hide them, wish them away or assume that they can be resolved" (p. 543).

Tierney's "process" figuration fits nicely with Foucault's (1976/1990) explanation of power and resistance networks. Foucault explains that they form, "mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remolding them, marking off irreducible regions in

them, in their bodies and minds" (p. 96). I must also remember Richardson's (2000) warning that the, "worded world' never accurately, precisely, completely captures the studied world, yet we persist in trying" (p. 923).

Racing Against the Panopticon

Foucault (1977/1995) also discusses another dimension of power apparatuses that is pertinent to my research. That is the idea of Jeremy Bentham's (1812) "panopticon." The panopticon is a model for building prisons in which the authorities are able to view the activities of all prisoners at all times. Schools, hospitals, and mental institutions are built along the lines of the panopticon. The problem with the panopticon is that, "society is very much like this prison for Foucault. With our contemporary political culture, comprised of markets, globalized communication, technology, and social sciences, we have become increasingly a surveillance society" (Abrams, 2002, pp. 185-92). Similarly, Foucault explains that the panopticon was established because, "exercises of discipline presupposes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation; an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power" (pp. 170-71). Foucault further calls these mechanisms "techniques of subjection and methods of exploitation" (pp. 170-71). In other words we live within a society of voyeurs obsessed with observing people as they practice "technologies of the self" (Foucault, 1986). This voyeuristic gaze induces power effects that subjugate no matter how innocent their users' intentions.

This panoptic theory bears on my research subjects primarily because the surreptitious monitorings of the security guard precipitated the 1997 shooting. Voyeurism in general is an issue with many African-Americans. We often enter upscale stores, elevators, and expensive hotels only to find that the gaze is directed on us. The gaze that is facilitated by the panopticon is an effect of power in and of itself, but when it further manifest itself in more overt power moves, the subject of the gaze must either sit passively under it or resist. I explored this dimension of participants' subject-positions in the course of this research.

The second way the gaze effects the participants is that the products of the security guard's disciplinary gaze has propagated innumerable other instances of subjection to other gazes that each of these participants made an explicit agreement to avoid by keeping the shooting a secret. First, as the reader will see in Chapter 4, they wished to avoid my gaze and that of Carolyn. Secondly, they wished to avoid the gaze of administrators, teachers, and students at Murphey East. Stephanie cited her bewilderment when I caught her in a daze during a literature class shortly after the shooting. When I, in an effort to help her, took her outside and asked her if she was thinking about the shooting, the gaze intensified in a way that was uncomfortable for Stephanie.

Stephanie also mentioned that she felt the gaze (she stated this differently) from her parents, her white friends who knew about the shooting, and other relatives. One of the first major disagreements she had with her mother after the shooting was the result of her mother telling an uncle about the shooting. Likewise, both Stephanie and Michelle expressed relief that the guard was not tried; therefore, they did not have to return to the city where the shooting occurred to testify against him. They also were relieved that the suit was settled out of court, again alleviating the need for lengthy court battles.

Now I feel like I am a part of the cause and filter of the panoptic gaze directed at these young people. I cause the gaze because I have exposed them to so many people through conference presentations, papers I have written, and especially this research report. These participants have no idea how many insensitive and inappropriate questions and comments people have made as I presented parts of this data story. Many people do not realize that intent and effect are not necessarily conterminous. They often do not think of queries in terms of how they invade the intentionally unthought, or what Toni Morrison's (2000) "Sethe" calls those things "disremembered" in ways that do not balance the need to know with the effect of asking the question. As ethical methodologists, we must strike a careful balance between these two poles lest we become the panoptic eye (or ear, again a mix of metaphors) who discipline our participants into revealing things they would rather keep secret satisfying the voyeuristic gaze of our consumers.

Another dynamic I kept in mind is my own presence—my physical and psychic closeness to the subjects. I felt that I must try as much as possible to acknowledge implied yet unequal power relations between each of my participants and me. I was aware of their need to please the “elder,” an issue I discuss extensively in Chapter 4. I was also aware of how my positionality as their former teacher, friend, and sometimes mentor affected the way they presented their data story. I watched for that wary look that said, “Don’t forget, this is Mrs. Jones I am talking to.” During the interviews and even now I continue to deal with this issue. This was the unspoken question throughout the interview, and I continue to ask it as I document these results. If I felt the participant was reluctant to reveal important information because I am the interviewer, I used several approaches. One example is the interview with Michelle in which I ask her what she and Stephanie did after my arrival at the desk. When I arrived at the desk, I asked the hotel representative what they had done. When he replied with some vague comment about them standing outside the hotel lobby, I told the women to go to their rooms. I knew at that moment that race was part of the reason these two young black women were singled out by the guard, but at that time I did not realize the extent to which they were harmed. I dismissed them because I did not want them to be privy to what my grandmother calls “grown folks’ conversation.”

I interviewed Stephanie on December 29, 2003, and Michelle on February 4, 2004. During my interview with Stephanie, she revealed that she and Michelle left the desk area and ducked behind the elevator when I told them to go to their rooms. They did this so that they could hear what the hotel representative and the guard told me. According to Stephanie, they went to their rooms just before I returned to my own room after my first visit to the lobby. When I interviewed Michelle, she did not know that Stephanie had revealed this information to me. Consequently, when I asked her what they did after I told them to go to their room, she said they went to their rooms. Since this issue was not that important, I simply responded by saying that I knew that was not all they did after they left the lobby. Michelle still did not know what I was talking about; consequently, she revealed other information that Stephanie did not during my interview with her. Michelle told me that she, Amari, and Josh had returned

to the outside and that Josh said he had a cigar that they could smoke. In Michelle's account, she refused to smoke it, and after they agreed not to tell Caroline and me about the shooting, they returned to their rooms. I then asked her directly if they stopped to listen to the conversation between the guard, the hotel representative, and me. She said they did in a rather dismissive tone as if that was unimportant information.

Once Michelle revealed the story of the cigar, I remembered Amari's interview during which he made not comment about them returning outside and Josh offering a cigar. Then I began to wonder what other details he as well as the others omitted during their interviews. I thought about what I should do, if anything, to flesh out these incidents. Finally, I decided that both incidents were so peripheral to the study's focus and that I would leave them alone.

As a student of intersubjectivity, I must accept responsibility for the way I presented the question, thereby positioning participants to respond in a certain way. In other words I must remember that these 21 and 22-year-old bodies are still inhabited by the 14 and 15 year-olds who, in their own words, "looked like they were wrong" immediately after the shooting event. Unfortunately, I realized this after the interviews; therefore, it only advises my future qualitative endeavors.

Validation

My position as teacher and mentor to the participant facilitated entrée into this community. Consequently, my knowledge of these participants is etic as well as emic (Creswell, 1998). In other words, my representation involves "views of the actors in the group (emic) and researcher's interpretation of views about human social life in a social science perspective (etic)" (p. 60). I continue to work and play with the participants as teacher, mentor, and friend. Our relationships embody elements of Africanist community life. On the other hand, my supraanalytical view places me on the outside. Ultimately, I cannot claim to know very much. Consequently, my method of data collection—specifically the flexibility of this postmodern study within the interview process, was critical in allowing the participants to speak for themselves.

As an insider in this community, I am privy to many aspects of the personal lives of my participants. Since I know things about the participants that they may not even know about themselves, I was careful and very ethical with my insider knowledge. Consequently, the information I provided only encompassed the elements salient to the portrayal of their subjective lives. Unlike traditional history, the lives of these participants have not always been progressive and consistently more rational from event to event. In addition, their lives are strongly tied to their subject-groups, women, men, African-American, middle-class, etc. Finally, their lives are rife with paradoxes. While on the one hand, they often have moments where they emerge as significant subject/actors and agents of power and resistance, other times their acts defy logic and exhibit self-hate, nihilism, and brokenness from which they always must emerge progressively or digressively.

Finally, this type of analysis was unusual in its focus on the one as opposed to the many and its concern with singular acts as opposed to grand events. It was novel and difficult, but was the best method of representation of my participants as subjects of their own lives. Throughout this process I heeded Cornel West's (1994) warning that we continue to demonstrate how black folks are *victimized* while not placing them within the binary of *victim*.

Transmigration to Decolonization of the Mind

In Chapter 1, I promised a journey, a journey in which I would cut. My participants and I began this journey long ago. This journey is a transmigration, an attempt to get somewhere in which we have to cross the alien territory that lies between our destination and our present location. Decolonization and recovery is sometimes a lifelong process (Smith, 2002). At the onset, I had hopes that the participants had come some distance in their journey toward deconstructing the Event and formulating resistances; but I really had no idea whether they had done so. This is ironic considering my self-characterization as an insider in this community; but the secrecy, shame, and unspoken rule not to speak of the Event imposed some restraints on my knowledge of how those victimized had coped.

In order to explain the difficulty I had in deciding to study this Event, I must describe the pivotal event that affected my decision. Last year, one of my participants, Amari, was shot twice at a fraternity event during his school's Spring Break. Amari is the participant with whom I have the closest relationship. After the 1997 shooting Event, Amari by his own admittance experienced trouble within his family. At the time, Amari lived with his mother and stepfather. Amari was in the ninth grade when the Event occurred. Throughout his tenth and eleventh grade years, I watched Amari become angrier, more distant, and rebellious toward his parents and other authority figures. In the meantime, Amari's stepfather relocated to Sandpiper because of a career move. Amari refused to move with his family and became even more rebellious.

During Amari's eleventh-grade year, his mother felt that he had become too rebellious. Consequently, she sent him to live with his biological father. The biological father also lived in Murphey. Amari was unhappy at his father's house because his father would not allow him to participate in high school football. For reasons that I do not know, Amari's father made him move into his paternal grandmother's home.

By this time, I had resigned as Academic team coach, yet I maintained a strong relationship with most of the team members. Amari visited my classroom daily and appeared sadder and angrier. Consequently, I proposed to his mother that he come to live with my husband and me. With the court's approval, Amari spent his last year of high school at our home. Amari's mother and I were already friends since she was our team's chaperone when the 1997 shooting Event occurred. After Amari moved into our home, she and I became even closer. Again, all of us in the Amari's family community worked to resolve this problem, acknowledging that in the Africanist tradition "the individual was a part of this collective unity; *i.e.*, the family" (Nobles, 1978, p. 684).

