A Phenomenological, Qualitative Study of Place for Place-Based Education: Toward a Place-Responsive Pedagogy

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines people's place experiences more fully than has been done by others in the field of education, and in doing so, it opens new ways of thinking about place in place-based education. Place-based education, in its effort to connect educational processes with the local places in which students and teachers carry out their daily lives, has become an increasingly popular reform movement that challenges assumptions about the purpose and meaning of education in a rapidly globalizing world. Though the scholarship on place-based education describes, justifies, and advocates for turning the educational focus toward local places, it does not necessarily bring forth an explicit understanding of how people experience place.

Grounded in phenomenology, this qualitative study explores the place experiences of five individuals who were born and raised in the White Mountains of eastern Arizona. Experiential descriptions were gathered through three, in-depth, iterative interviews with each participant. Documents considered for this study included interview transcriptions as well as photographs, observations, and descriptions of places in the White Mountains that were deemed significant to the individuals. A phenomenological framework, specifically Edward Relph's explications of place and insideness and outsideness, structured the methodological processes, contextualized participant narratives, and facilitated and informed an understanding of participants' place experiences.

Through the coding and analyzing of interviews for common themes and subthemes, as well as through the crafting of individual profiles, participant place experiences emerged as a dialectical relationship between insideness and outsideness and

consisted of Part-of-Place (play-and-exploration, cultivation-of-place, stories-of-place, dangerous-endeavors, and care-of-place), Place-Sensations (remarkable-moments, sensory-triggers, and features-marked-in-time), and Ruptures-in-the-Place-World (pivotal-moments, barriers-borders-boundaries, drastic-changes, and injuries). While the research was exploratory and only investigated a limited number of place experiences, the findings, coupled with theoretical and conceptual understandings of place anchored in phenomenological perspectives, strengthen a discussion in place-based education of place, how place is experienced, and how these experiences matter in people's lives. Furthermore, the findings of this dissertation support a proposed pedagogical method that blends place-based education and culturally relevant practices into a place-responsive pedagogy.

In affection and gratitude this dissertation is dedicated to

My Mother, Barbara Nolan,

for her limitless patience,

tireless editing of drafts, and continued encouragement.

This dissertation would not have been possible without you.

My dearest husband, Stefan Borg,

for his unwavering support.

You are the love of my life.

The memory of "Poppy," Edward Barge,

who always believed in me.

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PREFACE: SONG OF THE CICADAS

Figure 1: Author with Apache Dance Group, White Mountain Apache Reservation, Arizona (From Nolan Family Photograph Collection).

I was lucky enough to be born in a community that expresses a deep and rich understanding of place. My parents were educators and taught in Whiteriver, a community on the White Mountain Apache Reservation in eastern Arizona. Traditionally,

the people of this community considered themselves *placed* in the White Mountains by the Creator. As placed people, they learned to be *Ndee*—The People ("White Mountain Apache History," n.d.). Though the Apache people have lived in the area for thousands of years, the federal government in late 1891 established the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (which is also known as the White Mountain Apache Reservation). A geographically diverse region, the reservation consists of 1.67 million acres of a variety of vegetation, from high desert plains to dense pine forests. The reservation contains a rich wildlife habitat and abounds with more than 400 miles of lakes and streams. The community of Whiteriver lies in a beautiful valley surrounded by dramatic red bluffs and mesas. The major river in the area, White River, runs through the middle of town.

My parents arrived on the reservation in the summer of 1969. Married for less than three months, they attached a U-Haul trailer to their turquoise Nissan Patrol and drove 375 miles from Durango, Colorado to the town of Whiteriver, Arizona: the seat of tribal government on the White Mountain Apache Reservation. Recent graduates of Fort Lewis College, and hired by an all-Apache school board, they were looking for a teaching adventure—something that would occupy them for a year or so before they settled down to have a family. Thirty-five years later they retired from the Whiteriver Unified School District.

My older sister Heather was born in 1973 and I followed in 1981. The two of us grew up as *Dá Báń* (White Bread) on the reservation. My parents remember finding my older sister rubbing her arms until they were raw, trying to spread her freckles together so she could be brown like her friends.

We lived in teacher housing—a conglomerate of brick apartments, modular homes, and trailers—a place where non-Apaches could reside on the reservation. Our modular backed up to the town's cemetery. The communities of Dark Shadows and One Step Beyond bordered the other end of the graveyard. At such an impressionable age, stories of boogiemen (and women) ran wild in my imagination. One in particular, told often by community members, was that of Buchi'san, an old witch who tossed misbehaving children in her burden basket and carried them up the red cliffs to her home. Late at night my friends and I could hear blood-curdling screams echoing in the canyons as Buchi'san devoured naughty children.

When I turned four years old my younger sister Meagan was born and my parents, after living in Whiteriver for fifteen years, decided to purchase a home and move to Pinetop-Lakeside, a town that borders the reservation. In the early mornings, when most people were just rising, my family and I would all pile into our red suburban and begin our daily commute to Whiteriver (my parents would continue to make this commute and teach on the reservation for an additional 20 years). On weekends I would often stay with my friends in Whiteriver. I remember many moments with friends playing "rez" ball on dirt-packed earth, the crunch of pickles as we sat eating in front of the trading post, shelling sunflower seeds as we walked along the cracked sidewalks of the town, pouring Kool-Aid powder on the palms of our hands and licking up the sweet flavors with our tongue, braiding our hair in intricate patterns, swimming in the cool waters of the White River, and trying to find the molt of cicadas in the cottonwood branches above. The cicadas would sing incessantly in late summer and early fall, and to this day the song of

the cicadas conjures intense memories of my childhood activities. Accepted in this community and culture, I was blessed by an Apache medicine man and was thus privileged with the opportunity to become a member of the Mountain Spirits, commonly known as the Crown Dancers. I grew with this group throughout my childhood learning the many facets of the Apache culture as I danced to the beat of the drums, the silver jingles on my buckskin swaying with the rhythms. It is in this setting that I became an insider, a *placed* human being at an early age, immersed in natural as well as cultural surroundings that have had a lasting impact on me.

My understanding of place has been deeply shaped by my experiences in Whiteriver. But it was also shaped by experiences off the reservation. My parents were avid outdoor people. As a family, we took every opportunity available to us to hike, fish, camp, and cross-country ski in the White Mountains. One of my first memories as a child is the smell of my father's winter-wool cap. As a baby, he would place me in a backpack, strap on his skis, and I would fall asleep to the rhythm of his strides. As I became older, we would ski together for long miles through pines and aspens, meadows and canyons, breaking fresh tracks through the dense snow. The quiet solitude of the backcountry would envelop us. Occasionally, my father would break the silence to point out fresh animal tracks in the snow or to retell a story from his past. But mostly we attuned ourselves to the natural stories of place—animal scat, calls and movements, and wind whistling through the trees.

In the summer and autumn months we would camp almost every weekend near a natural spring that created a trickling stream. At our hidden campsite, my sisters and I

would build elaborate tree and rock forts and recreate scenes from Gary Paulsen's (1988) *The Hatchet* or from Jean Craighead George's (1959) *My Side of the Mountain*. These stories of outdoor survival would come alive in our imagination as we turned our natural surroundings into places from our beloved stories.

As I returned to our campsite as an adult, my mother and I began a new quest to better understand our cherished place. Camera and notebook in hand, we began the arduous task of recording arborglyphs carved by Mexican, Peruvian, and Basque sheepherders who were once in the area. The mountains have a rich history of sheepherders traveling there from South America, Central America, and Spain. These men would travel thousands of miles, leaving family behind, to herd sheep for months at a time in very isolated, remote corners of the American West. They would often not see another human being for weeks on end. The carvings we found mostly consisted of names, dates, and birthdates; messages and poetry; and artwork that often included horses, sheep, women, self-portraits, and the occasional pornographic picture. These carvings provide a record of the presence, experiences, and thoughts of sheepherders who have been passing through this bioregion since the 1920s. Studying the ways sheepherders connect to place in the mountains where I grew up has given me a deeper understanding of the layers of meaning that envelop a place, as well as the ways in which people make an unfamiliar place familiar.

I left the White Mountains after high school graduation to attend university. After graduating with a degree in Elementary Education, I returned to the area. I taught for two years on the reservation (I actually taught in the same classroom that I attended as a

child) and three years in Pinetop-Lakeside. Dissatisfied with current education policies, I once again left the White Mountains to attend graduate school.

It was during this time that I read Keith Basso's (1996) seminal piece, "Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache" and fully realized the significance of people's relationship to place. Simultaneously, I began profusely reading Native authors of place such as N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, Simon Ortiz, and Louise Erdrich as well as non-Native authors Wallace Stegner, Willa Cather, Ivan Doig, and Larry McMurtry, and nature writers Barry Lopez, Rachel Carson, Annie Dillard, Aldo Leopold, and Wendell Berry. I soon recognized that the words, descriptions, and stories of place that these authors elicited provided me with a comforting intimacy and a sense of belonging. They also simultaneously memorialized and problematized place. Most importantly, they captured the living quality of place. It was this deep relationship with place that I, too, understood so well.

My motivation for conducting this dissertation research stems from my interest in the relational aspects of people-place connections and my experiences as an elementary educator. As a teacher, I witnessed firsthand how schools, under increased pressure from state-mandated school reform policies, can become increasingly disengaged from and unaccountable to the lived experiences of students and local communities. An amplified emphasis on standards, testing, and accountability resulted in the use of scripted curriculum in the classroom, written by professionals far removed from the White Mountains. This in turn led to even more stringent English-only policies that further

marginalized the use of local languages such as Spanish and Apache in schools.[1] Time spent indoors practicing rote memorization became more important than time spent outdoors engaging in hands-on activities. Field trips, even to local sites, became non-existent. Frustrated with current educational policies that force schools to divorce themselves from local place—failing to even emphasize or recognize the rich cultural, historical, or ecological place in which students and teachers reside—I have since sought to find a philosophy and practice of schooling that honors local place ways-of-being and that can more effectively tap into a child's sense of place. Place-based education offers one such method.

This dissertation takes up the notion of place and place-based education. In the following chapters, this study examines place experiences more fully than has been done by others in the field of place-based education, and in doing so strengthens a discussion of place, of how place is experienced, and how place matters in people's lives. In the concluding chapter I discuss the importance of a place-responsive pedagogy, a notion that brings together the pedagogical methods of place-based education and culturally relevant pedagogies.

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[1] This is also illustrated in a study I conducted for my Master's thesis in 2009. In this study, after being granted permission from the Tribal Chairman, I examined the effects of high stakes testing and punitive labeling practices in a public elementary school located within a Native American community. I found that the lived experiences of the students, the local Indigenous language and culture, as well as school/community relationships were increasingly marginalized as the school was forced to meet state and federal accountability mandates.

Chapter One: Clarifying the Context

The purpose of this dissertation is to bring forth deeper understandings of place experiences and open new ways of thinking about place in place-based education through a phenomenologically oriented, in-depth qualitative study. Interest in place-based practices has grown rapidly in recent years, most notably in the field of education. A growing number of teachers and researchers concerned with community development, ecological literacy and identity, and environmental and cultural sustainability have come to embrace place-based initiatives (Gruenewald, 2003b; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Orr, 1993; Sobel, 2003; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Smith, 2002, 2011; Theobald & Curtiss, 2000; Thomashow, 1996; Umphreys, 2005). Place-based programs have had a number of positive effects: most notably in directing attention and resources toward the development of quality curricula rooted in local place; in facilitating more effective partnerships between schools and communities; in boosting student achievement; and in improving student interest in environmental, social, cultural, and economic vitality (Barnhardt, 2008; Powers, 2004; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Sobel, 2002).

In many ways, place-based education has become a reform movement that challenges assumptions about the purpose and meaning of education in a rapidly globalizing world. It offers a progressive alternative to current curriculum that alienates and divorces students and teachers from the places in which they carry out their lives. It challenges mandated curriculum and standardization and, instead, uses local place as its starting point in teaching concepts and subjects across the curriculum. The most devoted advocates of place-based education approaches believe that turning the educational focus

toward place, and integrating curriculum around the study of place, can transform the lives of young people and the places in which they live, both now and in the future.

My primary aim in this dissertation is to describe people's place experiences more fully than has been done by others in the field of place-based education. To this end, I intend to add to existing place-based literature—literature that seeks to regain and restore a sense of place in a globalized world—by bringing forth deeper understandings of place experiences and, in doing so, open new ways of thinking about place in place-based education. As such, the following questions guide my research:

1) What are the elements that compose a person's sense of place?

2) In what ways might these findings inform discussions of place and place experiences for place-based education?

In an attempt to answer these questions I present a phenomenologically oriented study of place and place experiences. This is undertaken through a thorough review of the major theoretical understandings of place as well as through "on the ground" experiences of five individuals who were born and raised in the White Mountains of eastern Arizona. In the following pages I illustrate the significance of place-based education. I then provide a rationale for an in-depth study of place and place experiences and conclude with an overview of the chapters presented in this dissertation.

Reinstating *Place* Through Place-Based Initiatives: The Importance of a Place-Based Education

Understandings of the pedagogic relationship between experience, reflection, and the learner's world first came to fruition in the United States education system under the

guidance of John Dewey (1859–1952). A philosopher, psychologist, and educator, and often cited as one of the principal founders of the experiential education movement, Dewey is credited with advancing the notion that relationships and place are crucial to education (Ziniewicz, 1997). Dewey criticized the U.S. school system in the early 1900s for its lack of effort in utilizing knowledge gained outside school in a productive way in the classroom. Dewey believed that learning should not consist of passive or disengaged experiences controlled by adults and teachers. Rather, he argued for an education that emphasized emancipatory and democratic encounters with learning. Dewey stressed the importance of developing an education system in which "the sense of reality [is] acquired through first-hand contact with actualities" (Dewey, 1915, p. 11). Dewey's philosophy emphasized the sensing body in its environment and that learning, and subsequently knowledge, begins when the immediate, tangible, and moving world presents itself to the senses (Hunt, 1995).