Amari graduated valedictorian of his class and received full athletic and academic scholarships to pursue aerospace engineering at Weldon University. Amari told me that he wanted to fly in a space shuttle one day. With all that he had overcome, I believed he would attain his goal.

As I mentioned earlier, Amari was shot twice, once in the foot and once in the groin, during an altercation at a fraternity party. The party was not at Weldon, the prestigious Historically Black College (HBCU) he attended. Instead, the shooting occurred at a large predominately-white research university in our state. Amari describes this event thusly:

Vj - So then you were shot at again.

Amari: This was March of this year, 2003. And we were on spring break. And it was supposed to be a pajama party at Piedmont. We had just got on spring break that Friday. So we all, me, Rico, it was about seven or eight of us. We piled up into cars and we went down there. A lot of other football players came too. In all it was probably about 30 of us. So we went to the party. It was in the Piedmont University gym. I think it was about 12. There were a couple of after-parties. So we found one to go to and next thing I remember we was in there for a while. It was in an apartment complex. I remember like looking at a little bar in the apartment. It was like a little circle. I was talking to some girls and a bunch of people came running in and said 'Rico fin'da get into it with some guys.' So I went outside and they were trying to hold Rico. And I didn't see who it was he was fin'da get into it with. But probably about two seconds later three guys come out the door. You could tell they was trying to go towards Rico. So I grabbed one of um. It's bout three of us so we grabbed them, we all football players so we bigger than them. I think first thing I was just trying to push them away. And they just kept on coming. It was aggravating then. So I pushed him real hard. And he fell back through the door. Rico still almost getting loose it's 'bout ten people, cause he kinda' strong you know. And I figured I can talk to Rico, 'cause we best friends. So I just told everybody to get away. So I took Rico round the corner. The way the balcony it was like ... you come out the apartment. But the balcony ... it's some steps where you can go down to your car or you can ... it connects to the other balcony where you can go to the other apartments too. So I just took Rico, bypassed the steps I just took him round the corner toward the other apartments. So we just cooling down; you know we was

just down there jokin' around and everything. We were just cooling down; letting everything blow over. And one of the other girls, one of our other friends came round there too.

Vj - Was she the one that the fight was about?

Amari: No. She wasn't the one. And we heard about three shots. And we thought we didn't have to worry 'cause we was about 20 yards away from them. And we get to runnin' and stuff. But we din' have to worry about it because we were far down as we were. And cause I had my back to the party and Rico. Cause I was holding Rico still. And I turned around and looked over my shoulder. And that's when the guy just rolled around the corner kinda'. And I heard like two shots and my body kinda' jerked. I figured he had shot me but I didn't know where he had shot me. And Rico ducked real quick. I was like "aint' no need in everybody dyin'," so I just threw myself around Rico, like torso and upper body. Everything happened so fast, I didn't really hear no more shots but they said they shot of 'bout ten.

Vj - Which guy was this?

Amari: I saw all three of um come out. But the only one I remember was the one I was trying to keep from getting over there.

Vj - That wasn't him?

Amari: No. It was a light-skinned guy. So Rico, he started stumbling. He started stumblin' to'rd some more steps. I was just gon' let him go that way, keep going. Then he turned around started going towards the guy. He had broke his leg and he was just like ... he was kind of delirious. He was like aah! aah! aah! On one foot and on both his hands just kind of hoppin'. So I grabbed him and snatched him toward the steps. The steps were probably a few feet away. And he fell on the ground. And that's my first time remembering that the girl was right there. Her and Rico side by side just screaming. And I knew I couldn't just take Rico and leave her. So I tried to grab both of 'em and pull 'em. That wasn't working. And 'bout a few seconds later everybody came running up ... Naw. First it was the guy up on the balcony. The white people up

on the balcony came out of their apartment and was askin' me if we needed help. I told them to call the police. And that's when everybody came running from upstairs. I just sat down. I told them to take him downstairs. I just sat down.

Vj - When did you realize you had been shot twice?

Amari: Ah. I knew he shot me. But I think when Rico started hobbling back towards the dude I was just trying to ... I was trying to get him back to the steps but at the same time I was trying to calm him down because he was like delirious. I was like, 'you been shot man, but I been shot too.' I was trying to show him that I was still calm, so he need to be calm. It didn't hurt. It was just kinda' stinging. Something like that. So that's my first time really realizing where I had been shot. So when I sat down I just took my shoe off and blood was pouring out. By that time, my foot had started hurting and I kinda' had forgot about my side. By that time, the ambulance had gotten there. They put me in an ambulance and took me to the hospital.

Vj - What happened to her?

Amari: Tore her Achilles tendon. Me and Rico were walking before her. But Rico still got a rod in his leg. She had that cast on for a long time.

This dramatic narrative demonstrates best Amari's subjectivity in the near present. First, Amari assumed a certain safety in the enclaves of a predominately-white university community. He did not expect this event to occur. When Amari's friend is involved in a fight, the community of football players congeals and gets Amari to extricate his friend from the situation. According to Amari, his friend Rico was protecting the honor of a young female friend who was called a "bitch" by a young man with whom she refused to dance. When Amari found Rico, Rico had lifted the offender over the railing of the upper-level apartment and threatened to drop him to the ground. I have had occasion to meet Rico, and I believe this account to fit his personality.

Amari and the other football players blocked the offenders' friends from attacking Rico. When they eventually become tired of holding back the offender's friends, they punched them harshly, and the

offender's friends fell under the substantial force of the football players' power. Amari took Rico out of the immediate area to allow him to cool down. In the meantime a female friend (not the one who was offended earlier) joined them. Amari was the first shot by the offenders. He acted instinctively to protect his friends. To Amari, there was no "I" without a "we." He risked his life to save his friends. While Rico, delirious because of his bullet-holed body, tried to reach the shooter by crawling towards him, and the young woman was disabled by a bullet through her Achilles' tendon, Amari collected both his friends and took them to safety. In spite of two bullets, one in the groin and one in his ankle, Amari carried both of the other victims out of reach of the shooters.

After returning from my own Spring Break in 2003, Carolyn, Amari's mother, called me and told me that he had been shot. Fortunately, Amari's injuries were not severe. After a short rehabilitation, he returned to spring training in football. Prior to this point, I felt that I could not study the 1997 Event without doing some harm to my former students. I saw no benefit in digging into the psychic ground of their past trauma.

However, my first visit with Amari after the shooting changed my mind about this study. Amari stayed at our home for a few days at the beginning of the summer. We had just eaten dinner, and I felt it was an appropriate time to discuss this most recent shooting incident with him. When Amari showed me the two wounds he had sustained during this shooting I thought I would faint. He had a deep glossy round scar the size of a silver dollar on his groin, very close to his femoral artery, and a similar one on his ankle. He seemed unconcerned about his injuries and indicated that they caused him no present pain.

I asked Amari a question, the answer to which I thought was predictable given his wounds. I asked him which he felt traumatized him more, this most recent shooting in which he sustained bodily injury, or the 1997 shooting from which he sustained permanent no bodily injury. Again, my thoughts wound away when he responded that the 1997 shooting was more traumatic. I was a coward and did not have the nerve to ask him why.

Prior to Amari and I having this conversation, my professors and colleagues tried to convince me that I needed to study this Event. Even though I was not totally convince, I went through the motions of explaining it to my committee and writing comprehensive exams with this subject in mind. This conversation with Amari convinced me that the 1997 shooting had effects even greater than I had suspected. It also propelled me toward using this event as a topic for this study.

Why It Was Worse

The question of why Amari perceived the 1997 Event as more traumatic than the 2003 shooting continued to worry me throughout this study. As I mentioned earlier, I had predicted that Amari would say the 2003 shooting was more traumatic; consequently, when he responded contrary to my expectations, I was taken aback and did not know how to respond. Later, I tried to develop theories about why Amari felt the way he did.

At the time of the 1997 shooting Amari had lived a relatively sheltered life within the close supervision and nurturing of his mother, his stepfather, and other members of the community. I remember that as a high school freshman, one of Amari's middle school teachers called me and warned me that she heard from some of her students that Amari was smoking cigarettes. This was considered a big deal at that time and I immediately confronted Amari about the rumor. As I recall, Amari did not admit smoking cigarettes, but neither did he deny it. Since he now knew that I was aware of the rumor, I felt my purpose was served and pursued the matter no further.

I also noticed that Amari demonstrated attributes of what I call and "gang wannabee." In other words, even though Amari would never join a gang, he wanted to appear as if he were dabbling in gang activity in order to be accepted in the high school culture. I spoke to Amari about this during one of our follow-up interviews. Amari credited his former desire to wear gang colors and use gang tags to a desire to break his image as a nerd and to attract the kind of girls who associate with gang members. Since Amari dated a young woman who not only was a senior when he was a freshman, but also who had a reputation for being involved with gang members, I must admit that his strategy worked.

In spite of Amari's desire to work the fringes of gang association, he remained a sheltered and protected young man. Consequently, he was not the same young man in 1997 as he was in 2003. By the time the 2003 shooting occurred, Amari had experienced two years on his own in a large urban environment. In our follow up interview Amari said that he felt the earlier shooting impacted him more because at that time he had never experienced racism to any large extent because he lived and was school in an almost all-black environment. Therefore, being raced along with being violently assaulted traumatized him more in 1997.

By the time the 2003 shooting occurred, Amari understood the potential for danger in his environment. I also believe that as Amari began to work with people of other ethnicities and live in areas where he assumed that danger was imminent. He assimilated himself to the potential for danger. Therefore, when he was victimized in 2003, he was not as easily shocked as he was in 1997.

Finally, college campuses where fraternity parties, step shows, football games, and other social activities are the center of social life are inherently dangerous because young adults away from home for the first time learn about the mixture of alcohol, drugs, and sex. Within this vortex of college social life, violence becomes inevitable. I know this is true because I have attended predominately-white or predominately-Hispanic institutions my entire post-secondary career. At every one of these institutions, parties are a key part of campus life. At my present institution I am not an insider in the undergraduate community, but I often hear my students talk about parties, drinking, and the inevitable fights that follow. Based on information provided by these participants, this phenomenon also occurs at HBCU's. According to Amari, the football players usually socialize in groups because they expect that violence will ensue when they attend social functions. The 2003 shooting was an extreme example of the problem of mixing young adults, drugs and/or alcohol, and sex on the college campus. Although I see it as extreme, I believe Amari was better prepared for an event like this than he was for the 1997 shooting.