Place-based education has become a broad term incorporating different "on-the-ground" pedagogical movements that draw heavily from Deweian concepts. There are a variety of descriptive names and movements that link education practice to local places. Several authors (Gruenewald, 2003a; Powers, 2004; Smith, 2002; Sobel, 2004; Smith & Sobel, 2014; Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000) acknowledge these methods as experiential learning, culturally responsive schooling, Indigenous education, community-based learning, service learning, environmental education, outdoor education, bioregional education, ecological education, nature studies, sustainable-development education, cultural journalism, and real-world problem solving. Although developed somewhat separately, the strength of these place-based approaches is their ability to adapt to the

unique characteristics of particular places. Most specifically, they emphasize learning in the context of local communities and environments, they use particular attributes of place for curriculum development, are multidisciplinary, are experiential, connect place with self and community, facilitate student-driven learning, acknowledge the role of teacher as co-learner in the educational process, and dissolve the walls between the school and the community (Powers, 2004; Smith, 2002; Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000).

Moreover, place-based education movements revolve around a few core themes. As I will discuss in the following pages, these include the belief that people are becoming more rootless, alienated, and isolated from place as modernizing practices emphasize the global and general and gloss over the local and the distinctive, as well as the view that the majority of educational institutions reflect this process. As Gregory Smith (2002) argues, despite Dewey's efforts, the learning that occurs in most schools today still directs children's attention away from their own lived experiences and ways-of-knowing toward knowledge produced and developed by strangers in other places. Schooling, in this view, is a site that promotes interchangeability, standardized tests, universal requirements and accountabilities, and, ultimately, a denial of the local places in which students and teachers live out their daily lives. In contrast, place-based initiatives recognize the significance and meaning of direct experiences and encounters with the social and ecological places people actually inhabit. Furthermore, place-based approaches offer insight into the ways education might assist in easing the tension between local diversity and globalization. The movement for place-based education owes much to the advocacy and writings of Barnhardt (2008), Bowers (2006), Gruenewald (2003a, 2003b), Smith (2002), Sobel (2005), Theobald (1997), Thomashow (1996), and to such school reform

organizations as the Orion Society, the Foxfire Fund, and the Rural School and Community Trust. In what follows, I draw from the work of prominent educators and researchers in the field of education to illustrate how critiques of the adverse effects of neoliberal globalization have been taken up in place-based initiatives. In addition, I include the frameworks recommend to reinstate a more significant role for place in pedagogical practices. Each researcher and educator discussed utilizes a place-based framework in a slightly different way. And the understandings of place, through each framework, are conceptualized and conceived somewhat distinctively. However, taken together, these frameworks and conceptualizations form the foundation of place-based education. Furthermore, at the end of this section, I provide a brief discussion of educational anthropologist Jan Nespor's critiques on what she believes to be conceptual and theoretical problems in place-based education.

Core Themes and Frameworks

David Orr (1992) and Mitchell Thomashow (1996) make an overarching case for the crucial importance of place and the transformative role education can play in a much-needed paradigmatic shift toward awareness of local ecologies and communities.[1] Conceptualizing place as ecological environments, they examine cultural forces that they believe continue to damage people's relationships with the places on which communities depend. They both argue that education is part of this problem.

For Orr, modern education was designed to "further the conquest of nature and the industrialization of the planet" (p. x). As a result, Orr argues that educational

[1] Both Thomashow and Orr draw extensively from a particular literary tradition that includes John Muir, Henry David Thoreau, Aldo Leopold, Gary Synder, Edith Cobb, Wendell Berry, and others.

institutions have overlooked the importance of place and will continue to do so as long as "our immediate places are no longer sources of food, water, livelihood, energy, materials, friends, recreation, or sacred inspiration" (p. 126). In order to refocus our attention toward local places, Orr suggests we need to open up a dialogue with nature through "ecological literacy." Orr understands ecological literacy as the ability to observe and interact with nature—soils, landscape, wildlife—with insight. According to Orr, an ecological identity "is driven by the sense of wonder, the sheer delight in being alive in a beautiful, mysterious, bountiful world" (p. 86). Furthermore, an ecologically literate person comprehends interrelatedness and knows the importance of care and stewardship toward natural environments.

In a similar vein, Thomashow (1996) suggests that academic environmentalists embrace and teach toward an "ecological identity." For Thomashow, an ecological identity "refers to all the different ways people construe themselves in relationship to the earth as manifested in personality, values, actions, and sense of self" (p. 3). As such, an ecological identity provides a framework for reflection on the ways we relate to and extend our sense of self toward nature.

Paul Theobald (1997) uses "the commons," rather than ecological environments, as his starting point. Theobald defines the commons as an "intradependence" that is "dependence within a place, dependence on the good will and wisdom of people with whom the land is shared" (p. 601). He explores the inequities between the rich and the poor, the increasing power of multinational corporations, the weakening of democracy across global and local spaces, and individual demands over community needs. As Theobald argues, "The ascendancy of the modern worldview during the seventeenth

century has slowly eroded the communal dimensions of living to a point that we no longer know quite what they are or what they were" (p. 15). By tracing the decline of the commons, Theobald attempts to illustrate the ways in which schools can reverse this process and promote community. Suggesting that schools are agents in placing individual enrichment over shared community values, Theobald cogently argues that schools must embrace an intradependence between place and community consciousness, emphasizing both communal accomplishments as well as individual successes. He articulates a vision of education that he believes not only strengthens community spirit, but also builds a sense of connection with place.

C.A. Bowers (2006) also turns toward the commons, but does so through an ecojustice lens. For Bowers, the commons are shared by all members of a community and include natural systems (water, air, plants, animals, etc.) as well as patterns and traditions of culture learned through the generations (language, rituals, music, dances, etc.) that have not been monetized or privatized. Bowers argues that a connection to the commons has disintegrated over time: "Today the diversity of the commons and the cultural beliefs and practices that influence whether the life-supporting natural systems are exploited or nurtured are being threatened by the spread of industrial culture…" (p. 48). Bowers suggests that to revitalize the commons, students must engage in learning that addresses both environmental problems and oppressive social and economic influences that contribute to poverty, exploitation, and oppression.

Prominent place-based educators and researchers Gregory Smith and David Gruenewald discuss alternative approaches to schooling that emphasize learning in the context of local communities and environments. Smith (2002) argues the disconnect

between learning, schools, and children's lived experiences has intensified as education policies continue to emphasize standardized test scores and mastery of knowledge created by others far removed from the communities of teachers and students. He examines five place-based approaches that implement curriculum and instruction derived first from local knowledge before extending outward to include the global. These five approaches are: cultural studies, nature studies, real-world problem solving, internships and entrepreneurial opportunities, and community decision-making processes. Place-based approaches such as these, Smith contends, reconnect rather than separate students, and serve "both individuals and communities, helping individuals to experience the value they hold for others and allowing communities to benefit from the commitment and contributions of their members" (p. 594).

Gruenewald (2003a) argues in *Foundations of Place: A Multidisciplinary Framework for Place-Conscious Education,* that "[c]ontemporary school reform takes little notice of place" (p. 620) and in doing so, the education system "fails to connect meaningfully to the lives of learners and the communities from which they come" (p. 621). For Gruenewald, the purpose of a place-conscious education should be "to work against the isolation of schooling's discourses and practices" (p. 620). He reviews five dimensions of place (the perceptual, the sociological, the ideological, the political, and the ecological) and illustrates the many ways that places are pedagogical in that they "teach us who, what, and where we are, as well as how we might live our lives" (p. 636). He then shows how traditional "on the ground" education programs, such as natural history, cultural journalism, and action research (taken together with the five dimensions of place), extend learning and accountability toward place. Finally, Gruenewald argues

that a place-conscious pedagogy holds the potential to challenge assumptions about the purpose of education reform and the meaning of accountability and achievement.

In their edited book *Place-Based Education in the Global Age: Local Diversity*, Gruenewald and Gregory Smith (2008) continue their argument that centralized curriculum and standardization promote national and international agendas at the expense of regional and local ones:

> The process of formal education in schools and universities is often totally isolated from the immediate context of community life. Interaction with the wider community and all the learning opportunities these could afford is overlooked in the push for each student to meet prescribed content area standards through decontextualized classroom instruction. Furthermore, education is explicitly linked in policy and practice to the narrative of economic globalization. Today, the seldom-questioned, underlying assumption about the purpose of schooling is to prepare the next generation to compete and succeed in the global economy. (p. xiv)

Advocating for pedagogical practices that promote connections with place, Gruenewald and Smith hope that children and young people will acquire the knowledge, responsibility, and skills required to care for the places they inhabit now and in the future.[2] They see place-based educational initiatives as part of a "new localism…a broader social movement reclaiming the significance of the local in the global age" (p.

[2] A number of studies show that an individual's experience with natural, environmental settings in childhood may influence his or her career choice and behavior toward the environment in later life (Asah, Benston & Westphal, 2011; Chawla, 2009; Chawla & Cushing, 2007; Wells & Lakies, 2006).

xiii). Place-based approaches, they suggest, are part of a larger reaction against economic globalization and corporate capitalism that disrupt, rather than cultivate, relationships to local places. Reclaiming the local in the global through such initiatives as place-based education, Gruenewald and Smith believe, provides children and young people with the opportunity to connect more deeply to the places where they live.

Ray Barnhardt (2008), an advocate for Alaska Natives and other Indigenous peoples, as well as a long-time proponent of place-based practices, demonstrates how the local is being reclaimed in educational practice. He illustrates an educational place-based approach that brings together Indigenous groups across Alaska in an effort to integrate Indigenous knowledge systems and ways-of-knowing into Alaska's public education system. He describes the challenges many Indigenous people currently face: living locally in accordance to their Native ways-of-knowing and being, as well as living within a world of Western ways-of-knowing and being defined and imposed by others.

> The tensions between these two worlds have been at the root of many of the problems that Indigenous peoples have endured throughout the world for several centuries as the explorers, armies, traders, missionaries, and teachers have imposed their worldview and ways of living onto the peoples they have encountered in their quest for colonial domination. (pp. 113-114)

To find a balance between these two worlds, Indigenous peoples have started the process of reasserting their place-based worldviews through such fields as education.[3]

[3] Other scholars have also taken up education initiatives that reinstate the importance of place in an Indigenous context, most notably in language revitalization efforts. See McCarty, Nicholas, and Wyman

Barnhardt illustrates a place-based approach, over a decade in the making, which details a process for ensuring that non-Western knowledge systems and cultural practices are given a place in public education in Alaska. This approach, known as the Alaska Native Knowledge Network (ANKN), demonstrates a systematic process that affirms the importance of local knowledge systems rooted in the long inhabitation of a particular place (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). It emphasizes experiential learning and values a learner's traditional and cultural views specific to a local place.[4] ANKN upholds, for instance, the role of Native Alaskan local elders as guides and teachers, the significance of cultural camps as sites for teaching and learning about traditional senses of place, and the importance of technology ("cultural atlases," a CD-ROM/Web site) as an additional means of helping students connect and contribute to their place. The significance of such an approach as ANKN, Barnhardt contends, is that while it attends to knowledge associated with a particular place, it also provides a foundation for the teaching of broader knowledge. Importantly, ANKN does not deny the value of Western ways of making sense of the world. Rather, it seeks to merge knowledges from multiple worldviews in an effort to make learning meaningful for all students.

Amy Powers, co-founder of and evaluation co-director for Program Evaluation and Educational Research Associates, has also worked to create a public research

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(2012), "Re-emplacing Place in the 'Global Here and Now'—Critical Ethnographic Case Studies of Native American Language Planning and Policy."

[4] Furthermore, Battiste (2000) and Castango and Brayboy (2008) demonstrate that a natural outcome of a curriculum designed and practiced in ways that reflect a familiar, localized worldview in an Indigenous context is increased student motivation to learn.

network addressing the integration of place-based education into general curriculum models. This research network, Place-Based Education Evaluation Consortium (PEEC), evaluates current place-based education research in an attempt to discover links to theories behind the instructional approach. In 2004, Powers summarized a study that was done on four place-based education programs in practice. The four models are: *The CO-SEED Project* through Antioch New England Graduate School, *The Sustainable Schools Project* and *A Forest for Every Classroom* through Shelburne Farms, and *The Community Mapping Program* through Vermont Institute of Natural Science. Her findings indicate that when communities and schools enter into a partnership, students and teachers gain access to more resources and facilities, as well as receive an increase in financial support. Powers also found that in interacting with community members, students and teachers benefit from different viewpoints. Grounded in the local community, curriculum becomes more pertinent to the lives of students, and children, in turn, become more active participants in and contributing members of their communities.

In *Place-and Community-Based Education in Schools,* Smith and David Sobel (2010) renew the idea that place-based education practices have the potential to act as an antidote to what they believe to be "one of the most serious but generally unspoken dilemmas in American education: the alienation of children and youth from the real world right outside their homes and classrooms" (p. viii). Viewing place as a mostly ecological site, they advocate for a community-oriented framework to "achieve a greater balance between the human and non-human, ideally providing a way to foster the sets of understanding and patterns of behavior essential to create a society that is both socially just and ecologically sustainable" (p. 22). They also address several misconceptions of

place-based and community-based practices expressed by teachers and administrators: that such approaches sound appealing but test scores are more important, they are another add-on to curriculum, they are really just environmental education approaches, they are only for rural schools, and they take too much time and energy to implement.