Sample Selection

As I stated earlier, five of the seven young adults who accompanied me on the trip were present during the shooting. These five young adults I call Josh (the 16-year-old), Michelle, Stephanie, Rosanna (all 15-years-old), and Amari (14-years-old). As I envisioned an effective history study, I believed that its application was predicated on discursive movement orchestrated by impressionistic accounts of events participants view as significant in their lives. Unfortunately, when one is experiencing a crisis or struggling with identity issues in a small community like East Murphey, many people know “your business.” Consequently, in spite of the fact that I have not worked with these young people in over five years, I still hear things in the wind about what is going on in their lives.

Using a specific group comprising only five individuals presents unique problems. One issue is the fact that these five people know each other and know that the other participants can only be among the other four. Specifically, when dealing with issues of anonymity, a predetermined sample group is problematic because other participants can easily triangulate what participants say. For instance, in the recollection of Amari’s shooting, all the other participants can easily triangulate the speaker’s identity because there were only two men among the five students present during the shooting. Once anyone familiar with this event looks at the behavior and details about the person who was shot, identifying him as Amari follows easily. Amari was aware of this risk and chose to disclose these details anyway. I did not believe Amari would be harmed if someone read this study and determined his identity, so I chose to include him.

The same is true of the two young women who I chose to interview. Again, there were only three young women present during the shooting. When one participant described an event in her life, she also provided strong clues for other participants to triangulate her identity. For instance, since Stephanie went to an HBCU, and Michelle did not, once either of these women spoke of her post-secondary schooling in terms of the college environment, she signaled her identity to the other participants by the process of elimination.

Since I feel it would be quite easy to identify these participants, I chose not to include any of my former students who were dealing with sensitive issues in their lives. Consequently, I did not include Rosanna and Josh in this study. I understand that these statements make the reader even more curious about what is happening in the lives of these two people, but I am not of the view that we are entitled to know everything. I also do not believe that I have to answer every question that the reader has about details I believe are privileged. This is qualitative research for education, not for *The National Enquirer*.

Compassionate Exclusion: Ethical Benchmarks in Sample Selection

As I stated in Chapter 1, five students were present during the shooting, yet I only interviewed three in this study. Gossip data gleaned from my former teaching peers, other participants, and relatives of the two students I chose not to include convinced me that there was a strong possibility that interviewing them and representing their effective histories would cause them harm. The first reason I believed this was that major life-changing events had occurred in the lives of both these young adults. Secondly, both were still in the midst of these crises, and I believed I would do them harm if I were to reveal any more about them than what has already been stated by the other participants.

Obviously, I cannot state what those conditions and events are because doing so would violate our community's tacit agreement to allow these young people to work through serious challenges with minimal pressure from those outside their immediate families. Consequently, I chose not to ask these two young people to participate in this study.

In order to be completely honest about my own subjectivity and how it effects sample selection, I must admit that the need to protect these young adults is a salient issue with which I struggled throughout this study. My struggle is both an emotional and a philosophical one. On an emotional level, I have discovered through my interview with Dr. Grantham and as I ruminate on what I am doing in this study that I still harness a certain guilt because of my perceived failure to protect these young adults in 1997. I will not attempt to justify the way I feel—but until I have sufficiently deconstructed this issue to the point that I feel comfortable placing the two students I chose not to interview at risk, I will continue to protect

them. Certainly, this is a validity issue as it effects the scope of this study and the potential for more data and more depth in terms of events, effects, and resistances in the lives of the five participants.

The philosophical issue has to do with my awareness of how these two young adults would likely respond if I asked them to participate. In determining whether to request their participation, I believed that both would agree to an interview if I asked them simply because I am their former teacher and they respect me. I am not convinced that I should just because I can. I am also much more keenly aware that many members of this small community are graduate students at The University of Georgia and are also aware of the shooting incident and the fact that I am doing a study of this Event. I could not take the risk of someone's tender secrets being exposed in order to further my own research agenda.

As I examined what I tried to portray as emotional and philosophical issues that predicated my decision not to ask Josh and Rosanna to participate in the study, I realized that my assumption of a maternalistic subjectivity is all this entire issue was about. Since I am not yet convinced that protecting these young adults is inherently bad, I decided to move on as planned and excluded them from the opportunity to participate. I do believe though, that I will revisit this decision should I choose to write a more comprehensive study documenting the effective histories of these five young people. In a longer tome, I would have the opportunity to fully and compassionately develop issues related to the lives of all five of these young adults.

The Lawsuit

Similarly, I had to make decisions about discussing the lawsuit that followed this Event. By the time we returned to the school that Saturday night in November 1997, the principal had contacted parents, all of whom were gathered to greet us when we arrived. After unloading our gear from the bus, we gathered in the office and allowed the students to give a choral account of the shooting. The psychic trauma was fresh and palpable in both the students and their parents. Caroline had been discussing the possibility of a lawsuit with me as we move through the phantasmal day following the shooting. After the students finished telling their story, Caroline suggested that they discuss this possibility. I stepped out as

they held this discussion and tried to catch some air to help me cope with the nicotine fit that was enveloping me. I also felt that it was inappropriate for me to be involved in the lawsuit because I would be attempting to capitalize on the suffering of my students.

The parents arranged to meet several times, hired a lawyer, and filed suit. In the meantime, I had faith that our school system would also file suit and force the hotel to do right by these young people. Unfortunately, my faith in the system was unjustified. The system's lawyers wrote a letter to the hotel protesting the treatment of our team and demanded an apology. Of course, the hotel was happy to oblige, and that was the end of the system's involvement in the affair.

The private lawsuit filed by the parents lasted over three years. In the end, they settled out-of-court for an undisclosed sum. In the meantime, the young man who shot at the students was tried and convicted. By the time the lawsuit was settled, every student present during the incident had graduated from high school and started college. Moreover, other events had begun to eclipse the Event. I have never asked the parents how much money the students received in the settlement. I did not ask because I believed that asking for such information was an unnecessary intrusion on their privacy. In addition, focusing on money suggests that by paying these students, the responsible parties can alleviate the effects of this traumatic experience. Since I believe the settlement of the lawsuit has little bearing on the qualitative study, readers will have to follow me as I exercise the ethical choice to foreground people instead of things.

Another type of gossip date comprises this information about the lawsuit that the parents of these five students filed against the hotel where the 1997 shooting occurred. First, almost all the details I know of the lawsuit I obtained through gossip. I clearly remember three participants and one parent notifying me either telephonically or via e-mail when they reached the out-of court-settlement in the summer of 2001. Again, I believe that it is not the norm in our community to ask questions about the amount of money received in the settlement of lawsuits because it breaches the privacy of those questioned. I would have transgressed this implied boundary if I felt it would enrich this study in some way, but I do not see

any purpose in the consumer of this research or in me knowing the amount the parents and the company agreed upon when they settled the suit. My committee members and peer reviewers have challenged me about these the lack of discussion of the lawsuit and my decision not to interview Josh and Roseanne throughout the writing of this study. In spite of their questions, I chose to show solidarity to this Africanist community who adopted me in 1994 by not revealing anything they have not selected to reveal to me as data for this study. It is well with my soul.

Gossip as a Source of Validation

Gossip data has been very useful for me. It has kept me from transgressing boundaries of private/public revelation. It has also protected my participants, their families, and other members of this community. Finally, it has facilitated validity in this study through informal checks of data in social conversations during which my interlocutors did not know I was checking data.

This explication of data has, as Robert Frost (1916/1996) put it, lead “from way to way” (p. 852). These representations circulate around autoethnography in my own personal and impressionist version of the history of Murphey. They move through reflexive ethnography as I look at my role in shaping discourse while functioning as teacher and coach to these participants. Key to this study is the interview data that is not only impressionistic, but also lucid in the participants’ recall of detail. Finally, gossip data effects not only the composition of the sample group, but the limits on what areas I will not visit in the effective histories of these three young adults.

Contacting Participants

Once I decided to study the Event, I proceeded to contact the three people with whom I communicated most regularly, Amari, his mother Caroline, and Stephanie. Both Amari and Stephanie were away at college. After talking to Stephanie, I had concerns about the legality of this study. Stephanie stated that she thought that as a part of the settlement of the lawsuit regarding this case they had agreed not to discuss it. At this point, I felt that my endeavors might be crushed. I contacted Caroline, who spearheaded the lawsuit and who has experience working with the judicial system. Caroline

informed me that since her son was one of the plaintiffs in the case, they all had to sign the same agreement. She further advised me that the lawyers for the hotel had initially placed this restriction in the settlement, but she told them that they could not pay her enough money to agree not to talk about it. Therefore, the young people were free to talk with me about the Event if they wished.

Two of the three participants, Amari and Stephanie, agreed to participate by July 2003. I had difficulty contacting Michelle, the other young woman whom I wished to include. Michelle, as far as I could determine, was away at an out-of-state university. I attempted to contact her through that university to no avail. Finally, I called her mother to find out where she was. The mother informed me that Michelle has returned to Murphey.

The way I chose to obtain consent for these interviews fit with my understanding of Africanist epistemology or what Wade Nobles (1978) calls “Africanity” (p. 685). With an understanding of the interconnectedness of black families, I could not ignore the entire family unit in this research process even though all of the participants were legally adults. I felt that information disclosed during these interviews collaterally affected the families as well as the participants. Consequently, I chose to obtain agreement from parents as well as participants. Michelle’s mother agreed to allow Michelle to participate, but I did not talk to Michelle and get her verbal consent until late August. I also contacted Stephanie’s mother who was glad to do whatever she could to help me. Likewise, Caroline agreed not only to participate in an interview but also consented to my interviewing Amari.

Patti Lather and Chris Smithies (1997) discuss research within a context of personal crisis and loss of women in a support group for HIV patients. In her introduction, Lather acknowledges the careful balance a researcher must make between “[d]oing work that is both service and learning,” research that “risk[s] the necessary invasions and misuses of telling other people’s stories” (p. xiv). I too have had to balance the necessity for disclosure with the “necessary invasions” required in researching crises.

Troubling “Sites”

This study has many geographic sites as well as a plethora of psychic locations. As Braidotti (1993) suggests, “the idea of the politics of location is very important” (p. 8). She stresses that, “[i]n its political applications the politics of location determines one’s approach to time and history” (p. 8). Braidotti further stresses that, “[t]he sense of location, for me, has to do with counter-memory or the development of alternative genealogies” (p. 8). Effective history is arguably an alternative form of genealogy. This method, especially when used in the narrow confines of a postmodern interview study must necessarily trouble the traditional way the term “site” is employed in conducting and reporting research. With these considerations in mind, I would like to speak of “site” in terms of physical as well as psychic locations.

Many theorists have discussed the nomadic nature of the Other (Braidotti, 2001; Elia, 2001; Hughes, 2002; Rella, 1994; St. Pierre, 2000). In fact, St. Pierre (2000) stresses that:

Ethical dilemmas proliferate in the sixth moment's vortex of crises that have emerged from the ruins of traditional epistemology and methodology and each research study produces specific, situated, and sometimes paralyzing complications that have no easy resolution. The richness and power of qualitative research is confirmed as its practitioners work through such complications, searching for less harmful possibilities for making sense of people's lives. (p. 405)

Defining the “site” in this study forces this researcher to confront specific, situated, but hopefully not paralyzing dilemmas. As I described research sites, I retained the mobility of my subjects, the events in their lives, and their methods of resistance. Indeed Doel (1977) is emphatic that poststructural critiques:

[require] a “philosophy of passage, and not of ground or of territory” for “traversing the chaos: not explaining or interpreting it, but traversing it, all the way across, in a traverse which order the

planes, landscapes, coordinates, but which leaves behind it the chaos, closing on itself like the sea on the wake of a ship." (p. 32)

At times Michelle, Stephanie, Amari, and I occupied positions of power, dominance, and subjection, while at other times we were overpowered, dominated, and subjected. Consequently, the ground of this research site will be somewhat complex. I will speak of sites that travel in the psyche of my participants. At times, this site is a clear and cogent past. At other times it is a muddle of emotions linked by trauma and disclosed impressionistically.

Kvale (1996) also speaks of a travel metaphor in describing the interviewing process. Kvale suggests that "The interviewer wanders along with the local inhabitants, asks questions that lead the subjects to tell their own stories of their lived world, and converses with them in the original Latin meaning of *conversation* as 'wandering together with'" (p. 4). Therefore, meandered through these sites and warn readers that if they try to locate many of the "research sites" described herein, they may become lost, like Daedalus seeking the diabolical flame.

The School Site – Murphey East High School

Segregation and Beyond

I will first describe the city of Murphey and the school site. The high school, Murphey East High School, is located in a southern town with a population of about 200,000. In 1997, this city had five public high schools. The history of these schools is an interesting study in integration. The researcher was a witness to the advent of court ordered integration that began in Murphey in 1967. At the time, I was entering sixth-grade. Since the city comprises at least 50 percent African-American citizens, many students in elementary school were not directly affected by integration. On the other hand, there existed a few small African-American communities where predominately-white neighborhoods and their schools flourished around the older black enclaves. In those cases the black children who prior to integration had to travel on city busses for miles to reach a black school now simply walked to the neighborhood schools. My sibling and I belong in the latter group.

The situation in the junior high schools (now called middle schools) and the high schools was a bit more turbulent and divisive. Prior to integration, the city contained two black high schools for grades eight through twelve. One was located on the southeast side of the city, while the other was located in the northeast side. White junior and senior high schools were structured differently than black schools. There were six public predominately-white high schools. While the black high schools were organized as the center of large majority black neighborhoods, the white schools were organized according to the neighborhoods that had the most (or least) power and affluence. Another difference is that women and men attended the same black high schools, while the sexes were segregated in the six white high schools.

An interesting element regarding the organization and building of schools prior to desegregation is the fact that even though this city had a majority African-American population, there were only two black high schools while there were six white high schools, three for men and three for women. Rushing (2002) theorizes that the southern patriarchal apparatus designed schools during Jim Crow so that white women would neither associate with nor come to understand black men. Within this plan, if enough propaganda were fed to both blacks and women regarding each other without these groups having recurring contact on equal footing, myths about the sexual proclivities of black men and women as well as other racist propaganda would be reinforced.

After 1967, the debate about the names of the new schools threatened to dismantle plans for integration. The Board of Education (which by this time was integrated) resolved this issue by naming the high schools based on their location and not continuing the practice of monumentalizing them to some person's memory. Since the black high schools' facilities were inferior to the white campuses, the board easily decided to locate the senior high schools on the white campuses and the junior high schools on the black campuses.

Hence, in 1967, Murphey established three regular high schools and one technical high school, naming the academic institutions easily East Murphey, Murphey Midtown, and South Murphey High Schools. East Murphey, the school attended by the participants in this study, grew out of two formerly

white schools located adjacent to one another. One school previously served white males, while the other was for white females. Both these schools served a small enclave of white residents who resided in the hills alongside the east side of the river that traverses Murphey. The school lies along a deep curve on East River Road, so named because it parallels the river as well as the north-south interstate.

The Black Bourgeoisie in East Murphey

At the onset of integration, Murphey East was the place where black folks wanted their children to go. Murphey East was a choice school for black teens for several reasons. First, Burlington, one of the most affluent neighborhoods in the city, lay within Murphey East's school zone. In Burlington, the first black affluent neighborhood in Murphey, major black funeral directors, black dentists, doctors, lawyers, educators, contractors, and other professionals built upscale homes. Prior to the occupants building this neighborhood, few black people in Murphey had lived in such luxury. The occupants built homes bordered by beautifully manicured rolling lawns of deep green St. Augustine grass, unlike the dirt yards that other black people in the city swept so meticulously. The homeowners or their gardeners planted colorful flower gardens; and brandished their affluence by changing those flowers regularly with the seasons. They built their houses with brick, or if the owner was truly modern, stucco. Many had two floors, another anomaly in black neighborhoods in Murphey. Those who could afford to live in this neighborhood were the envy of many other black people in the city.

The Hill

While Burlington sat on the extreme southeast edge of the Murphey East school zone, the Hill community that also inhabited this zone was just a few blocks from the school and the inner city. The Hill community rested around the Indian mounds and between three major thoroughfares that fed into the school. At the onset of integration, The Hill had some degree of respectability and desirability. Unfortunately, rent-controlled housing became synonymous with shame and poverty, and living farther away came to signify more affluence. At this time, living on The Hill lost its respectability no matter how nice the home. Similarly, many African-Americans who lived in Burlington did not associate with those

who lived on The Hill, even though many of The Hill's occupants were respectable business people or worked in professions such as medicine, insurance, real estate, cosmetology, or at the nearby military installation.

The flight of white people who lived in the riverside community and the majority white working class neighborhood east of the river muddled efforts to keep the “talented tenth” (Du Bois, 1903) from fraternizing with the other ninety percent of African-American young people who lived in East Murphey. Once white flight took hold, many black people from other parts of Murphey moved into these previously white neighborhoods.

The Black Panopticon in East Murphey

The egress of middle-class white people from East Murphey and its concurrent ingress of middle-class black families created a panoptic racial dystopia in the area zoned for East Murphey High School (Abrams, 2002; Bentham, 1812; Stoler, 1995/2000). It provided a method through which city government and school officials could monitor a large number of black people in East Murphey—through which apparatuses could “see without being seen” (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 171).

African-American neighborhoods are magnets for certain types of apparatuses. To demonstrate this point, I would like to take you on a journey from the river where the school zone for East Murphey begins to the northeast edge of the city proper. The river divides the northeast area of Murphy and downtown. One crosses that river by two large boulevards, to the south, Malcolm X Boulevard, and to the north, Winter Street. An interstate highway that connects Murphey with Sandpiper, a large coastal city 160 miles east of Murphey traverses both highways. This interstate begins at Winter Street and literally runs into the Atlantic Ocean at its terminal point in Sandpiper.

In our journey, we will cross the river at Winter Street. We arrive at Winter Street by leaving the monumental main city library and the main post office across the street. We then travel north on University Avenue with its many small parks, azaleas blooming in more shades of pink, red, and white than one can count. We observe the sturdy Yashino cherry trees with their speckled shiny gray bark, and

myriad hydrangeas, creamy sweet shrubs, daylilies the color of sunsets, and magnolias older than the city itself.

As we pass the post office we turn south on Chinaberry Street and notice the Victorian mansions of Old Murphey. Some of these two and three story mansions are white with the typical Georgian columns one often sees in old southern neighborhoods while others are sided and painted in mauves and pale yellows that easily fit with the historical society's requirements. Finally a few houses on the west side of the river are maroon brick monuments to a time when labor was cheap or free and southern white gentry and those who serviced them were the sole occupants of these mansions.

Chinaberry Street winds south and east approximately one mile and veers to the east as it passes another public park also lush with azaleas, forsythia, hydrangea, cherry, magnolia, and oak trees. At this point Chinaberry becomes Winter Street and begins an east/west orientation. As one travels about two miles east, Winter Street crosses River Drive, then the Murphey River. Immediately across the river is the Interstate overpass, a high deep noisy overpass where many homeless people make their home in the crevices created between the interstate and its underlying supports.

After passing under the interstate, the apparatuses of poor and working class communities become apparent. First, is the McDonald's, then the Kroger. The street splits into the two highways that enclose most of East Murphey's school zone. The highway leading to East Murphey, Silver Street, moves in a Northeast direction, while the other one, Indian Mound Highway, moves in a Southeast direction. There are six or seven lottery outlets, several pawn shops, a Super Wal-Mart, a Krystal, Burger King, several beauty and barber shops, dollar stores, ethnic hair apparel shops, and fast cash businesses. There are few houses on the major highway because businesses displaced them. There are three or four banks, a few car repair and detailing shops, and several fast food chicken restaurants. The requisite CVS, Eckerd, and Walgreens pharmacies have also recently found space on this highway.