In response, Smith and Sobel use Sobel's (2004) definition of place-based education to ground their work:

> Place-based education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teaching concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects across the curriculum. Emphasizing hands-on, real-world learning experiences, this approach to education increases academic achievement, helps students develop stronger ties to their community, enhances students' appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens. (p. 7)

Smith and Sobel emphasize the need to view place-based education as a starting point rather than an endpoint. This, they suggest, reduces the chance that localizing the curriculum will lead to such things as parochialism. As such, they do not endorse a curriculum that disregards the national or global. Rather, they believe that learning should be grounded in local places and communities before it extends out to other concepts.

Furthermore, referencing current case studies, Smith and Sobel illustrate how place and community-based practices enhance student learning and academic performance and increase test-scores on standardized tests. In addition, they suggest place and community-based practices should not be thought of as a curriculum unit but rather as a holistic approach to all curriculum areas. As such, place and community serve

as the starting point for all concepts taught in school: language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects across the curriculum. They also show how place and community-based curriculum approaches include more than environmental perspectives, but social and cultural as well, and likewise that these approaches are not limited to rural areas, but are being successfully utilized in a variety of places: urban, rural, inner-city, and so forth. Finally, they dispute the idea that implementing place and community-based standards takes more time, suggesting that in effective settings children and teachers become co-learners. Children take control of their own learning and pursue topics that are interesting and important to them and teachers become facilitators of this process. Teachers, in this context, are not responsible for preparing all of the content that students must master as in a traditional educational setting.

Through their review of case studies, Smith and Sobel discovered that when teachers, students, and community members engage together in processes that integrate the local into education activities, teaching and learning become meaningful for all involved:

> More students find reasons to become involved in school, and their achievement begins to demonstrate the attention and commitment they bring to their studies. Many teachers rediscover the possibilities and ideals that drew them into education as a vocation and become energized and passionate about their work with the young. And community members realize that schools can be more than they ever imagined and that students are capable of making extraordinary contributions to their common life. (p. xi)

A Critique of Place-Based Education

Nespor (2008) explores what she believes to be fundamental conceptual and theoretical issues in the area of place-based education, most particularly in regard to the work of Theobald (1997), Bowers (2006), and Gruenewald and Smith (2008). First, she puts forth the argument that *place* in place-based education is under-theorized. Nespor illustrates that throughout the literature on place-based education, specifically as presented by Theobald (1997), Bowers (2006), and Gruenewald and Smith (2008), place has been referred to as "the land," "the natural environment," "the non-human world," and "community." She takes most issue with the notion of community-as-place, viewing it as a moralizing concept. Though she recognizes place-based educators use the term "community" in an effort to dissolve the nature/culture dichotomy, she believes they employ the term uncritically: "The connotations of 'community' make it possible simply to orient PBE [place-based education] theoretical discourse around an idealized image of 'place' as a stable, bounded, self-sufficient communal realm" (p. 479). Nespor views this kind of discourse as a myth that perpetuates the idea that suffering and disorder in this current era are a result of globalizing practices, as well as of an industrial culture that increasingly divorces us from our rural, agrarian roots. She also argues that myths such as these divide the world into binaries: place/nonplace, urban/rural, local/global, and commons/markets. Framing issues as binaries, she argues,

> distracts us from the work of analyzing and developing theory in relation to, say, how changes in specific economic circuits or cultural processes are related to the ways groups work with or against different material and symbolic infrastructures to produce schools, homes, and neighborhoods as intertwined "places." (p. 479)

For Nespor, then, globalizing practices do not destroy places; rather, they reconstruct our relationships to place. In addition, Nespor suggests that in promoting myths of globalizing practices as "place-eating forces" (p. 479), place-based education discourses end up "defining cultural identity and differentiating groups according to what we judge to be their distance from the ideal [rural, agrarian roots]" (p. 482). The consequence of this, she believes, is that it deflects attention from the role of class, race, ethnicity, and gender in the field's theoretical formulations.

Additionally, Nespor explores the problems associated with place-based education as a transformational movement. She argues there is a lack of direction offered by Theobald (1997), Bowers (2006), and Gruenewald and Smith (2008) in regard to what place-based education movements actually intend to accomplish. Nespor suggests that if place-based education is a movement that is too bounded to the local (e.g., privileging community), it may subvert broader social and environmental justice efforts. Moreover, if place-based education puts too much emphasis on individual initiatives, she contends, it reflects popular narratives in right-wing ideologies. In conclusion, Nespor argues that "separatist dichotomies and moralizing narratives" of place-based education theory; its lack of attention to race, class, ethnicity, and gender in place-making processes; as well as an unarticulated vision "marginalizes the program in relation to key political and education debates of the day and, in the end, may undermine efforts to make place central to educational theory and practice" (p. 489).

Rationale for Study

From the review of the literature on place-based education we understand that relationships with places are important to the care and stewardship of natural and human-made environments and communities; that places can serve as pedagogical sites that simultaneously teach us, guide us, and ground us; that if children and young people learn from, attend to, and care for one place in particular, they will hopefully learn from, attend to, and care for all places in general; and, perhaps most importantly, the transformative role education can play in a larger paradigmatic shift toward the recognition of local places as significant to our lives. However, lacking in the literature is an adequate assessment of human experiences in place.

Place-based education is deeply indebted to the educators and researchers who have emphasized the importance of seeking sustainable relationships with place in a rapidly globalizing world, and also to scholars such as Nespor who push the academic boundaries by calling for a more explicit critique and theorization of place. However, as of yet, there have been few detailed yet comprehensive treatments of human *experiences* in place in relation to place-based education. Most accounts in the literature, as demonstrated in the literature review, address the importance of place-based education and suggest the many ways place-based practices assist in establishing a sense of place for teachers, students, and community members. Though the scholarship on place-based education describes, justifies, and advocates for place, it does not necessarily bring us any closer to understanding how people experience place. If, as many authors suggest, strengthening a child's sense of place is important in repairing and maintaining the quality of place, as well as the human and non-human life that exists within it, the

challenge is then to deepen our understanding of what a sense of place is all about. Furthermore, if place-based education is to continue to play a role in a larger transformative movement that seeks to reinstate the importance of the local in the global, then it behooves us to reflect on what it means to be-in-place, in the first place (Casey, 2009).

In an attempt to more thoroughly understand place experiences in order to add to existing place-based literature, I have conducted a phenomenologically oriented, qualitative study. Through in-depth, iterative interviews, experiential descriptions of place experiences were gathered from five individuals who were born and raised in the White Mountains of eastern Arizona. A phenomenological framework of place and place experiences focused my methodological processes, contextualized participant narratives, and facilitated and informed an understanding of the elements of sensing place that emerged from participants' place experiences.

Overview of Study

In Chapter 2, I first consider the understandings and theoretical strands of place, in comparison to space, as a concept in geography, philosophy, and education. I then orient myself in relation to phenomenological understandings of place, most specifically to the work of Edward Relph (1976). Relph's understanding of place and place experience, through the use of "insideness" and "outsideness," provides an in-depth, working definition of place as well as a framework for making sense of people's place experiences.

I discuss the overall research design of this study in Chapter 3. Here, I outline the rationale and criteria for selecting the White Mountains of Arizona as a place of study as well as the individuals involved in the research. I describe the methods used to gather experiential descriptions of place experiences as well as the methods used to analyze the data. This is followed by a brief discussion of my role as a researcher.

In Chapter 4 I present participant narrative profiles of place experiences. The profiles, as well as accompanying photographs, present each participant in his or her particular context. This includes a description of the physical setting of his or her place experiences, as well as the context from which these experiences arise.

I present the interpretive findings of this study in the penultimate chapter. The elements that composed participant place experiences, along with accompanying subthemes, emerged as: Part-of-Place (play-and-exploration, cultivation-of-place, stories-of-place, dangerous-endeavors, and care-of-place), Place-Sensations (remarkable-moments, sensory-triggers, and features-marked-in-time), and Ruptures-in-the-Place-World (pivotal-moments, barriers-borders-boundaries, drastic-changes, and injuries). Here, Relph's conceptualizations of place and place experiences, through the use of insideness and outsideness, facilitate a deeper understanding of the findings and attend to some of the critiques Nespor (2008) has highlighted.

In the final chapter, I explore both the implications and limitations of this study. I discuss the way a phenomenological understanding of place, as well as the interpretive findings from participant place experiences, may inform theoretical discussions of place in place-based education. Most specifically, I address practice and policy by taking the position that place-based education and culturally relevant pedagogies are mutually

supportive pedagogical methods. As such, I call for a synthesis that blends the two methods into a place-responsive pedagogy. I conclude with suggestions for further reflection and study.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Underpinnings

In this chapter I draw together disparate themes and synthesize assumptions within the theories of place and place-based education. The formative ideas and theories about place presented here focus my methodological processes and contextualize participant narratives as well as the findings of this study. I begin with a discussion of the emergence of place as a theoretical concept in geography, philosophy, and education. In the first section I discuss conceptualizations that have contributed to theoretical understandings of place and, in conjunction, space in geography and philosophy. Next, I show the emergence of place-based practices in rural, community, environmental, and Indigenous education. Following this, I address a more critical understanding of place: first in relation to geographies of struggle and resistance, and second in relation to emancipatory possibilities for education. I then take up the notion that place is a fundamental aspect of human existence, but is made meaningful through social processes. This theoretical understanding underpins the rest of this dissertation study. In the final section of this chapter, I discuss a phenomenological approach to understanding place and place experience. This place-centered perspective provides a framework with which to understand people's place experiences.

Place and Place Experience in Geography, Philosophy, and Education

The Emergence of Place in Humanist Geography

Since Plato, Western philosophers and scientists have focused intently on abstract topological conceptions of space and time. Viewing space and time as universal,

unlimited, eternal, and absolute, place was relegated to the realm of the particular, limited, historical, and the local (Escobar, 2001). Humans were removed from the scene (space was an empty entity; i.e., not embodied) and place merely existed as a functional organization of space and time: a bounded, areal containment.

Believing that an exclusive focus on space and time was a conceptual weakness to understanding the complexities of human experience in the everyday environment, seminal thinkers in geography in the 1970s such as Yi-Fu Tuan (1977, 1974), Anne Buttimer (1976), Anne Buttimer and David Seamon (1980), and Edward Relph (1976) began examining place as a multidimensional concept. They emphasized subjectivity and human experience against what they saw as the dominance of space and time, particularly in Enlightenment thought. Strong advocates of examining the rich human experience of place, they began to break down the dualistic implications of subjective/objective, or mind/matter, tendencies. They laid the groundwork for a humanistic orientation toward place, which considered place as a universal part of the human condition. It was not so much a place in the world or a specific location that interested the humanist geographers, but rather place as an idea, concept, and way of being-in-the-world. In other words, what they saw as the fundamental human condition of being emplaced. Furthermore, their work broadened horizons to new areas of intellectual inquiry, as well as transcended the artificial Cartesian barriers between thinking, mind, and being: objective/subjective, mind/body, and being/knowledge.

To elucidate lived experience and evaluate modes of knowing in light of ways of being in the everyday world, humanistic geographers turned to phenomenology to describe what makes a place *a place* different from space. Phenomenology does not

separate "subjective" and "objective" modes of knowing; rather, it questions the assumptions and philosophical foundations of conventional scientific models. Philosophers Franz Brentano (1838—1917) and Edmund Husserl (1859—1838) developed the philosophy of phenomenology in the nineteenth century. The central concern of phenomenology is what philosophers call “intentionality,” which refers to the “aboutness” of human consciousness. That is to say, we cannot be conscious without being *conscious of something*. Phenomenologists point to the intentionality of behavior and perception residing in the "lifeworld," or the culturally defined spatiotemporal setting or horizon of everyday life (Buttimer, 1976). They strive to show how the lifeworlds in which people live not only influence their experience *of* life, but also direct much of their actions *in* life. The aim of phenomenology is to examine and clarify human situations, events, and meanings as they are experienced in everyday lifeworlds and that typically go unnoticed beneath the level of conscious awareness (Seamon, 2000). According to Seamon and Sowers (2008), “One of phenomenology’s great strengths is seeking out what is obvious but unquestioned and thereby questioning it” (p. 43).

Linking phenomenology to scholarship on place means to question the taken-for-granted nature of place and emphasize its role as an inescapable experience of human life. Thus, to be *in* place is to become aware of one’s very consciousness of being in the world. According to cultural geographer Tim Cresswell (2004), “It was not so much places (in the world) that interested the humanists but ‘place’ as an idea, concept and way of being-in-the-world” (p. 20).