In East Murphey there are no malls, no major clothing stores except the usual discount outlets. There are more than seven liquor stores and an equal number of gun/pawn shops within a three-mile

stretch of highway. Yet, there are only two grocery stores (not counting the Super Wal-Mart), only about three medical facilities, no hospitals, and four pharmacies.

All of this description may make Silver Street seem dark and foreboding, but the opposite is true. Both Silver Street and Indian Mound Highway are alive with people. Halfway between the Kroger that sits at the beginning of Silver Street and the Super Wal-Mart at its other end (the city limits) sits a superstructure, a high rise that houses elderly of many ethnicities. These elderly people take their morning and evening walks on Silver Street. They often appear working in the community vegetable garden set aside for them at the ground level of the high-rise. Likewise, community members from the adjacent neighborhoods often walk to Krystal for a quick cheap burger or Dairy Queen for a smooth Blizzard. I have to travel this highway anytime I leave the small town where I live to go to Murphey. I usually travel the 15 miles to Murphey on a daily basis; yet, I have never witnessed an act of violence on this highway or in the neighboring public housing area.

Silver Street may have been disciplined to destroy the black people who occupy its adjoining neighborhoods through the establishments of gun shops, liquor stores, and businesses that serve unhealthy food. In spite of these disciplinary efforts, many of the same black business owners who lived in the neighborhood thirty years ago continue to live and prosper there.

As I mentioned earlier, the first affluent black neighborhood in this city is within the Murphey East zone. In addition, many educators who were highly esteemed prior to desegregation live in this neighborhood. After the commencement of desegregation, many of these educators requested assignment to Murphey East High School and its feeder elementary and middle schools. Consequently, the Murphey East area has a rich corporate cultural legacy. Even though the campus of Murphey East, a campus divided into three buildings, is old, crumbling, and receives minimal maintenance compared to other schools in the system, the legacy of educators who were indoctrinated into an “old school” educational design keeps this school at the top in many areas of academic and extracurricular endeavors.

For instance, three or four years before I returned to Murphey from San Antonio, Texas, a young woman from Murphey East was on the cover of *Parade* magazine because she had written and applied for so many scholarships that she was offered over one and one-half million dollars in scholarships from across the country. Murphey East's quiz bowl team was ranked eighth in the nation the year before the shooting incident. Murphey public high schools have a tradition of competing to see which school can garner the most monetary scholarship opportunities for its students. During the six years that I taught there, Murphey East won this unofficial award more often than any other high school in the city.

Murphey East occupies the large curve where East River Road rises to meet Old Reagan Road, and exited the city limits. As we approach the campus, we first see the track. In the Fall, the marching band might be working on their half-time show; while in the Spring, the state champion track team runs, jumps, leaps, and throws in practice for the next meet. Meanwhile, pedestrian community members, some with pets, some with children, and some alone walk the path that follows the track and moves into the adjacent woodlands.

The school proper faces East River Road where it begins. The first of three buildings houses the Language Arts, Social Studies, ROTC, and Exceptional Children departments as well as the regional school within a school for high school students with severe emotional challenges (SEC). The fact that the SEC facility is located within Murphey East's campus causes much chagrin from community members and parents because the SEC students often commit violent acts, acts that the press credits to the student population of Murphey East. In addition, most of the students in the SEC do not live in the Murphey zone. Many do not even live in the city of Murphey. The Center is a regional center that serves this county and several surrounding ones. Of course, many parents, teachers, and community members credit establishment of the center on Murphey East's campus to the fact that Murphey East student population is over ninety-five percent African-American.

In addition to the departments described above, an administrator's office, the nurse's office, part of the physical education department, the main gym, and a cafeteria are in the first building on the

campus. The second building that houses the main office is also called the vocational building. This building houses the media center, keyboarding, computer training, family and consumer sciences, and the health sciences magnet program. It also includes the greenhouse from which students often depart to peddle the products of their hard work to faculty and staff during the spring and fall months.

The last building houses the mathematics and science departments, another cafeteria, a gymnasium, counselors' offices, and administrative offices. The academic buildings (the first and the last) are older and designed on the same schema. Each building is red brick with red iron trim work. Each building contains an office immediately at its main entrance, and each has four hallways on its upper level to the right of the main entrance, a gymnasium on the lower level, and a cafeteria at the end of the long central hallway. My room was on the end of the second hallway in the first building. It was one of the largest rooms in the building because a technology lab as well as quiz bowl equipment rested within its walls.

Quiz Bowl at Murphey East

My classroom was a second home to about twelve academic team members. We practiced every weekday except Friday, from school day's end until five in the evening. Sometimes we also practiced in the morning when we had a major tournament upcoming. We practiced by playing against each other. When a major away tournament is upcoming, students competed for a spot on the away team. Team members obtained points for showing up for practice on time, for completing study cards in their given discipline, and for answering the most questions correctly. The team was also divided according to subject areas. Usually the subject areas were literature, history, mathematics, science, fine arts, sports, and popular trivia. Each team member selected one of the four major disciplines plus one of the ancillary ones. In the end, committed team members knew a lot about almost every discipline (except perhaps mathematics) because they had listened as I asked the questions during practice and noted the things they did not previously know.

Site of the Event

Often when trauma occurs in one's life, those who were present have different memories of what the place was like. I will give my best account of the location here. This event occurred on a cold rainy Friday night in mid-November 1997. As indicated, the students had to compete for one of seven spots on this trip; therefore, they were very excited about this trip. We arrived at Murphey East in the morning at about seven o'clock. The students brought their gear into my classroom and placed their bags in the closet until the bus arrived. Since our school was closest to the highway that takes us to Brownsville, the bus picked up the Murphey Midtown team prior to coming to our school. The bus arrived at about ten o'clock in the morning. We loaded our gear, the buzzer systems that we used for practice, and the coolers that I had packed with snacks and beverages onto the bus. Everyone took a seat. There was usually enough room on the bus for everyone to have one seat to him or herself. Almost everyone had a pillow and a blanket. Likewise, almost all of the students had portable compact disc players and earphones. This day seemed like any other day, this trip like any other trip.

We stopped at the midway point where the interstate that covered the last leg to Brownsville intersected the US Highway that connects Murphey to the northeastern part of the state. There, we made sure that team members had a variety of fast food restaurants from which to choose. The other coach and I decided on a time for departure, and we advised the kids as to what time they needed to be back on the bus. I also warned them about crossing the four-lane highway.

After lunch, we departed for the last leg of our trip to Brownsville. From the midway point to Brownsville, travel took about three hours. By the time we arrived there, it was about four in the evening. The hotel was located just south of the main interstate in northeast Brownsville and immediately adjacent to an affluent suburb. The hotel was a nice facility. Its entrance was somewhat grand with the usual comfortable sitting areas, a café, and a large registration desk. The hotel was also quite large, probably about ten to twelve floors, and all the rooms opened to the inside. I remember the façade of the hotel as

stucco beige, while the interior lobby was full of dark earth tones, maroons, browns, forest greens, and golds.

As is our custom on away trips, the team members remained on the bus while the coaches went inside to check in and get room assignments. The other coach and I obtained the assignments and took the keys to the team members. Midtown was assigned a different floor than Murphey East. I generally had logistical ideas about where I wanted the boys' rooms to be and where I wanted the girls' to be. I usually assigned the boys to the room across from mine, and the girls to the one next door to my room. This was ideal because I shared a door with the girls, and if I needed to check on the boys, I could simply open my door. In addition, I could detect problems with loudness (always a problem with teenagers) before the hotel security had to come and tell them to be quiet.

We took our gear to the rooms and I called Caroline Chastain, the other chaperone for our group, who was driving to the hotel after work. I told her that we would practice for a short while and wait on her to arrive before going to dinner. Caroline was already en-route, so the wait was no more than a couple of hours. The team practiced for about one hour, and as soon as Mrs. Chastain arrived, we went to the mall for dinner.

Caroline Chastain arrived and freshened up. We then went to the mall across the street from the hotel. Actually, describing this mall as across the street is a bit misleading. The hotel was on a side street parallel to the interstate. In order to get to the mall, we walked up this street, crossed a six-lane highway, passed a group of restaurants, and crossed a large parking lot. Consequently, the walk from the hotel to the mall lasted about a fifteen-minutes. When we left for the mall, dusk was about to fall.

After arriving at the mall, I told the team members that they have two hours to do their shopping and eat dinner. I also advised them as to what time they must return to the food court so that we could all walk to the hotel together. Shopping malls are interesting phenomena. I believe malls in the United States represent a symbol of status and affluence. The type of department stores and boutiques in a community's mall reflects the level of affluence of the community. This mall was very large. It probably

had over 200 stores. This was not the Sears, Macy's, J.C. Penny type of mall, even though those stores did have branches in this facility. This was the Parisian, Dillard's, Lord & Taylor, Saks Fifth Avenue type of mall. Mrs. Chastain and I were not interested in shopping, so we sat and watched. I observed a fair number of different cultures meandering through this mall, but mostly the customers were of European descent. This was no working class mall, and this hotel was not in a working class neighborhood.

As I have stated previously, I have vague memories of the exact layout of the exterior of the hotel in Brownsville. Apparently, there was a pool outside one door to the hotel's rear and a patio area outside another. In order to enter either door after dark, the guests had to use their assigned key card. The hotel's elevator was located to the right of the check-in desk. The shooting occurred outside the door that led to the patio area. This area seems to represent a very important psychic space to my participants, evidenced by the rich detail they used to describe it. Although I have noted that the participants' accounts of the Event are different concerning minor details, their recollection of the layout of the hotel's exterior is consistent. I will provide a more in-depth analysis of these accounts in the next Chapter.

Psychic Sites

Since my analysis focused on the Event and the many other events in the lived experiences of the participants, there were many psychic sites. These spaces were more important for what they did in the minds of the participants than for what they were existentially. One of these psychic spaces was the athletic field. Both Michelle and Amari compete in collegiate athletics and have participated in competitive sports since childhood. Both participated in Tee-ball as youngsters. One played football in high school and is currently playing for a university team. Another competed in track and field from fifth-grade through college and at one time was a serious Olympic contender in her chosen field event.