Yi-Fu Tuan and Edward Relph are two key figures who have thoroughly developed this notion of place. Edward Relph’s *Place and Placelessness* (1976) and Yi-

Fu Tuan's *Topophilia* (1974) and *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (1977) have had enormous impact on the conceptual development of place as experience. Both Relph and Tuan stress the idea that we only come to understand place through human experiences.[5]

In order to understand what is meant by place, Tuan (1997) defines place through a comparison of space – the former rooted and particular (e.g., resting, stopping, and becoming involved) and the latter mobile, generic, and open (e.g., movement and action). In this context space is the abstraction of spatial science, whereas place is amenable to discussions of value and belonging. He highlights the various ways in which these two concepts are intrinsically interrelated:

> The ideas "space" and "place" require each other for definition. From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space, and vice versa. Furthermore, if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place. (p. 6)

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[5] Relph's and Tuan's insistence on the lived experience of place is grounded in Martin Heidegger's understanding of being-in-the-world. Heidegger conceptualized "location" and "region" in contrast to space. This philosophical line of thought is guided by ideas on *Dasein* described in Heidegger's (1977) work *Being and Time.* For Heidegger this is the very essence of existence, or the way humans exist in the world. The central determination of *human being* is *being* in the world, and our existence is the need to make sense of the human condition of being *thrown into* the world. Heidegger examines the interface of human being and meaning and comes to the conclusion that being *is* meaning. As Heidegger states, "Spaces receive their essential being from particular localities and not from 'space' itself" (1977, p. 332).

In Tuan's (1977) view, place can exist on many different scales: "At one extreme a favorite armchair is a place, at the other extreme the whole earth" (p. 149). For Tuan, individuals come to understand the world through perception and experience of place. Concerned with the high mobility rates of modern society, Tuan believes fewer individuals pause long enough to establish roots. This results in a superficial experience of place, thus causing people to give less care to the places where they reside. Long-term daily routines and practices in a particular environment intimately connect people to a specific place, resulting in an "affective bond between people and place" (p. 4). This bond, albeit subconscious to the individual at times, enables a deep love of place. Tuan (1974) coins this affective bond "topophilia" and develops the idea of place as a "field of care." Consequently, individuals who frequently move from place to place will rarely experience this affective bond. Place for Tuan, therefore, becomes meaningful only when people invest it with long-term care.

Similar to Tuan, Relph in *Place and Placelessness* (1976) uses the comparison of place with space. Place and space, in his view, form a continuum, which has place at one end and space at the other, simultaneously linking experience to abstraction.

> Space is amorphous and intangible and not an entity that can be directly described and analysed. Yet, however we feel or explain space, there is nearly always some associated sense or concept of place. In general it seems that space provides the context for places but derives its meaning from particular places. (p. 8)

Relph contends that though place is anchored in physical configurations and activities, these features are not the property of place. Rather, place is the sum total of

intentions and experiences of the people who occupy them. As Seamon and Sowers (2008) explain:

> For Relph, the unique quality of place is its power to order and to focus human intentions, experiences, and actions spatially. Relph thus sees space and place as dialectically structured in human environmental experience, since our understanding of space is related to the places we inhabit, which in turn derive meaning from their spatial context. (p. 44)

Place-as-dwelling. The phenomenologist Martin Heidegger (1971) views dwelling as the authentic experience to human existence:

> To be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell. The old word *bauen*, which says that man *is* insofar as he *dwells*, this world *bauen* however *also* means at the same time to cherish and protect, to preserve and care for, specifically to till the soil, to cultivate the vine. (p. 147)

For the phenomenologist, place is the particularization of "being-in-the-world," a phrase coined by Heidegger. In this thought trajectory, the phenomenologist *turns to* "being-in-place" or being in the place-world itself (Casey, 2009). The act of dwelling then becomes the act of being, and the act of being is experienced in a particular place. Ann Buttimer (1976) explains the act of dwelling further in her article, "Grasping the Dynamism of Lifeworld." According to Buttimer, to dwell means to live "attuned to the rhythms of nature, to see one's life as anchored in human history and directed toward a future, to build a home which is the everyday symbol of a dialogue with one's eco-logical and social milieu" (p. 2).

Expanding on the concept of dwelling, scholars use the metaphor of home to guide further understandings of place. According to Cresswell (2004), humanistic place scholars view the concept of home as "an exemplary kind of place where people feel a sense of attachment and rootedness. Home, more than anywhere else, is seen as a center of meaning and a field of care" (p. 24). For the phenomenological philosopher Gaston Bachelard (1994), home is the essential phenomenological object and is where personal experience is fully embodied.

Bachelard sees the inside of the house as a sort of "first universe" that frames our understanding of all phenomena that happens outside the walls of the structure. In this context, the home is a site of intimacy and memory, a source of poetic images. It is not a mere object to examine and describe. Rather, a house provides the phenomenologist with an opening to endless dimensions that explain our existence. To conceptualize home in its total essence, Bachelard coins the term "topoanalysis," which he sees as an alternative to psychoanalysis. He defines topoanalysis as "the systematic psychological study of the sites of our intimate lives" (p. 8). If, as Casey (2009) suggests, we substitute "places" for "sites," we can look for the value of places within "our intimate lives" (p. 311). Hence, in a topoanalytic study of home, rooms reveal dreamed, imagined, and lived places. The actual material aspects found in these rooms are not of interest; it's what the material aspects convey that is essential for they are what allow an understanding of human experience.

Place-as-process. Human geographer Allen Pred focuses on practices of place, examining the processes that *constrain* daily practices that occur in place. In his paper "Place as Historically Contingent Process: Structuration and the Time-Geography of

Becoming Places" (1984), Pred utilizes a framework of place-centered geography and structuration theory.[6] He moves beyond what he believes to be measurable and visible attributes of place, or "frozen scenes for human activities" (p. 279), and argues, instead for a view of place as "constantly becoming." Drawing on the work of Anthony Giddens, Pred approaches place as a process influenced by overarching structures such as capitalism and patriarchy, national and local institutions, laws and rules, and social and cultural expectations.[7] At any given time, place provides a set of specific structures that are practiced by those inhabiting it—stopping at a stop sign, whispering in a library, not driving while intoxicated, etc. Yet, within these structures, Pred contends, people don't always follow the rules. Human agency is not so easily structured. Consequently, because of the relationship between human agency and structure, place can never, and will never, be a finished product.

David Seamon (1979, 1980) investigates the essential characteristics of place through everyday movement. In Seamon's work "Body-Subject, Time-Space Routines, and Place-Ballets" (1980), he examines the movement of the human body in space and time. He suggests that routine movements (movements that are habitual, mechanical, and involuntary) combine to form a "place-ballet" that generates a sense of place. Such movements consist of everyday routines like driving to work, reaching in the cupboard for a coffee mug, picking up the mail, taking a shower, and dropping the kids off at

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[6] Nigel Thrift has also been instrumental in introducing structuration theory to geography. Thrift (1983, 1996, 1997) draws on the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, arguing that we need to establish a primal relationship with the world that is more embodied and less abstract.

[7] Structuration theory is primarily associated with the work of British Sociologist Anthony Giddens (1979).

school. A person passing through a different place will appear *out-of-place* as he or she will not know the practices, or fit the routine, of that place. For Seamon, then, daily practices and everyday mundane movements create a sense of belonging to a specific place.

Edward Soja provides place-scholars with another way of conceptualizing place-as-process, though Soja focuses on space rather than place. Soja (1989, 1996, 1999) builds on Henri Lefebvre's concept of "spatial trialectics" (1974) to develop his notion of "trialectics of spatiality." Lefebvre and Soja both critique binary perceptions of spatiality such as space/place, subjective/objective, and real/imagined. To move beyond these binary interpretations, Soja (1996) develops the idea of a first, second, and third space. All three spaces are interconnected and cannot exist in isolation. Firstspace, or perceived space, relates "to the directly experienced world of empirically measurable and mappable phenomena" (p. 265). Secondspace, or conceived space, is "more subjective and 'imagined,' more concerned with images and representations of spatiality" (p. 262). Finally, Soja posits Thirdspace, which happens when

> everything comes together… subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history. (p. 57)

Thirdspace, or lived space—a space of events, actions, and practice—corresponds with many scholars' ideas of place as lived, practiced, and inhabited space (Casey, 2004). Thus, understanding trialectics of spatiality provides place-scholars with: a theoretical

grounding; another way to understand place as objective and empirically observable phenomena; a subjective understanding of concepts and imaginings; and active, lived practices.[8]

The Emergence of Place in Education

Around the time humanist geographers and phenomenologists were "getting back with place" (Casey, 1993), a growing concern over the increasing disconnect between people and their local surroundings set in motion pedagogical practices. These practices emphasized ecological environments, natural settings, and local communities. These early place-based practices included rural, community, environmental, and Indigenous education.

Indigenous education. Although the term "place-based education" is relatively new, it has been in practice for thousands of years. The educational practices of Indigenous peoples have long incorporated the knowledge and tradition of local places, centering education on connections to the environment and community (Cajete, 1994; Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Marker, 2006). Place, in this context, is embedded in Indigenous knowledge systems and acquires meaning through relationships.

As Marie Battiste (2002) explains, "Indigenous Knowledge is the expression of the vibrant relationships between the people, their ecosystems, and the other living beings and spirits that share their lands" (p. 42). Place for Indigenous people is rooted in Indigenous knowledge systems, is lived, begins with the here and now, and becomes meaningful through relationships with place (Marker, 2006).

[8] French theorist Michel de Certeau has also made tremendous contributions to notions of practice in relation to space and place. For de Certeau, *space* not *place* is created by practice (see de Certeau, 1984).

An example of an Indigenous notion of place comes from the work of Stoffle, Zedeño, and Halmo (2001) who worked with Numic and Yuman Indians. According to the authors, the Numic and Yuman Indians believe the best way to understand how the world is connected to a particular place is to understand the concept of a *living universe*. A living universe is alive in the same way that humans are alive. It has most of the same characteristics as humans. The elements of the universe include types of air, water, rocks, minerals, topographic features, plants, and animals. Each element has a different personality, intensity of power, and relationship with people and other elements. To understand why humans attach themselves to specific places, Numic and Yuman people believe "power is dispersed in a network of relationships among the universe—relationships that most resemble spiderwebs. At various points in the web power gathers, producing powerful places, which are then recognized and commemorated by humans" (p. 70). For Numic and Yuman Indians, humans derive power through recurring spiritual and physical interactions with places.

An additional example of place relations comes from the ethnographic work of Keith Basso (1996a: 1996b), who studied Western Apache peoples' place-names. His work expounds on the way language and storytelling in everyday conversation shapes and gives cultural significance to place. For the Western Apache, place encompasses the interior landscape of mind, spirit, and morality. In this regard, place names and stories about place guide relationships among people and between people and places. Basso (1996a) suggests that through their relationships with place, Apaches' "self-hood and place-hood are completely intertwined" (p. 86).

In our current era, however, education discourse that heavily emphasizes universal standardization, testing mandates, and national economic objectives has increasingly marginalized Indigenous understandings of place, including knowledge of local culture, language, history, tradition, and ecology. As Michael Marker (2006) states, modern schools "seem to arrive on the landscape out of nowhere. They are institutions plopped down in a place without regard to the local history or ecology of the land" (p. 492). Seeking to combat this, Indigenous peoples have begun the process of emphasizing the importance of place along with their unique world-views in schools (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). For example, Native Alaskan educators joined together to develop and implement the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools and Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998). One critical recommendation adopted in these guidelines is as follows:

> (6) [A] curriculum that meets this cultural standard recognizes the depth of knowledge that is associated with the long inhabitation of a particular place and utilizes the study of "place" as a basis for the comparative analysis of contemporary social, political and economic systems. (p. 14)

Inupiat educator Leona Okakok (2008) illustrates this recommendation with the following example:

> Educating a child means equipping him or her with the capability to succeed in the world he or she will live in. In our Inupiat communities, this means learning not only academics, but also to travel, camp, and harvest wildlife resources in the surrounding land and sea environments. Students must learn about responsibilities to the extended family and elders, as well as about our community and regional

governments, institutions, and corporations, and significant issues in the economic and social system. (p. 274)

Here, a framework for education is grounded in local place where long-sustained relationships will have the chance to flourish between constituents of the school and community. Place is seen as a natural classroom, simultaneously teaching, guiding, and grounding individuals.

Environmental education. One of the original templates for environmental education came from the principles and philosophies of the Romantic Movement.[9] The Romantic Movement encouraged people to turn away from industrial despotism, rapid urbanization, and large-scale environmental appropriation, and turn instead to wilderness experiences, communal living, and self-reflection in natural settings. Place was thought of as isolated, wild, and pristine.

Environmental education has also traditionally drawn from literary traditions of North American nature writing. In particular, writers such as Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, Annie Dillard, and Barry Lopez, among others. These authors are often cited as providing examples of ways to live in and respond to place as nature.

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[9] Nature studies and the Romantic Movement can be traced back as early as the 18th century to the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who wrote the book *Emile, or On Education* (1762). Rousseau stressed the importance of an education that emphasizes the environment as a site for learning. Other important contributions include Henry David Thoreau's work, specifically *Walden; or, Life in the Woods* (1854) and Aldo Leopold's work *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There* (1949).

With roots in Romanticism as well as nature studies, environmental education has become a discipline addressing environmental catastrophes and human deprivation of the land (Ramsey & Hungerford, 2002). The environmental education movement addresses a need for education about environmental systems and global degradation. It is also referred to in place-based literature as "ecological education" (Smith & Williams, 1999), "bioregional education" (Traina & Darley-Hill, 1995), "ecological literacy" (Orr, 1992), and "ecological identity" (Thomashow, 1996).

Rural and community education. One of the earliest programs incorporating local community and educational practices in rural schools was the Foxfire program in 1966 in Rabun County, Georgia. Attempting to build an appreciation for the assets of rural Appalachia, students became journalists documenting regional cultures through interviews with elderly community members (Gibbs & Howley, 2000). Connecting students to stories, particular crafts, culture, and a history of Georgia, the Fund hoped to build and maintain a vital community.

The success of the Foxfire program provided a platform for future place-based initiatives across the country such as the Annenberg Rural Program. This program emerged in 1993 when former ambassador Walter Annenberg donated $500 million toward reforming the public school system in the United States. Part of this money launched *The Annenberg Rural Challenge,* an initiative that supported networks of schools across the nation with an emphasis on place-based education and rural communities. The challenge emphasized the need to move beyond the realm of homogenized national textbooks to connect students with their communities. By working to discover local places, as well as establish collaborative partnerships with community

members, the *Rural Challenge* (now *The Rural School and Community Trust*) sought to promote the importance of local place and communities.[10]

An example of curriculum that utilizes local place comes from Sharon Bishop (2004), a high school English teacher who understood the need to strengthen ties between school and place. In 1997, her school partnered with *The Annenberg Rural Challenge* to improve public education in rural settings by promoting participation in solving real-life problems, such as dwindling populations and economic insecurity. She developed a language arts curriculum that encouraged students to collect stories from community members. Through poetry and essays based on collected stories told by community members, "[s]tudents come to see members of their family and community as real people whose lives have made significant contributions to this place" (Bishop, p. 4).

Education researcher Mary Driscoll spoke of the disjuncture between rural schools and communities in 2000 at a New York University seminar on *The Future of the Comprehensive High School*. Driscoll's main focus was to offer a rebuttal to James Conant's *The American High School Today* (1959). She argued Conant's work has heavily influenced education policy throughout the decades and, as a result, small towns and place-rooted local perspectives have often been neglected and left at the margins. According to Driscoll, Conant believes a successful child is one that leaves his or her

[10] Another important initiative is *The Stories in the Land Teaching Fellowships*, funded by the Orion Society. This program supports teachers of place-based education who root massive global concerns in local places. This initiative aims to *re*center global affairs in local places in an attempt to reach students and create personal connection with and compassion for natural environments.

community for greater societal destinations. Driscoll, drawing on work by place scholars such as Casey (1993) and Jackson (1994), demonstrates a need to counteract this narrow view of the local by examining contemporary education through a lens that highlights a "sense of place." Driscoll believes a reconnection can be forged between schools and their communities through the integration of social services (using local schools as the primary site of this delivery) and the utilization of assets-based community development. In her view, "Universal outcomes mean little if we do not arrive at them through means that respect and nurture the particular strengths of the places and communities that house schools" (para. 8).

Critical Social Theory

Place in geography. Critical theorists position themselves in relation to geographies of struggle and resistance and examine the way places shape culture, identity, and social relationships (Harvey, 1996; Keith & Pile, 1993; Massey, 1994, 1995; Soja, 1989, 1996).[11] For critical scholars, places are expressive of political and ideological processes filled with beliefs, thoughts, struggles, and actions that shape human beings.[12] Engaging with place in a critical mode enables scholars to examine the

[11] While phenomenological scholars rescued place from oblivion, critical scholars believe that conceptualizing place as rooted is essentialist, exclusionary, and unsustainable in today's modern era.

[12] Most of these authors build on the work of Michel Foucault's conceptualizations of panopticism and heterotopics (1970, 1979, 1986). Rather than directly using the term "place," Foucault uses "functional sites" as an analysis of repression, institutional power, and social control. French philosopher Henri Lefebvre (1976) has also influenced critical understandings of place. However, Lefebvre takes up the notion of "social space" rather than place, suggesting that "[s]pace is political and ideological. It is a product literally filled with ideologies" (p. 31).

many ways place—seen as sites of social, political, and economic power struggles in the modern world—structures human relations. This has simultaneously led to a reexamination of the concept of place under globalization.

David Harvey (1996), for instance, examines the myriad ways global capital has reconfigured space and time and, simultaneously, restructured the experiences of who we are and where we belong. Similar to Yi Fu Tuan, he views place as pause. However, Harvey takes a more critical stance than Tuan, seeing place as fixed capital, and space and time as flowing capital. He describes globalization as "time-space compression," which he defines as spatial flows of capital and information across the globe that alter relationships between space and time. Harvey believes that the current speeding-up of time and space dilutes meaning and identities from place. And yet, he believes that in this postmodern moment, place is paradoxically more important than ever before. In other words, as globalization threatens to diminish place altogether, place has become even more prominent and makes us more aware of the places we live and work. For instance, communities seek to distinguish themselves from other places by establishing heritage sites, tourist attractions, parks, colleges, universities, special museums, etc., and groups within communities (e.g., artists, organic farmers, advocacy groups, neighborhood organizers) often strive to create their own unique entity to define themselves against the pulls of globalization. Harvey calls certain forms of resistance to the forces of globalization "militant particularism." However, he warns that struggles to create unique places can also lead to an establishment of exclusive boundaries—an *us/them* orientation. An example he uses to describe this tendency toward exclusion is the current onslaught of gated communities. According to Harvey (1996), enclosing housing communities via

wall or fence as a means to secure neighborhoods against crimes such as robbery, prostitution, drug dealing, etc., creates a place that leads people to define themselves against "threatening others." In many cases, these "threatening others" constitute people of color and/or of low socioeconomic status. Bounded communities, in an attempt to create a sense of security and identity against the anxiety of global change, become places of exclusion and parochial struggle. Places for Harvey, therefore, don't just exist; rather, they are constantly being made, challenged, and negotiated in the tensions between the flows of time-space compression and the fixities of place. For Harvey (1996), the study of place is only appealing when reduced to the social and cultural: "Place, in whatever guise, is like space and time, a social construct. This is the baseline proposition from which I start. The only interesting question that can then be asked is: by what social process(es) is place constructed?" (p. 261).

Place creation, however, does not always involve physical or territorial boundaries. Places can be enclosed by sociocultural boundaries as well. Critical theorists engage with sociocultural subjects such as race, class, and gender. According to Tim Cresswell (2004), examining these subjects as they unfold in space and place provides "another tool to demystify and understand the forces that effect and manipulate our everyday lives" (p. 27). Cresswell examines the link between particular places and people in his work *In Place/Out of Place* (1996). Cresswell discovered that when people act "out of place" (when the link between people and place is broken) a transgression takes place. According to Cresswell, a transgression means a "crossing of a line." The line that is crossed can be a concrete geographical boundary or a sociocultural one. As Cresswell states, "The construction of places, in other words, forms the basis for the possibility of

transgression. The clearer the established meaning and practices of a particular place the easier it is to transgress the expectations that come with that place" (p. 103). When a transgression occurs, it means a person, or a group of people, do not match the expected behavior and relations between place and meaning.[13] In other words, to be "in-place" means to follow the expected norms of the place. To be "out-of-place" is to be abnormal, inappropriate, or unnatural.

Following this critical trajectory, Doreen Massey (1993, 2007) calls for a more progressive or global conceptualization of place. She moves beyond notions of place as an inclusive, reactionary site, instead viewing place as a multidimensional and unbounded concept. Additionally, she suggests that "time-space compression" and globalization have created a sense of anxiety leading people to long for a more romantic notion of place. Such a longing is reactionary, according to Massey, and leads to a withdrawal into longing for bounded ideas of place. She seeks instead to promote place as radical openness defined by its permeability: as a coming together of many different flows in one location. Place, for Massey (2000) then, is the "…intersections of particular bundles of activity, spaces of connections and interrelations, or influences and

[13] Acts of transgression may include political protesters; the homeless; gays, lesbians, transgenders, and bisexuals; non-white people; prostitutes; etc. Cresswell (1996) specifically examines graffiti artists in New York City, the peace campers of Greenham Common (UK), and new age travelers in the British countryside.

movements" (p. 58) and should be marked by openness and change.[14] To provide an example of this, Massey (1993) asks us to step back and view the earth as if we were in outer space. Equipped with the capabilities to see movement, we would witness a plethora of crisscrossing activity across an open space: satellites and airplanes; faxes, emails, and text messages; streams of finance and news; film and music distribution; ships, trains, buses, and cars; and, finally, bicycles and people on foot. When these flows crisscross and meet in space, Massey contends, place is established.

These flows are imbued with what Massey calls "power-geometry." Power-geometry describes the ways people are impacted by these flows; different groups and individuals are placed in distinct relation to movements. To provide an example of this, Massey discusses the city of London in her book *World City* (2007). She critically unpacks notions of London as a place where immigrants come voluntarily from all over the world to enjoy the freedoms it has to offer. Instead, she argues, London is a place deeply embedded in a troubled history—colonialism, slave trade, gender inequalities, and economic exploitation to name a few. Massey contends that immigrants, directly affected in their home country by these historical power relations, are left with little choice but to relocate to cities like London. In this regard, places according to Massey are not and cannot be autonomous, bounded, untouched entities. Rather, they are constructed and

[14] Place viewed as unbounded and multisited does not go without criticism. For example, Escobar (2001) and Castree (2004) express concerns over the elimination of borders, defending the rights of Indigenous communities to place-based forms of resistance that emphasize *distinctions from* rather than *relations with* the wider world.

situated within broader political, cultural, and social flows of global movement and power relations.

Place for critical scholars, then, is a socially constructed phenomena and is continually being made and remade. Place is not seen as a natural force; rather, people make place and destroy place, give it boundaries and take away its boundaries. This illustrates the possibility of human agency. As Cresswell (2004) explains, "To say something is socially constructed is to say that it is within human power to change it" (p. 30).

Critical pedagogy of place. This turn toward a more critical discussion of place is also reflected in the literature on place-based education. A critique of place-based pedagogy is that it does not unpack power dynamics or political histories that have largely determined the placement of people to available resources. As a theoretical framework, critical pedagogy of place synthesizes two education traditions, "critical pedagogy" and "place-based education," and has been proposed as a lens through which to investigate the interconnections between and among ecosystems, culture, and education (Gruenewald, 2003b). It is an attempt to bridge place-based pedagogy (with its roots in rural, community, and environmental education) and critical pedagogy (with its focus on the emancipatory possibilities of education). Critical pedagogy of place was first articulated in the academic literature by education scholars Gregory Smith (2002) and David Gruenewald (2003b). They bring together the approaches of Orr's (1992) ecological education, and Bowers' (2006) and Theobald's (1997; Theobald & Curtiss, 2000) community-oriented rural education (approaches previously discussed in Chapter

One) in recognizing the importance of both ecological and social aspects of a place (Smith, 2002; Gruenewald, 2003b; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008).

While Orr's, Bowers', and Theobald's conceptions of place are somewhat different—Orr focusing on the natural environment, Theobald and Bowers on local community—all three scholars see an increased connection to place as an essential component of promoting a sense of ecological and community well-being. As such, the political and ethical motivation seen in Orr, Theobald, and Bowers remains central in Gruenewald's and Smith's discussion of a critical place-based education.

In Gregory Smith's (2002) survey of critical place-based educational practices, he notes five distinct themes of place-based approaches: cultural studies, nature studies, real-world problem solving, internships and entrepreneurial opportunities, and induction into community decision-making processes. In cultural studies programs, students and teachers investigate local histories and produce projects such as oral histories, articles, dramatic plays, storytelling, and so on. In nature studies, students work within the local environment. When combined, these two approaches involve students first identifying community and environmental issues and then developing strategies to solve problems by taking action. According to Smith, internships and entrepreneurial opportunities also extend to place-based learning experiences, as well as opportunities for learners to be inducted into the community process of local decision-making. Smith believes that if students interact and make connections with these overlapping dimensions of place—cultural, economic, political and ecological—students will then seek the initiative to improve communities and the places in which they are located.

In the years since this initial survey, Smith has sought to bring more attention to nurturing place and community connection (Smith 2002; Gruenewald & Smith 2008; Smith & Sobel 2010; Smith 2011). In his latest study, Smith (2011) examines place-based, sustainable educational practices at Al Kennedy High School in Cottage Grove, Oregon. This high school engages "at-risk" youth (students who do not quite "fit in" at more conventional schools) in sustainable practices. The program is focused on issues of sustainability (e.g. developing long-term forestry plans, monitoring the health of local streams and rivers, removing invasive species, constructing school and community gardens, to name just a few). This solution-based approach seeks to ground students' educational experiences in local places that, in turn, should help them become agents in addressing current social, economic, and environmental challenges. Smith's work on place-based education simultaneously highlights student achievement as well as the difficulties school administrators have with initiating and supporting student involvement with real-world controversial topics and activism. Smith calls for a pedagogical shift toward policy changes that allow meaningful student involvement with topics that address critical issues of place.

Gruenewald (2003b) pushes the connections between place and community even further, advocating for an education that identifies and challenges unjust social conditions (what he calls a "critical pedagogy of place"). In Gruenewald's view, place-based education can and should seek to change the place in question, actively promoting social and ecological justice. Critical pedagogy of place, Gruenewald (2003b) believes, promotes reflection and action about the network of issues standardization and

globalization raise, stimulates multiple avenues of inquiry and dialogue, and inspires community action on the interrelated themes of caring, justice, peace, and sustainability.

For Gruenewald (2003b), enacting a critical pedagogy of place is a two-fold social and political process brought to fruition by decolonization and reinhabitation. Decolonization, a notion central to critical pedagogy, is the process of overturning social, political, and ecological violence instilled in peoples' thinking by the dominant culture (hooks, 1992). Reinhabitation is learning to live in closer harmony with environments and ecosystems that have been previously damaged by ecological mishandling (McGinnis, 1999). Gruenewald argues that the aims of a critical pedagogy of place should be to "(a) identify, recover, and create material spaces and places that teach us how to live well in our total environments (reinhabitation); and (b) identify and change ways of thinking that injure and exploit other people and places (decolonization)" (p. 9).