The playing field for these two participants represented a psychic space of success and excellence. Both admitted that they were competitive, and both admitted to a degree of ego satisfaction from excelling in their chosen sport. Consequently, when events occurred relating to sports, their psychic effects were significant in this analysis. Both Michelle and Amari have experienced major events in their

lives involving sports. Michelle won two state titles in her field event, while Amari led his high school football team to the state semifinals during his senior year. In addition, Amari was accompanying some of his fellow college football teammates when he was shot in 2003.

Along with the high school sports arena, the college field, whether track and field or football, was also a major apparatus in the lives of these participants. One participant attended a Division 1 school that I call Gulf State after receiving a full athletic scholarship. During this participant's freshman year, she garnered all-conference honors in her event in spite of being red-shirted for part of the season. During this same year, this participant sustained permanent debilitating injuries during a team practice. The injuries this participant sustained were so severe that she was unable to return to the track. Two years and several surgeries later, this former high school salutatorian was advised that she was failing all of her classes and that her athletic scholarship was withdrawn. These injuries and the field of Gulf State will always serve as a psychic "site" for research into her effective history.

Likewise, another participant was successful in football at a prestigious HBCU. He also received a full scholarship in athletics as well as other scholarships for his academic performance. At the beginning of his third year at this institution, he had a major conflict with the team coach. The coach demanded that he "crab crawl" in penitence for what the coach saw as a bad attitude and poor leadership. After the coach issued his demand, this participant knelt on one knee and placed his helmet in his hand, a sign of non-violent rebellion. The coach continued to demand that he crab crawl, and the participant said nothing, but continued to kneel silently. The next day, the athletic department withdrew the participant's athletic scholarship and he was placed on academic probation. Again, this field at Weldon University served as a psychic "site" for this participant.

Another kind of site that was prominent in the participants' effective histories is elementary and middle schools. One participant explained how she became aware of not being "black enough" after attending Department of Defense schools her entire life, then returning to this state at the beginning of middle school. She cites two middle schools as pivotal to her subjective development, one is located

about 30 miles east of Murphey, in a city I will call Chanceville. The participant attended Chanceville Middle School for her entire seventh grade year and a few weeks at the beginning of her eighth grade year. She had to attend Chanceville because her parents were building a house in a suburb of Murphey called Taylor. As her parents built their house and prepared to retire from the military, they sent this participant to live with her mother's sister in Chanceville. The participant cited Chanceville Middle School and Murphey South Middle School where she attended eighth grade as pivotal to her consciousness of being black or not being black enough. Again, the psychic places of Chanceville and Murphey South Middle Schools are more important than the physical places.

Interview Site

By choice of the participants, I interviewed each of them at my home in Yargary, just a few miles northeast of Murphey. This seemed an ideal place to conduct these interviews because my ranch home sits in the middle of seven rolling acres, most of which is virgin forest full of oaks, hickory, sycamore, dogwoods, and pines. The two young women both came and had lunch with me. I let them choose what they wanted me to prepare for them. Stephanie wanted lasagna, while Michelle wanted linguini. I conducted both of these interviews in my formal living room. This room was bright and somewhat sparse. It had a cozy formal sofa upholstered in muted tones of mauve, green, brown, and yellow. The windows in this room faced three directions. The front two windows faced northwest, toward the street; but one could not see the street because the forests separated it from the house. The side windows faced the east. These were the windows with the clearest view of the sky as well as the stars on a clear night. Because the house was away from the street, it exuded a serene peacefulness. The eastern windows were flanked by ficus, begonia, ginger plants, several types of ivy, spider plants, and other houseplants that I had grown for years. Since it was the winter, these plants came inside and lived with the family.

The southern exposure was the door leading to the sunroom. This view overlooked the great creek a football field's length away from the house to the south. The entire first floor of the house was elevated, so one often saw owls, hawks, and other large predators as they soared graciously through the

sky. In the morning, if one looked through these windows the doves may be taking their stroll across the rear lawn of the property. This setting seemed to lend itself to these interviews. It was quiet, secluded, and had an air of privacy that set the mood for one being open about one's life.

While I interviewed the two women upstairs in the formal living room, I interviewed Amari in the downstairs family room mainly because Amari often spent several days with my husband and me during school breaks. Our house was Amari's second home. Consequently, he was more comfortable in the basement family room where our family spends most of its time. In addition to this formal interview, Amari and I talked about the Event and other events the entire time he was with us. This room was a bit darker and cozier than the upstairs formal living room where the other interviews were conducted. The furniture is leather and everything reclines, including a leather eggplant-colored sofa. The fireplace warms us and the large family kitchen is just a few steps away.

Description of Participants

Several times throughout this section, I have mentioned my concern for maintaining the anonymity of my participants. Lather and Smithies (1997) highlight this need in *Troubling The Angels : Women Living With HIV/AIDS*. Indeed, Lather and Smithies document interviews out of sequence and combine them across various groups "for purposes of theme development, dramatic flow and to protect confidentiality" (p. xvii). Because this issue was key to my research ethic, I believed the best way to portray my participants was to talk about them based on identified data themes instead of providing holistic individualized accounts of each participant.

Three young adults participated in this study. All three attended the same high school, Murphey East. Two attended the same middle school, Murphey East Middle School, the other attended Murphey South Middle School and Chanceville Middle School. One participant attended Murphey East as a part of the Health Science Magnet Program. This participant did not live within the area zoned for Murphey East. Instead, she lived in another zone; but after choosing health care as a career, she attended Murphey East's health-sciences magnet program.

All of the participants were African-American young adults. One was a male and the other two were females. Two of the participants were 22-years-old, while the other was 21-years-old. One had two sisters; one had two brothers and two sisters, while the other one had two brothers. Of the three only one did not live with both the biological mother and father. The participant whose parents were divorced lived with the biological mother and stepfather. In this case, the biological mother was a business professional; the biological father was an entrepreneur; the stepfather was a public official; and the stepmother worked in publishing. In addition, the stepmother is of European descent while her husband, the biological father, is African-American. Two of the participants were essentially the youngest in their immediate family unit. One was the oldest and had two younger sisters. All of these participants are solidly middle-class. The one whose stepfather is a public official is upper-middle class.

Two of the participants were seniors in college and one was a junior. Two participated in collegiate sports. One was heavily involved in the school social scene, evidenced by her membership in a sorority as well as her leadership in her university's Student Government Association. All three participants received full scholarships to college. One received an academic scholarship, one received an athletic scholarship, and one received both.

One participant was valedictorian of his senior class, one was salutatorian, and the other was president of the high school senior class. Two graduated the same year, while the other graduated a year later. All of these participants were either in the ninth or tenth grade when the shooting Event occurred.

One of the women's skin was the color of nutmeg, while the other's was the color of cinnamon. Both of the women were full-bodied women, yet both appeared healthy and fit. One is approximately five-feet-ten-inches tall; the other is approximately five-feet-eight-inches tall. Both were conservative dressers. They wore khakis and alligator type shirts for the interviews. Both women had straight, relaxed, shoulder-length, ebony hair. Both women had strong personalities and expressed their feelings freely. While one's voice was cheerful and her tone optimistic, the other's voice is deeper and velvety, her manner was serious and more direct.

The young man was about six-feet-two-inches tall with the muscular build of a serious athlete. He weighed about 180 pounds. Generally, he wore hip-hop style clothes, with his pants baggy and his shirts only the most popular brands. He had close-cropped wavy ebony hair. His skin was the color of honey. One interesting observation about all three of these participants is that the young man spoke with black vernacular more frequently during our interview than the young women did. Although all used some elements of African-American vernacular during the interviews, both Amari and Stephanie used it more and generally spoke in a more relaxed manner than did Michelle.

I had a very close relationship with two both Amari and Stephanie. These two always came to see me whenever they were in Murphey for a school holiday. Michelle and I had a more formal relationship. At one point during the interview, Michelle commented that we were probably not as close because I talked so much (which is true). I credited our lack of closeness partly to the fact that this participant and I have similar personalities as well as the fact that she simply did not seek out a close relationship with me when she was in high school.

All of these participants were what the educational apparatus would describe as “gifted.” However, I hesitate to use this totalizing label in describing them for two reasons. First, even many African-American students labeled “gifted” try not to focus on the label because they only see it as a way to separate them from their friends. Secondly, the label is ultimately useless because being labeled “gifted” did not prevent these young people from being racially violated during the Event.

Analysis of Data

As the researcher, I assumed much more knowledge on the consumer’s part than I should have. Kvale (1996) suggests that the interviewer should first ask, “How do I go about finding out what the interviews tell me about what I want to know,” before I begin the arduous work of analysis (p. 180). Consequently, I arrived at another methodological juncture. I was answering a question that I thought I had already dismissed.

It would seem apparent that I began my analysis with the transcripts, but I did not. Analysis began with my thoughts, my remembrances, and my instinctive knowledge of the participants. I did not immediately begin transcribing; instead, I played the tapes repeatedly in my office at home and as I drove to and from Athens. At one point, I became so engrossed in a tape that I ran out of gas on a country road after having my taxes done in a city 50 miles away from home. Listening to the tapes helped me visualize and conceptualize ideas and thoughts instead of words and utterances.

I listened to each of these tapes at least three times in their entirety. This helped me get a feel for recurring themes and events the speaker seemed to revisit often in the course of the interview. Just in listening to the interviews, I discovered that Stephanie would go to her sisters and their issues with weight, then she would return to the 1997 shooting. She might talk about the African boy in her elementary school class in Germany, and then return to the shooting. When I sent Chapter 4 to the participants for member check and feedback, Stephanie was the only one who responded. Her short response again mentioned the effect of the shooting on her subjective development.

Amari circulated his conversations around race. He might talk about school for a few minutes then focus on the job he had at the time in a retail department store and how his white supervisors tried to take advantage of him. Amari spoke of Jim Crow as if he were there. He obviously had spent many hours trying to analyze the genesis of racism given his reference to Freud cited in Chapter 4. Amari also circulated his interview around friendships. Friendships were very important to Amari. This was evident in his heroic actions during the 2003 shooting; in the way he refers to his peers and teammates, and the way that he always recalled who was with him when an event occurred.

Michelle circulated her interview around her family. Michelle made myriad references to her mother and her brothers. As the reader will notice in Chapter 4, the first thing she said after realizing the extent of her injury on the track field was that she wanted to talk to her mother. In addition, when Michelle began to have trouble with her academics, she consulted her mother and they communally decide how to deal with the problems. Michelle's two older brothers were also prominent, especially in

motivating her to become involved in athletics and in her training for a potential Olympic spot.

Michelle's oldest brother is married to a Caucasian woman and they have several children. Michelle cited her brother's marriage for helping her deal with the 1997 shooting—for admitting that the shooting was racially motivated, yet not essentializing all white people because of the actions of a few.

Listen, then Write

Kvale (1996) warns researchers against using transcripts to represent interviews. Indeed, Kvale states that “the transcript is a bastard, it is a hybrid between an oral discourse unfolding over time, face to face, in a lived situation—where what is said is addressed to a specific listener present—and a written text created for a general, distant, public” (p. 182). With this warning in mind, I sought to hear the speakers in these interviews first. I sought to reenter the intersubjective space at the time when we exchanged and negotiated meaning during the interview.

One way that I was able to revisit this intersubjective space was to listen to the taped interviews several times before I transcribed them. After I listened to each tape several times, I began transcription. I transcribed specially selected portions of my interview with Dr. Grantham and the interview with Carolyn. My interview transcript was over 20 pages long and Carolyn's was about 30 pages. I transcribed the three participants' interviews in the entirety. These three tapes produced about 130 pages of transcripts. Generally, it took one day (12-15 hours) to transcribe one interview. Even though transcribing these interviews was the most time-consuming task, it was not the most difficult. What was most difficult was developing codes, themes, and analysis.

Richard Boyatzia (1998) defines coding as “the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way” (p. 63). Boyatzia carefully differentiates between the unit of coding and what he calls “the unit of analysis” (p. 62). Implicitly a unit of coding must be equal to or smaller than the unit of analysis. The example Boyatzia gives is a study of the organizational climate in which a questionnaire is used. For a moment, I will dismiss with the debate about whether a questionnaire is qualitative data, and focus on what type of unit the questionnaire defines.

Let us assume that instead of questionnaires the researchers used interviews, the unit of coding (the unit I will code) is the interview. The unit of analysis in this example would be the organization. Likewise, in my case the unit of analysis was the group of participants.

Boyatzia (1998) also states that the unit of coding must have a theoretical justification. In my case, I justified the coding by revisiting the methodology, effective history, and the open-ended structure of the interviews. Since the term “event” is open-ended and highly interpretive, I over-coded each interview in the beginning, added codes as I read the transcripts, and waited until I had placed all the data in one or more codes before I proceeded with developing themes and analysis.

After hitting and missing several times while developing a code list, I finally decided on a method that I would use (whether or not it was the best or easiest). First, I brainstormed a list of codes based on my knowledge of the interviews. The codes I listed without consulting the transcripts included family, violence, community, resistance, account of the event, and attitude towards white people. I designated a color for each code, then went to the interview transcripts and color-coded a copy of it based on this list. As I read the transcripts and discovered codes I had left off my initial list, I designated colors for those codes. I then added them to the list and began to use it to code the data. I had done the traditional numbering of lines on the interview transcript, but ultimately, I did not find this useful in developing codes and themes.

The final list of codes included:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Awareness of blackness | red |
| 2. Raced | blue |
| 3. Sibling influence | green |
| 4. Sports | yellow |
| 5. Violence | purple |
| 6. Account of the event | teal |
| 7. Attitudes towards whites | lavender |
| 8. Parents | orange |
| 9. Physical pain | maroon |
| 10. Resistance | gray |
| 11. Other events | pink |
| 12. Community | turquoise |
| 13. School | peach |

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| 14. The body | dark yellow |
| 15. Othering others | pale blue |

I carefully read each interview transcript and coded each piece of data by cutting and pasting it into a page designated for that particular code. Once I had coded each transcript, I read them in the coded format. This allowed me to determine what I needed to quote explicitly in the participants' words, and what I could summarize. I established themes by developing issues that one participant addressed at length or all participants discussed during their interviews.

I used two conditions in determining what comprised a theme and if either of these two conditions were met, I considered the event as a theme. The first was frequency of occurrence, and the second was sustained concern in any one interview. By frequency of occurrence, I refer to codes that appeared in more than one interview. The obvious example is the 1997 shooting event. By sustained concern, I refer to codes that one person discusses frequently or at length in the interview. In addition, sustained concern occurred when a participant explicitly stated that something is important in the effective history.

The themes common to more than one participant included family as a support system, the nature of collegiate sports, issues of racing (as done to others and as others race the participants), violence, and academics. Some issues were singularly important; but in an effective history analysis, I believe these themes were equally significant. These themes included friendship (Amari), being accepted by other black people (Stephanie), and the status of athletes (Michelle).

Once I had determined themes and placed parts of interviews into one or more themes, I began the effective history analysis. First, I culled events from the coded data. Then, I examined what effects these events had on the person(s) who experienced it. Finally, I examined how they resisted the events' effects (or failed to do so).

I deleted some of what I initially considered events from the data story in Chapter 4, because although they were issues in the lives of participants, no *event* marked their emergence. An example of

this was Stephanie's issues with weight and her concerns about her two younger sisters. Stephanie's youngest sister was only eight-years-old and according to Stephanie already exhibited signs of an eating disorder. The other sister was about twelve-years-old and ate compulsively. Stephanie and I talked about this at length, but throughout our talk, there was no singular event that precipitates these problems. Therefore, I cannot call the body image and weight issue an *event*.

Events for Stephanie, Amari, and Michelle

The events in this effective history are as follows: the 1997 shooting for all participants; Stephanie's movement to an all-black middle school; the 2003 shooting for Amari; Amari's conflict with his mother, Carolyn, and the fallout from it; the first time Amari shot a gun; Michelle's sports injury; and Stephanie and Michelle's problems with university professors, advisors, and other personnel. The final event I analyzed described how one participant decided to buy a gun. As I explain in Chapter 4, although I chose not to identify this participant, this event was significant and I believe the reasoning the participant uses in justifying the decision to buy a gun reflects discourses circulated throughout this nation as rationalization for the purchase of firearms.

Following effective history, as I believe it should apply to methodology, I followed each event with an analysis of effects and resistances. Once I identified effects and resistances I conducted an analysis of the discourses used as resistance. Although these participants employ myriad discourses as resistances, I based my study on the assumption that two types of discourses would be more frequent than others: Eurocentric and Africanist discourses.

It was not my intention to oppose Eurocentric and Africanist discourses; instead, I hoped to demonstrate ways in which participants used these discourses and what these discourses did once employed by participants. Not only did I analyze the discourses participants used them, I also looked at my own discourses, that of the hotel employees, and that of educators at Murphey East High School.

Subjectivity, the Vortex of White Supremacist and Africanist Thought

I wrote this methodology with some trepidation and awareness of how very important the idea of subjectivity was in this study. Subjectivity was critical in this study because not only was I the researcher, I was also a major player in the Event that prompted this study. As Britzman (2000) states, "There is a belief and expectation that the ethnographer is capable of producing truth from the experience of being there and that the reader is receptive to the truth of the text" (p. 28). I questioned my own ability to produce truth because participant's accounts of the same events that I thought I understood have already revealed how little I really knew about what was going on.

Likewise, I was still involved in the lives of my participants, even though they graduated from high school three or four years ago. Laurel Richardson (2000) posits that, "[p]ostmodernism suspects all truth claims of masking and serving particular interest in local, cultural, and political struggles. But it does not automatically reject conventional methods of knowing and telling as false or archaic" (p. 928). Consequently, the type of subjective analysis that conducted will, "not allow researchers to split methodology from epistemology. Second, this framework allows us to theorize different levels of participation in research and research process and therefore build different forms of reflexivity directly into the research process" (p. 928).

Perhaps Britzman (2000) offers help in troubling of traditional ethnography within the postmodern frame. Britzman states that "[t]he ground upon which ethnography is built turns out to be a contested and fictive geography. Those who populate and imagine it (every participant, including the author and the reader) are, in essence, textualized identities. Their voices create a cacophony and dialogic display of contradictory desires, fears, and literary tropes that, if carefully 'read,' suggest just how slippery speaking, writing, reading, and desiring subjectivity really are" (p 28). My subjectivity was more slippery than most. I needed to deconstruct it in order to operate reflexively and listen attentively.

My doctoral committee suggested that I needed to inquire into my feelings about the Event and my participants prior to beginning data collection. Actually, this is somewhat misleading, because the

analysis of my subjectivity is itself data. Dr. Tarek Grantham, who was not only one of my committee members but also a professor from whom I learned the rudiments of data collection, compassionately listened as I told my representation of the Event and tried to deconstruct why, even four years afterwards, its effects still plagued me. Tarek was the first African-American male professor I had ever taken a college course from. I was enrolled in a qualitative research course with Tarek during my last year as a high school literacy teacher—a period during which students spewed racial epithets at me on a regular basis. Tarek encouraged me to continue my goal of obtaining the PhD even when others said I was crazy. Tarek and I were not alike, but Tarek understood me, we trusted each other, and I knew that he would handle issues involving my subjectivity with caution. I believe any member of my doctoral committee could have done this interview, but Tarek stepped up and accepted this challenge.

Dr. Grantham was one of the first in the university with whom I shared the shooting Event. Because he was an African-American man who had been subjected to racialized events, he had a deep and abiding compassion for my participants and me. Tarek was a thirty-something assistant professor in the Educational Psychology department. His focus is on gifted education. This interview occurred on October 13, 2003. I drove from my home in the city identified as Yargary to my university, approximately 70 miles north of my home. Upon arriving at the university, I discovered that the place we had arranged to meet was closed. I called Tarek on his cell phone and we agreed to meet at the International House of Pancakes. The interview began at approximately 10:30 and ended about 1:30. My first field interview was approximately one month later.