Critiques of critical views on place in place-based education. Several scholars contend that children are becoming increasingly fearful of environmental deterioration and environmental problems (Bixler, Carlisle, Hammitt, & Floyd, 1994; Pyle, 1993; Sobel, 1996; Strife, 2012). Place-based educator and researcher David Sobel (1996) warns against over-politicizing place-based education in his book *Beyond Ecophobia*. Too often, he believes, learners are exposed to "doom and gloom" messages, or a detriment view of the world, as educators overemphasize ecological catastrophes such as species extinction, the destruction of rainforests, and global warming. This, Sobel asserts, creates anxiety, fear, and hopelessness—ecophobia—in learners and makes them less likely to invest in ecologically appropriate behaviors. Sobel suggests that a more critical place-based approach should begin by fostering empathy for familiar places. He does not

advocate abandoning the realities of human-created ecological destruction; rather, he posits that students need to first develop an affective relationship with local place before being asked to solve its problems: "What's important is that children have an opportunity to bond with the natural world, to learn to love it, before being asked to heal its wounds" (Sobel, 1996, p. 10). One way to accomplish this, Sobel suggests, is by allowing children unrestricted freedom to play and explore in the outdoors. This also includes caring for animals and having the opportunity to find and create private worlds through the construction of forts, dens, and bush houses (Sobel, 1993). In Sobel's view then, before students are asked to critically engage in ecological and political issues, they should first be provided with experiences that allow them to connect, explore, discover, and build deep relationships with place.

Turning Toward a Theoretical Framework

Critical scholars, such as Massey (1993, 2007) and Harvey (1996), critique phenomenological views on place, as they believe such perspectives lack empirical data, romanticize place, make universal claims, and do not attend to the social circumstances that shape particular places and individuals' and groups' experiences of places, such as processes of gentrification or social unrest, or issues of race, ethnicity, class, or gender. Place for critical scholars is a through and through socially constructed phenomenon: people make place and destroy place, give it boundaries and take away its boundaries. As Cresswell (2004) explains, "To say a place is socially constructed is to say that it is not natural and given that human forces made a place, then human forces can equally

importantly undo it" (p. 30). This implies human agency and that if things are a certain way now, they can be different in the future.

Phenomenologists, on the other hand, seek a more fundamental role for place in social life (Cresswell, 2004). Resisting the urge to consider place solely as a social construct, phenomenological scholars such as Edward Casey (1996, 1997, 2009), J.E. Malpas (1999, 2006), Edward Relph (1976), and Robert Sack (1997) believe place should be thought of as an existential phenomenon—an intricate and essential grounding to being human. To move forward in a way that grounds my dissertation work in a place-centered approach, but that also attends to social constructivism, I draw from Cresswell's (2004) conceptualization of place as a "necessary social construction."

Cresswell proposes we reconsider the notion of social constructivism when thinking about place. To do this he presents two ways places are constructed. First, he describes how meaning is socially constructed in place:

> If we say that New York's Lower East Side is a social construct we are saying that the way we experience that place, the meanings we ascribe to it, come out of a social milieu dominated by Western cultural values and the forces of capitalism. They are also produced by the media, by politicians and by the people who live there. We might have read in the paper about riots in Tompkins Square Park and be (unreasonably) afraid to go there. We might see the graffiti, murals, cafes and shops and think it's an invigorating and diverse place to be. Whatever meaning it appears to have there is little doubt that it comes from 'society.' (p. 30)

He then explains how the materiality of a place—such as buildings, parks, gardens, roads, restaurants, toothpaste, and nuclear bombs—are also built, produced, and made

meaningful by society. Following this, Cresswell lists things that are clearly not social constructions, such as gravity, the planet Earth, life and death, and glacial moraines. These last examples, Cresswell clarifies, "have socially constructed meanings without which it is impossible to talk about them but the things themselves are there whether we construct them or not" (pp. 32-33). It is with such a view that Cresswell recommends thinking about place as a "necessary social construction," something that has to be constructed in order for us to understand and make sense of the world:

> Place, some would argue, is neither like toothpaste (which once did not exist and in the future will be redundant), nor gravity (which exists completely free of human will or consciousness). It is a construction of humanity but a necessary one—one that human life is impossible to conceive of without. In other words there was no 'place' before there was humanity but once we came into existence then place did too. A future without place is simply inconceivable. (p. 33)

In other words, just as people are emplaced, so are places already, always peopled. In some sense then, phenomenological understandings of place as well as a social constructive view of place may be mutually constitutive. In the following pages I consider this through the work of Edward Casey (1996, 1997, 2009), J.E. Malpas (1999, 2006), Robert Sack (1997), and most specifically Edward Relph (1976). I also draw from Keith Basso's (1996a; 1996b) anthropological accounts on place to illustrate certain points.

Rethinking a Social Constructivist View of Place

Resisting the urge to consider place solely as a social construct, phenomenological scholars such as Edward Casey (1996, 1997, 2009), J.E. Malpas

(1999, 2006), and Robert Sack (1997) point to an alternative understanding of place: "that humans cannot construct anything without being first in place—that *place is primary to the construction of meaning and society*. Place is primary because it is the experiential fact of our existence" (Cresswell, 2004, p. 32, emphasis original). These scholars do not deny that specific places are products of society, but argue that place should not be reduced to the social, political, cultural, or natural (Cresswell, 2004).

For Sack, place is an experience that brings these elements (the social, cultural, natural, and political) together and, in part, produces them. In his work *Homo Geographicus* (1997), Sack suggests the following:

> Indeed, privileging the social in modern geography, and especially in the reductionist sense that 'everything is socially constructed,' does as much disservice to geographical analysis as a whole as has privileging the natural in the days of environmental determinism, or concentrating only on the mental or intellectual in some areas of humanistic geography. While one or other may be more important for a particular situation at a particular time, none is determinate of the geographical. (p. 2)

Sack is not the only scholar to take issue with an exclusively social constructivist view. J.E. Malpas (1999) agrees that "[i]ndeed the social does not exist prior to place nor is it given expression except in and through place… It is within the structure of place that the very possibility of the social arises" (pp. 35-36). Malpas, in his investigations of place, draws on the work of Heidegger's philosophical notion of "being-in-the-world." Malpas (1999) believes it is the fundamental structure of place that creates human experience:

> Place is instead that within and with respect to which subjectivity is itself established – place is not founded *on* subjectivity, but rather that *on which* subjectivity is founded. Thus one does not first have a subject that apprehends certain features of the world in terms of the idea of place; instead, the structure of subjectivity is given in and through the structure of place. (p. 35)

An example of such interpretations on place, I believe, comes from the work of Basso (1996a,1996b). In his ethnographies *Wisdom Sits in Places: Notes on A Western Apache Landscape and Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscapes and Language Among the Western Apache,* Basso, as discussed previously in this chapter, suggests that places become meaningful from the physical, concrete, and geographic as well as through social interactions that occur within, on, around, and through them. Basso describes Apache peoples' relationship with the land through their use of place-names. Place-names for the Apache are derived from specific and detailed locations in the landscape and contain narrative and moral stories that guide behavior. As Basso (1996a) explains, "Western Apaches evoke and manipulate the significance of local places to comment on the moral shortcomings of wayward individuals" (p. 61), and furthermore, place-names' "mythical importance are viewed as resources with which determined men and women can modify aspects of themselves..."(p. 85). Physical features in the landscape hold wisdom and Apaches are encouraged to "drink from places" since wisdom, like water, is deemed essential for survival. In such a view, place is sensed through local topographies, personal associations, and socially constructed systems of reflection.

Similar to Malpas and Sack, Edward Casey (1996, 1997, 2009) also argues for a more fundamental understanding of place. Place for Casey is *to be.* Or, said another way,

to be is to-be-in-place: "We are not only in places but of them. Human beings—along with other entities on earth—are ineluctably place-bound. More even than earthlings, we are placelings" (p. 19). Hence, we come to the world—we come into it and keep returning to it—always finding ourselves in places however different the places themselves may be and however differently we construe and manipulate them.

Furthermore, Casey posits that place is general and only becomes particular when space and time infuse. Space and time are themselves *em*placed from the very first moment and at every subsequent moment as well. It is from this basis that he draws the conclusion that space and time are not autonomous presences but rather contained in places. Casey (2001) distinguishes place from space, "taking 'space' to be the encompassing volumetric void in which things (including human beings) are positioned and 'place' to be the immediate environment of my lived body—an arena of action that is at once physical and historical, social and cultural" (p. 683). Casey speaks of two relevant structures—the lived body's emplacement and the gathering power of place —to demonstrate how we are already, and always in, a particular place. Place integrates with body as much as body with place. Thus, the lived body—an emplaced body—becomes the natural subject of perception.

In his 1976 book, *Place and Placelessness* (written much earlier than the work of Sack, Malpas, and Casey), Relph examines the taken-for-granted attitudes and everyday assumptions about place and space. As discussed previously in this chapter, Relph views place and space on "a continuum that has direct experience at one extreme and abstract thought at the other…" (p. 9). Relph suggests that spatial experiences have varying degrees of intensities in everyday life: "Space provides the context for places but derives

its meaning from particular places" (p. 8). Relph presents various illustrations of space but cautions against viewing these examples as categories. Rather, he suggests they should be seen as a "heuristic device for clarifying space-place relationships" (p. 8). Examples of space for Relph include: unselfconscious and pragmatic experiences (acting and moving without reflection); self consciously experienced perceptual space (such as direct emotional encounters with the earth, sky, sea or created spaces); built spaces of architecture; the abstract space of geometry; and, most importantly for Relph because of its potential for phenomenological positioning, the existential or lived space (pp. 8-28). An existential understanding of space includes "our concrete experiences of the world as members of a cultural group…and unselfconscious patterns and structures of significance through the building of towns, villages, houses, and the making of landscapes" (p. 12). This demonstrates how space can also be seen as a social construct that is constantly being made and remade by human activity.

Through Relph's understanding, we see how space and place are "dialectically structured in human environmental experience, since our understanding of space is related to the places we inhabit, which in turn derive meaning from their spatial context" (Seamon & Sowers, 2008, p. 44). In such a perspective, place is unique because of its ability to focus human intentions, experiences, and actions spatially.

Relph also seeks to move away from simplistic notions of place as location or appearance as well as the idea that place only serves as a backdrop for human activity. To explain the deeper importance of place to human existence, Relph takes a multifaceted phenomenological approach and examines the various properties of place, such as location, landscape, and personal and community involvement.

First, Relph clarifies that although location is a common condition of place, it is not necessarily an essential condition. He quotes Susanne Langer to illustrate his point:

> A ship constantly changing its location is nonetheless a selfcontained place, and so is a gypsy camp, an Indian camp, or a circus camp, however often it shifts its geodetic bearings. Literally we say a camp is *in* a place, but culturally it *is* a place. A gypsy camp is a different place from an Indian camp though it may be geographically where the Indian camp used to be. (quoted in Relph, 1976, p. 29)

This view does suggest, however, that place has a visual form, or a landscape. For Relph, appearance is an important component in understanding place because "visual features provide tangible evidence of some concentration of human activities, or in a more subtle sense as reflecting human values and intentions" (p. 31). Furthermore, Relph proposes that a sense of time and rootedness are important for understanding the significance of place in human life. Here, he suggests that time spent in a specific place may lead to attachment and rootedness and, consequently, care for place: "It is this attachment that constitutes our roots in place; and the familiarity that this involves is not just a detailed knowledge, but a sense of care and concern for that place" (p. 37).

To more thoroughly understand place and its significance to people, Relph turns to the idea of home. Drawing from Heidegger's understanding of home-as-dwelling, Relphs sees home as

> the foundation of our identity as individuals and as members of a community, the dwelling-place as being. Home is not just the house you happen to live in, it is not something that can be anywhere, that can be exchanged, but an irreplaceable

> centre of significance… It is the point of departure from which we orient ourselves… (pp. 39-40)

Importantly, Relph also indicates that even though the place to which we are most attached may serve as a center of our lives, place may also be restrictive, oppressive, and at times even violent. In some cases then, place-as-home can be experienced as a place to stay because it anchors and orients and/or as a place to escape because it restrains, confines, and injures.

Conceptual Framework

For the purpose of this dissertation (to reveal a more thorough understanding of place and place experiences for place-based education), I ground my way-of-viewing-place as an essential quality to being human but with an understanding that place is made meaningful through social processes. Most specifically, I take up the work of Relph in his understandings of place and place experiences through insideness and outsideness. Though Relph's work derives from phenomenological methods, I believe it attends to the notion that place is a fundamental aspect of human existence as well as to the meanings people construct in place. In the following pages I describe Relph's notions of place and insideness and outsidness. These concepts provide a framework for my methodological process, contextualize participant narratives, and facilitate a deeper understanding of the findings of this study.

Place. Relph defines places as "significant centres of our immediate experiences of the world" (p. 141). Focusing on people's identity *of* place and *with* place, he describes place in terms of three components: (1) the place's physical setting such as soil, water, climate, and buildings; (2) the activities, situations, and events (people's and group's

everyday movements and behaviors) that occur in that setting; and (3) the significance of individual and group meanings created through experiences and intentions in regard to that place. Relph emphasizes that these three components of place are relational, irreducible to one another, and are interwoven into our experience of place. This view of place is consistent with what Basso (1996a, 1996b) reveals as Western Apaches' sense of place. Place experience for Apaches is grounded in physical, geographic features, but becomes meaningful through individual and group social interactions.

To understand particular place experiences in terms of meaning and intention, or the degree of involvement and concern that a person or group has for a particular place, Relph turns to the concepts of insideness and outsideness.