During the first part of this interview, we discussed my own schooling thirty years ago—schooling that occurred in the same town but at a different high school. I then explained my theory of how the school my participants attended came to be known as “the black school” in the town of Murphy. This part of the interview was revelatory because it gave a sense of the ethnic grounding and acculturation this predominately African-American community provided for its young people. It was especially important in analyzing how one does not become racially self-conscious a therefore, is not aware of being

disciplined when outside the cocoon of the majority-black neighborhood. The idea of racial self-consciousness that I will discuss later was a key element in how the participants rationalize the Event.

I explained to my professor that this campus generally operated on what black folks call the “old school” principle. I have found that the “old school” was what works best for my personality and was most nurturing and productive for the students I taught at Murphey East. He asked me to explain what “old school” means to me. I answer that:

Violet: The classic example is I have this coworker (who is African-American); she’s retired now, one of the most respected educators in the county. One day at lunch I was walking down the hall ... she was on duty. She was standing at one end of the hallway, and there was this kid at the other end of the hallway. And you know he’s not supposed to be in the hallway because it’s lunch. She had called him several times and he wouldn’t answer her.

So finally she said (and I forget the kid’s name) she said “so and so, get your ass down here!”

I almost fell out. Because this woman, she is an English teacher. She was definitely from the old school. Prim and proper. Prim and proper. They had a joke about her, she could make the paint peel off the walls or some mess like that.

Because she was always pretty, always dressed to the nines, in the junior league the whole nine yards.

And it was like she’s cussing all the way down the hallway. I mean you could hear her from one end to the other.

And the kids was like, “Oh man Miss _____. She gonna’ kill me.” But it wasn’t like “You cussed me”. It wasn’t that. It was like, “I got caught.” So you know ... it was funny ... and again, with love.

T – They obviously had a certain amount of respect for her

V – Respect, that’s right. And he knew he was wrong because she had called him two or three times, and he was trying to sneak. Trying to sneak to the gym or somewhere like that. And he was ignoring her. And I think she was embarrassed herself because that’s so unlike her.

Now me? That would be a different story.

But for her, she did all her cussin' in private.. That’s another old school thing. We do all our cussin’ in private.

But, we do things that might stretch the law a little bit. We talk to kids about things like birth control. We talk to kids about AIDS. I talk to them from the perspective of saving [their] lives. I don’t preach about any particular philosophy. I just talk about self-respect. And if a kid don’t have a place to stay, one of us gon’ take him home with us. If the kids need anything ... if we know the child ain’t gone have no dinner when they get home one of us is gon' take them to Krystal, or somewhere, Burger King or somewhere. We just do.

Another aspect of my subjectivity that my professor felt was important was the relationship between my team members and me. He asked me to describe the dynamics of our relationship. I described them thusly:

V – [My relationship to the members of the team was] stronger, much stronger. Because for them—for them to spend the night at my house was nothing when we had to get up at four in the morning and go to a tournament the next day. I’ve always felt this way about parents because one of the things that happens with black people and with Hispanic people who are ethnically on the outside is that those who teach them assume the parents don’t care. You hear that parents don’t care. And I don’t believe that. I think it’s a lot of hype. I mean what parent doesn’t care about their kid? Some don’t, but it’s not necessarily bound by race as to who those parents are. But anyway, so I always, I call

parents, I talk to them, I get them involved in what I am doing. So these parents I really talked to them a lot about what was going on with their kids. I was very involved with those kids. If they acted up in a class they knew it was going to get back to me and I was going to get on them. I would deal with the whole student, not just the quiz bowl commodity, which is the traditional sort of way. And you know the other thing is that I didn't just choose gifted students, or those who were at the top of their class. I chose students who I felt, you know some kids just have the ability to remember things or they know lots of trivia. Those kids are the kids I chose.

One particular example points to the sense of community, again a carryover of Africanist ways that I applied when working with the team:

Now see I had two groups of kids. I had the first group that went to nationals. And that's an interesting story because one of them, he ended up being like my godson too. He's Pakistani, and his ancestors were indentured servants in Guyana or somewhere and then they moved to the United States. And they moved to the projects because his mom and dad had liked six kids. And I remember Ramadan. I remember Ramadan we had a tournament in Sandpiper. And [his] mom and dad did not want to let him go because Ramadan started that Friday and we were leaving that Friday. And he calls me thinking he's gone manipulate me into convincing his momma and daddy to let him go to this tournament. And I told him, "Muhammad, that's none of my business." I said "I'm sorry, I hate to not have you," because he was the number one player. "But that's your parents' decision to make. What I will do is I'll assure them that I will afford you any facilities or whatever you need to stick with your Ramadan schedule." Because you know they had fasting and stuff, "But I'm not going to try to convince your mom to let you because your mother has a lot of respect for me and that's wrong to put undue pressure on her." Somehow, he fussed and complained enough that his mother called me and said,

“Well, Miss Jones, if you will promise me that Muhammad will stick to his fasting schedule and you’ll give him a place to pray” and I said, “yes, I’ll do that.” So we went to Sandpiper. And he did break his fast when he was supposed to break the fast. And at some point in the evening we were practicing and I know it was hard for him because he’s so into competition. And he said, “Miss Jones, can I go in your room by myself for a little bit.” And I gave him my key ... let him do what he had to do. And that worked out really great. But the whole point is, when he calls, when this boy calls my house, my husband says, "your son's on the phone." Thank God I'm married to the man I am. He doesn't resent that.

This data regarding my subjectivity demonstrates the way that I operate within Africanist paradigms. In this paradigm, all members of the community are like an extended family. Nobles (1978) cites this idea as a major attribute in examining and studying black families in the United States. Indeed, Nobles stresses that “for the African individual, the family constituted the reference point wherein one’s existence was perceived as being interconnected to the existence of everything else” (p. 684). While leading this team as well as operating as a classroom practitioner I have consistently employed an Africanist worldview even when I did not know that I was.

Africanist worldview and discourses are not the only discourses that I employed in the classroom. Indeed, I believe that part of my guilt about how I handled the Event and its aftermath stems from the way I implicitly employed Eurocentric discourse in the disciplining of my students. Within a Eurocentric mindset, “Autonomy has become a championed and revered individualism. Authority is lifted up to a romantic heroism waged against a raw, half-savage natural and mental landscape” (Miles, 2003, p. 12). I have identified certain disciplinary devices and methods that went beyond the necessity of teaching students to engage in the dominant discourse (Delpit, 1995; Gee, 1999).

Although I admit that it is important to teach young people how to function in the discourse of the dominant society, it is equally important to balance this engagement with a reification of the import of

their native discourses and ways of being (Daniel & Smitherman, 1976; Smitherman, 1995). The danger inherent in not supporting the discourse and culture of students is that we risk creating a generation of people who, after having successfully negotiated the territory of the dominant group, no longer consider their native discourses and community values to have import. Therefore, the talented who were able to make it decide to leave and engage in a community other than the one that nurtured them. This fractures the community by robbing it of the talent and human resources necessary for leadership and survival.

When I began teaching at this majority-African-American school, I knew how discourses operated and was aware that I should not marginalize Africanist discourse or ways of being. Even though I knew this on a cognitive level, something about having lived in dominant discourse communities since graduating from high school permeated much of what I said and did when engaging with these students. Oppression and subjugation do not necessarily imply intent. In my case, I intended to help students appreciate their own uniqueness. What I did was another matter entirely.

Toni Morrison (1992) critiques the problem of the white gaze on the black imagination. As for its application in literature, she describes the intentional erasure of race in literature as “pouring rhetorical acid on the fingers of black hands” (p. 46). Morrison believes that many black writers write with a white audience in mind. In other words, one could say that those people of color who operate with a constant white consciousness are themselves acting out of a white supremacist discourse. I feel that I have been guilty of this in many of my dealings with students. Morrison suggests that “[m]aybe I’m wrong in my feelings about the impact of the white gaze on African-American[s] ... but I know that eliminating it from my imagination was an important thing” (as cited in McHenry, 2003, p. 28-32).

As I seek to identify how the white gaze affects the way I deal with black students, some things I have done come immediately to mind. I have a deep understanding of what causes one to be raced black since I was produced by majority-white schools from fifth-grade through this doctoral program. First, many black people have strong, resonant voices; so I constantly told my team members not to be loud in public. Blacks, especially those of the hip-hop generation are raced because they wear baggy pants and

large oversized shirts. Consequently, I did not allow my team members to dress in this fashion when we went to tournaments. Ironically, we often saw white students from other schools who were loud and wore baggy clothing at these tournaments. Nevertheless, I felt it was *different* when my students did these things. I would look askance at any of my students who wore excessive or what I thought was gaudy jewelry. If I felt their appearance was *different* enough to draw attention to them, I required them to remove the violating adornments. The requisite “yes ma’am” or “yes sir” was not a big issue since most of these students were taught to address elders in this way by their parents and others in the community.

I felt that I had to watch my students constantly, especially when we were in public businesses. I would not tell them that they could not go into the gas stations or upscale mall stores when we traveled. I simply watched where they went, and as we traveled through small southern towns, I was careful to linger inconspicuously about as they did their shopping. I felt I had to do this because of the white gaze directed at young black people who attempt to shop in stores. I placed *my gaze* on my students in the hopes of preventing some white person from accusing them of stealing or committing some other inappropriate act.

What I did to and with my students was shameful, but necessary in certain instances. I was not conscious of racing my own students—of standing as proxy for the white supremacists. Nevertheless, my continual monitoring of their dress, speech, and behavior affected the way these young people negotiated the Event. My subjective impact became clear once I realized that these students agreed among themselves not to tell me about the shooting because they were afraid that I would be angry with them. In addition, they agreed that they would not tell anyone at Murphey East about the incident even after it became public. I have to take responsibility for my role in making young people feel embarrassed by a situation in which they held no culpability. The Eurocentrist attitude of the guard caused the shooting Event; but the white supremacist operating on my imagination affected their reactions and resistances to it.

Conclusion

This research project has taken me to places I did not intend to go. The knowledge continues to cut discourses in new and sometimes painful ways. The way that I endeavored to gain entrée and consent attests to my desire to foreground Africanist ways in this study. Contrarily, an analysis of my subjectivity demonstrates how intent and actions sometimes act counter-intuitively against one another. I will revisit both Africanist ways and Eurocentric discourse as I explain and analyze the data presented to me by my participants.