Insideness and outsideness. According to Seamon and Sowers (2008), Relph's "elucidation of insideness is perhaps his most original contribution to the understanding of place because he effectively demonstrates that the concept is the core lived structure of place as it has meaning in human life" (p. 45). For Relph, insideness is the existential crux of place experience. It means individuals or groups experience place as "here rather than there, safe rather than threatened, enclosed rather than exposed, at ease rather than stressed" (Seamon & Sowers, 2008, p. 45). On the other hand, a person who is separated or alienated from place experiences what Relph refers to as "outsideness."

Relph describes different levels of intensity with which individuals experience outsideness and insideness. These levels include: (1) Existential outsideness, (2) Objective outsideness, (3) Incidental outsideness, (4) Vicarious insideness, (5) Behavioural insideness, (6) Empathetic insideness, and (7) Existential insideness.

In its most extreme form, a sense of outsideness is to be homeless and alienated from place (*existential outsideness*) wherein a person (or group) does not feel he or she belongs at all. Place, in this instance, does not serve as a significant center of existence.

Objective outsideness, on the other hand, involves an individual (or group) who deliberately separates him or herself emotionally from place. To illustrate this concept, Relph uses the example of individuals who plan, restructure, and think about place according to principles of "logic, reason, and efficiency" (p. 52).

While objective outsideness is a deliberately adopted attitude, *incidental outsideness* is the exact opposite. Incidental outsideness describes an unselfconscious attitude toward place. Place here, writes Relph, is experienced as "little more than a backdrop or setting for activities" (p. 52). Relph suggests that this degree of outsideness has likely been a feature of most people's place experiences at one time or another: traveling through airports, attending conferences, driving across interstates, and so forth. In these instances, encounters with place are fleeting and what we are doing overshadows where we are. These experiences rarely occur in our home places, but rather occur in places we are visiting or traveling through.

Turning to degrees of insideness, *vicarious insideness* describes an experience with place in a secondhand way. Here, the depiction of a certain place (through paintings, poetry, images, texts, etc.) corresponds with the familiarity of a place with which we have been deeply involved. As Relph suggests, "We know what it is like to be *there* because we know what it is like to be *here*" (p. 53, emphasis original).

In *behavioral insideness*, place experience mostly consists of appearance (patterns such as color, texture, scale, style, character, and so forth) that distinguishes one place

from another. Unlike incidental outsideness, behavioral insideness involves deliberate attendance to place. It is an awareness of the unique qualities of place that let us know that we are *here* rather than *there*.

Empathetic insideness concerns a deeper involvement with place than behavioral insideness. Empathetic insideness describes emotional and empathetic relationships with place and, for Relph, "demands a willingness to be open to significances of a place, to feel it, to know it and respect its symbols… To be inside a place empathetically is to understand that place as rich in meaning" (p. 54).

The most extreme form of insideness is what Relph refers to as *existential insideness*. To experience place through existential insideness is to feel that this place is where you belong. As Relph explains:

> It is insideness that most people experience when they are at home and in their own town or region, when they know the place and its people and are known and accepted there. Existential insideness characterises belonging to a place and the deep and complete identity with a place that is the very foundation of the place concept. (p. 55)

Here, an individual (or group) is intimately associated with a particular place, feels a strong affective bond with this place, feels part of this place, and considers him or herself at home. Home in this context should be thought of as a place that fosters the strongest qualities of insideness.

However, as Relph has brought to our attention, there are times when place-as-home can also be a place of drudgery, oppression, and even violence. In such cases, place-as-home, which is supposed to engender the strongest kind of existential

insideness, has become paradoxically a place of overwhelming outsideness (Seamon and Sowers, 2008). In other words, even if a person is physically in a house, but is experiencing despair or hurtfulness, then he or she is not "home." In such a situation, Seamon and Sowers (2008) pose the following questions:

> The short-term phenomenological question is how these victims can be helped to regain existential insideness. The longer-term question is what qualities and forces in our society lead to a situation where the existential insideness of home and at-homeness devolved into hurtfulness and despair. (p. 49)

In thinking about place experiences, Relph suggests conceptualizing insideness and outsideness as a continuum. Individuals experience place differently depending on their degree of intensity with place. As such, insideness and outsideness should not be viewed as simplistic dualisms, but rather as relational, integrated, complex experiences. As Seamon and Sowers (2008) argue:

> The crucial phenomenological point is that outsideness and insideness constitute a fundamental dialectic in human life and that, through varying combinations and intensities of outsidenss and insideness, different places take on different identities for different individuals and groups, and human experiences take on different qualities of feeling, meaning, ambience, and action. (p. 45)

Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation is to bring forth deeper understandings of place experiences and open new ways of thinking about place in place-based education. As demonstrated in the literature, both in geography and education, a more theoretical

understanding of place can be understood through a social-constructivist, neo-Marxist, or even post-structuralist framework. Though these frameworks offer important insight into place, they do not necessarily reveal what places mean or how places are *experienced* as an intricate and fundamental grounding to being human. Thus, to do this, I turn to a phenomenological framework, most specifically Relph's notions of place, insideness, and outsideness.

Relph's understanding of place and place experiences provides a working definition and a framework for making sense of place for place-based education. His use of place suggests that place is more than a location, physical attribute, or backdrop for human activities. Rather, place is a combination of locale, activity, and meaning that is integral to human experience. Furthermore, his use of insideness and outsideness emphasizes not only place but also the experience and identity people have *with* place. To be inside a place means that an individual (or group) understands that a particular place is rich with meaning and significance. It means that an individual (or group) completely identifies with place, that he or she feels at home and rooted, and that he or she belongs in and with a particular place.

However, I also recognize there is a tendency in phenomenological understandings of place to essentialize, romanticize, and universalize both place and place relations. Thus, utilizing Relph's theoretical lens in this study not only allows for a phenomenological orientation, but it also allows for a more critical understanding of place experiences in its attentiveness to outsideness. Outsideness allows us to understand the qualities and forces in our society—particularly in relation to issues of race/ethnicity, gender, and social class—that construct and lead to feelings of separation or alienation

from place. As such, a sense of outsideness enables room in the framework for more critical discussions on power dynamics and political histories that might influence peoples' relationships with place without negating a phenomenological grounding. In the next chapter I discuss the methodological approach of this study.

Chapter Three: Designing the Method

> For any sense of place, the pivotal question is not where it comes from, or even how it gets formed, but what, so to speak, it is made with. Like a good pot of stew or a complex musical chord, the character of the thing emerges from the qualities of the ingredients. And while describing that character may prove troublesome indeed (always, it seems, there is something ineffable about it), the elements that compose it can be selectively sampled and separately assessed. (Basso, 1996, p. 84)

To begin the process of understanding more fully how people experience their particular place, as well as assess what it is about these experiences that are important for education, I asked the following questions:

1) What are the elements that compose a person's sense of place?

2) In what ways might these findings inform discussions of place and place experiences for place-based education?

Experiential descriptions were gathered from a total of five individuals who were born and raised in the White Mountains of Arizona. Individual's sense of place was examined from a holistic, phenomenological perspective through three, in-depth, iterative interviews. Furthermore, to orient myself to my participants' lifeworld, I visited places in the White Mountains that were significant to the individuals in the study. Photographs, observations, and descriptions of these places were recorded as field notes.

The questions I posed were most appropriately addressed through qualitative methods and modes of analysis. Qualitative methods offered scope and purpose to my exploration of direct experiences in natural settings (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Merriam,

1998; Rossman & Rallis, 2003), while interviewing methodologies in particular provided a framework from which to explore the thoughts, feelings, values, assumptions, and beliefs of my participants (Kvale, 1996; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Seidman, 2013; Tierney & Dilley, 2002; van Manen, 1999; Wills, 2001).

This chapter begins with a discussion of the overall research design. I then describe the rationale and the method for selecting the White Mountains as a place of study as well as the individuals involved in the research. A discussion detailing the interview process itself follows. Next, I discuss the specific methods I utilized as well as the way I analyzed the data. In the last section, I discuss my role as a researcher and how it influenced the study.

Research Design

My overarching qualitative approach was phenomenological in that it involved gathering experiential narrative material to develop a more comprehensive understanding of individuals' place experiences within the White Mountains of Arizona. As such, it contained the following qualitative and phenomenological research features:

- The research sought to understand the lived-experience of place.
- The study involved a small number of individuals for a more focused, in-depth understanding of experiences.
- Data collection followed an open-ended, iterative interviewing process.
- Analysis of the data involved interpretation of meanings through description and explanation (Kvale, 1996; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Seidman, 2013; Tierney & Dilley, 2002; van Manen, 1999; Wills, 2001).

I chose a phenomenological orientation because I believed it would best assist me in developing a richer and deeper understanding of place experiences. To accomplish this I utilized Irving Seidman's (2013) three-part, in-depth, iterative interviewing process to uncover the "lifeworld"—the world as we immediately experience it (van Manen, 1990)—of my participants' place experiences in the White Mountains. Drawing from place-based and ecological education perspectives I also used Mitchell Thomahow's (1996) sense-of-place mapping strategies, as well as David Sobel's (2003) map-and-interview techniques, as guides to elicit participant reflection throughout the interviewing process.

Seidman's phenomenological approach uses open-ended, semi-structured interviews to reconstruct a person's experience within the topic of study and consists of a series of three separate interviews with each interviewee. The three interviews include: (1) *focused life history*, (2) *the details of experience*, (3) and *reflection on meaning*. According to Seidman, the purpose of the first interview is to contextualize the participant's experiences by focusing on the participant's life history. As such, I focused on my participant's life history in the White Mountains. This included inquiry into his or her family's lineage in the area, early childhood memories, as well as narratives of school experiences. In the second interview, the interviewer's task is to elicit specific details of the interviewee's experiences. Thus, in the interviews I conducted, I sought to prompt discussion on specific place-experiences in the White Mountains deemed to be significant by the participant. The purpose of the final interview is to seek the *meaning* of experiences. For this reason, I elicited reflection on what it means, or has meant, for the participant to have long-term place-experiences in the White Mountains. The ways in

which I conducted interviews will be discussed in more detail in the section on data collection.

To extract detailed descriptions from participants, I employed sense-of-place mapping strategies (Sobel, 1993; Thomashow, 1996). Throughout the interviews, I attempted to guide participant description of place-experiences in such a way so that personal narratives came to represent a verbal map. To achieve this, I had participants engage in reflective processes that assisted them in visualizing their physical surroundings in the White Mountains. Participants described, in detail, their childhood homes, schools, neighborhoods, and communities. They verbally walked me into the corridors of their homes, down the rows of vegetables in their gardens, through the school halls to their classrooms, past the local church in their neighborhoods, and through the thickets of their favorite play places. Sense-of-place mapping became a crucial element of my research. Through the process of providing verbal maps, participants recalled specific features in their past landscapes that served as fasteners around which stories and narratives of place-experiences arose.

Selecting Place and Participants

Delimiting place. In order to establish a particular way of delimiting place for this study, I concentrated on bioregions as a focus for my site selection. By foregrounding a bioregion I attempted to move away from political boundaries (nations, states, counties, cities, etc.) in favor of those that emerge from natural and cultural histories such as local flora, fauna, weather, and cultural practices that grow out of a local context (Lynch, Glotfelty & Armbruster, 2012). In a study done in 2003, *LifePlace: Bioregional Thought and Practice*, Robert L. Thayer Jr. defines a bioregion as follows:

> A *bioregion* is literally and etymologically a "life-place"—a unique region definable by natural (rather than political) boundaries with a geographic, climatic, hydrological, and ecological character capable of supporting unique human communities. Bioregions can be variously defined by the geography of watersheds, similar plant and animal ecosystems, and related, identifiable landforms (e.g., particular mountain ranges, prairies, or coastal zones) and by the unique human cultures that grow from natural limits and potentials of the region. (p. 3)

The selected "study area," or bioregion, for this dissertation was the White Mountains of eastern Arizona (see Figure 2). This mountainous region rises to 11,420 feet, links three deserts, and is the source of a trio of important rivers. The east slope of the White Mountains drains into the Gila River, which flows through the northern edge of the Chihuahua Desert. To the south and west, the Mountains feed the Salt River, which makes its way through the Sonoran Desert. And the north-facing slope of the White Mountains drains onto the Painted Desert and its Little Colorado River. Despite the deserts that border three sides of this mountainous area, much of the region is forested with spruce-fir, aspen, mixed conifer, and ponderosa pine forest. Subalpine grasslands exist above 9,000 feet. At the base of the mountains, piñon-juniper woodlands extend into semi-arid grasslands.

Location of the White Mountains in Arizona

Prepared by Mia Costa on behalf of the ASU Libraries Map Collection on 12/1/14

Figure 2: White Mountains of Arizona (From Costa, M., 2014).

A large portion of the White Mountains is owned and managed by the White Mountain Apache Tribe. The mountains outside of the reservation include the eastern highlands, which are located within the Apache National Forest, as well as the northern and western regions, which are part of the Sitgreaves National Forest. The United States Forest Service manages both forests. The highest summit is Mount Baldy, with an elevation of 11,420 feet. Mount Baldy, or *Dził Łigai* (*White Mountain)*, is one of the most sacred mountains of the Western Apache.

Communities in the White Mountains include Whiteriver, Cedar Creek, Carrizo, McNary (all located on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation), Clay Springs, Pinedale, Linden, Snowflake, Show Low, Vernon, Concho, St. Johns, Springerville-Eager, Nutrioso, Alpine, Greer, and Pinetop-Lakeside (See Figure 3).

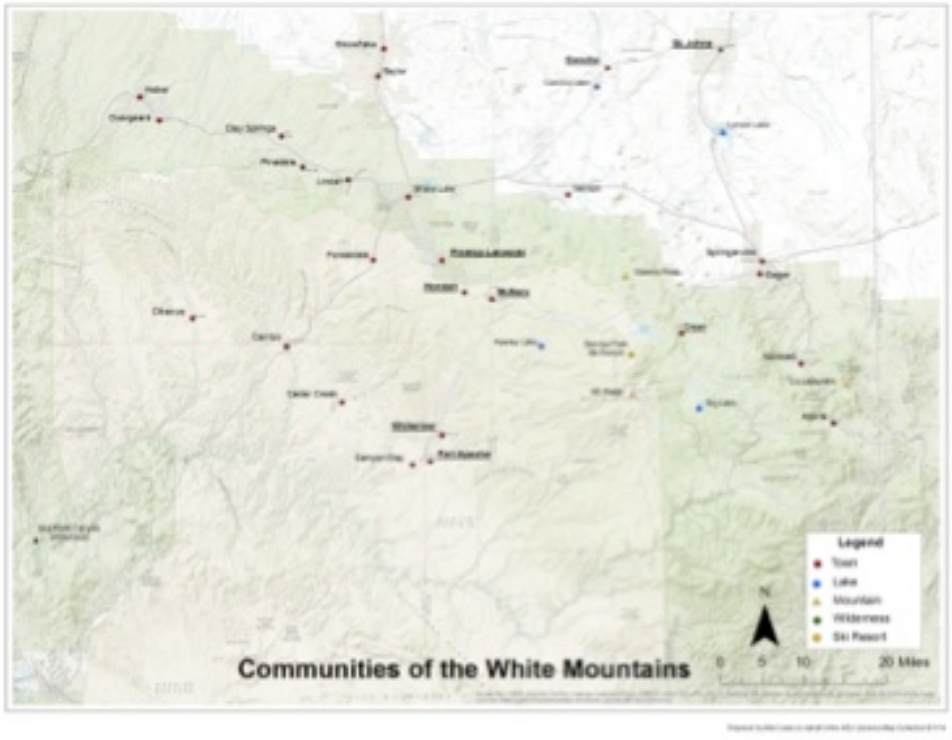

Figure 3: Communities of the White Mountains of Arizona (From Costa, M., 2014).

I chose the White Mountains as the site for my study since entry was possible and I felt it was a place where I could build strong relations with participants (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). I was born and raised in the White Mountains and my parents currently call the area their home. Thus, I have a thorough knowledge of the different communities, cultures, and physical environments that make up this bioregion. As I lived in the White Mountains while conducting interviews, entry into this site was not an obstacle. Furthermore, I had a shared history of this area with my participants as I, too, have lived in the White Mountains, left, and returned.

Additionally, I selected this study site because the White Mountains of Arizona present a unique research opportunity due to the variety of livelihoods and connections to communities and land that exist within this shared bioregion. Until very recently, many families in the White Mountain area followed a way of life dependent on subsistence living, such as farming or ranching, that provided children with an education that in many ways would now be deemed place-based. Families tended to live in this area for generations, and children subsequently learned from their families and elders how to make a living from the land.

However, in the past century communities throughout the White Mountains have been greatly affected by rapid change. For example, in the 1920s the logging town of McNary, Louisiana was literately disassembled, packed up, transported—people, livestock, and buildings—and rebuilt on the northern edge of the White Mountain Apache Indian Reservation. This once quiet location on the reservation quickly became

the economic hub of the White Mountains, employing thousands of people. However, just as rapidly as it came, it left. In the late 1970s the sawmill closed its doors and residents boarded up their houses and business or physically moved their homes to new foundations in other towns and communities. This once bustling company town quickly became a place marked by joblessness and abandonment.

Other communities in the area have also experienced rapid population expansion. In the late 1970s the building and operation of power plants in the White Mountains brought an influx of workers to the communities of Springerville, St. Johns, and Concho. Land was subdivided for housing, new schools and community facilities were built, country clubs and golf courses were established, and new stores and restaurants were opened. These small towns went virtually overnight from agriculturally-based communities to communities dependent on employment at, and hopeful longevity of, the power plants.

In addition to changes due to economic expansion, the White Mountains is also home to a diversity of people, religion, and culture. This includes Apaches, Caucasians, Hispanics, Catholics, and Mormons to name the most prominent in the area.

Borders, boundaries, and barriers also make the White Mountains an interesting area to conduct a study on place experiences. On November 9, 1891, by Executive Order, the Fort Apache Indian Reservation was established (also referred to as the White Mountain Apache Reservation). Prior to becoming a reservation, the Apache lived in family groups and bands. They established camps and farms along the major watercourses in the area and traveled widely throughout the region. They lived and learned from the land and passed this knowledge down through generations. Today,

Apaches are confined by political boundaries to 1.67 million acres and their once place-based practices have become increasingly marginalized. Furthermore, the northern boundary of the reservation runs through the center of the White Mountains. This political boundary separates towns, forests, grasslands, and economic resources and, at times, becomes a site of tension and contestation.

A further example of barriers concerns past segregation in the town of McNary. At one time, an African-American population worked and lived in McNary. Primarily lumber and mill workers who moved from Louisiana, they resided, attended schools, and conducted business in segregated quarters until the 1960s. Furthermore, there was a Mexican American quarter and a Native American quarter, each with its own school, café, and church.[15] Segregation, and eventually *de*segregation, is still remembered and discussed among long-time inhabitants of the White Mountains.

It is this mix of borders and boundaries, religion and culture, expansion and loss that makes the White Mountains a rich site for understanding place experiences among individuals. It is a bioregion of wild beauty and sought-after natural resources. It encompasses communities made vulnerable by drastic change and turbulent histories and consists of long-term inhabitants with deep ties to the land. In this context, questions concerning place take on particular significance as individual's experiences are varied and speak to a sense of place from multiple perspectives. Additionally, research in this bioregion provides the opportunity to illustrate the different ways a sense of place emerges as a place transforms over time.

[15] For further information see Chanin (1990) and LeSeur, G. (2000).

Delimiting participants. To better understand sense of place, I interviewed participants who were born and raised in the White Mountains. Long-term inhabitation in a place was an important element for this study. Drawing upon Relph's (1976) understanding of insideness and outsideness (discussed in detail in Chapter 2), I sought participants who identified with a place over a long period of time. The more an affective bond is established between an individual and a place, Relph argues, the more this individual will identify with this place. He defines this concept as insideness. In light of this argument, I believed the elements of experiencing place would most likely emerge by way of those who found themselves as insiders to, or were immersed in, the White Mountains from a young age.

However, according to Relph, individuals who experience place as insiders often do so without conscious reflection. Since I wanted individuals to consciously reflect on their experiences in the White Mountains, I decided to add further elements to my participant selection criteria. In addition to insideness, Relph also discusses the term outsideness. To be outside a place, according to Relph, is to feel a sense of estrangement from a place. For instance, a newcomer to a place might feel a sense of outsideness because he or she has yet to learn the practices, or fit the routines, of this new place. Another example might involve an individual who, having been away from his or her place of birth, returns and feels a sense of outsideness because it is no longer what it was when he or she knew it earlier. In both examples, this feeling of outsideness brings an awareness of place to the individual. Consequently, I selected individuals who were not only born in the White Mountains, but who also left the White Mountains for an extended

period of time and later returned. Living, leaving, and returning to the White Mountains enabled the participants to consciously reflect on their place experiences.

Furthermore, I chose to interview adults, rather than children, for this study. I felt adults would be able to analyze, synthesize, and reflect on, in a more comprehensive manner, their long-term place experiences in the White Mountains. As Sobel (1993) explains, "adults' memories can put childhood experience into a valuable context" (p. 87). Interviewing adults also allowed further understanding into the ways an individual's sense of place changes with different circumstances and over time.

Data Collection: Gathering Stories and Field Notes

Articulating the phenomenon of place experiences for this study began with a thorough reading of the literature. The work of Casey (1996, 1997, 2009), Malpas (1999, 2006), and Sack (1997), for example, sensitized me to the phenomenon and provided an initial framework. I then submitted myself to the lifeworld of my participants by collecting data through interviews and field-site visits.

Participants were selected through convenience sampling methods (Saldaña, 2011). Eight individuals, with whom I had previous associations, were initially contacted for this study through email or by phone.[16] The individuals were informed that I was a

[16] Originally, the plan for this study was to interview individuals who identified as Apache about their sense of place in the White Mountains. However, tribal and university Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocols limited participation by individuals on the White Mountain Apache Reservation. As such, this study included Apache and non-Apache people who lived off of the reservation.

Ph.D. student working on my dissertation and that I wanted to hear their stories and experiences living in, leaving from, and returning to the White Mountains. Five people responded to my inquiry and agreed to be part of the study (See Table 1 for participant details).

	Age	Identity	Profession	Childhood Place of Residence	Current Place of Residence	Length in the White Mountains
Daniela	52	Hispanic	Retired public school teacher	Concho, Arizona	Greer, Arizona	46 years
Wade	75	Apache & White	Retired Superintendent for the Bureau of Indian Affairs	Whiteriver & McNary, Arizona	Pinetop, Arizona	27 years
Nora	79	White	Retired public school principal	Whiteriver, Arizona	Cornville, Arizona	40 years
Cynthia	67	White	Director of Curriculum at a public school	Pinetop & McNary, Arizona	Pinetop, Arizona	63 years
Owen	48	White	Judge	St. Johns, Arizona	Chandler, Arizona	32 years

Table 1: Participant Details

Three separate interviews were scheduled with each of the five participants. Depending on the preference of the individual, I conducted interviews in his or her home or office. Each interview was scheduled for a 90-minute block of time. With the permission of the participant, I recorded each interview with a digital voice recorder and subsequently had it transcribed. Furthermore, senses, actions, and spoken phrases that struck me as significant were recorded in field notes.

Interviewing participants and the resulting narratives drew me further into understanding the elements of place experiences. In the first interview with each individual, I sought to establish the context of place-experience in the White Mountains, inquiring into each interviewee's history and life-story up to the present day. This included his or her family's origins in the area, descriptions of experiences in school, as well as early childhood memories of the White Mountains. The focus of the second interview consisted of understanding specific place-experiences in the area. For instance, I sought descriptions of a particular place(s), or experiences in a place, that as a child he or she felt were significant. In the third interview, I asked the interviewee to discuss the factors in his or her life that led him or her to leave and then return to the White Mountains. Furthermore, I asked the participant to reflect on his or her long-term emotional connection to the area—how, or if, it had changed throughout his or her life. Interwoven throughout the interview I also asked questions specifically pertaining to schooling experiences and the role this played in the participant's connection to the White Mountains (See Appendix A for specific interview questions).

In conjunction with interviewing, I also spent time in each participant's community as well as the childhood places he or she deemed to be significant. This involved identifying and photographing the house he or she grew up in, the schools and churches attended, the fields and playgrounds played in, and the gardens worked in. A detailed account of impressions and involvements in these areas were recorded as field notes. Familiarizing myself with the important places of my participants' past allowed me to orient myself to their lifeworlds. Furthermore, four of the five participants referenced books that had been written about his or her family's history in the White Mountains.

These books provided genealogical depth that further rooted the participant to the area. The located narratives of ancestors also contributed to a sociocultural and historical context, giving additional meaning to the participant's ways of being in the world.

Ethical Considerations

To protect the privacy of my participants, as well as hold in confidence what they shared, I made a promise of confidentiality. This consisted of using pseudonyms in place of given names and ensuring all interview recordings and transcripts were kept in a secure location.

Furthermore, I gained *informed consent* from participants (which was also required for Arizona State University's institutional review board). The ethical principles underlying the consent form are as follows:

- Participants are as fully informed as possible about the study's purpose and audience.
- They understand what their agreement to participate entails.
- They give consent willingly.
- They understand that they may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, pp. 74-75)

Following these guidelines, I made clear the purpose of the interview and explained how the process would unfold prior to each of the three 90-minute interview sessions. Next, I explained the measures that would be taken to ensure confidentiality, that he or she could abstain from answering any questions, and could end the interview at any time. Prior to the first interview, I also had participants sign a release form stating that they

agreed to participate, understood the purpose of the study, and allowed audio recordings and the use of their comments in research reports written by me.

Approaching and Interviewing Participants

Daniela. When brainstorming possible individuals to interview, Daniela, age 52 at the time of my interviews with her, came to mind. I knew she was born and raised in the area, had left to attend college, and returned to teach. I first met Daniela when I was a child. She taught with my parents at Whiteriver Elementary School and her son attended the same babysitter as my younger sister and me. I contacted Daniela via Facebook and inquired if she would be interested in me interviewing her for my dissertation research. When she agreed, we switched digital platforms and began using email. We set up a time and date for our first meeting and decided it was best if I interviewed her at her home in Greer, Arizona, a small community in the White Mountains.

Daniela identifies as Hispanic. She is a retired schoolteacher and lives with her husband in a secluded log cabin surrounded by towering pine trees and few neighbors. Situated on a gently sloping mountainside, I could view from her deck the open meadows of Greer Valley and the Little Colorado River below. The living, kitchen, and dining area of her home consist of one room, fitted with antique accessories and belongings. When I visited, the space was light and airy and the furnishings were situated in such a way as to take in the valley views below. Her refrigerator was adorned with lists, important dates, and photos of her husband, son, and family members. Interviews were conducted at her dining room table.

Wade. I first met Wade two years prior at a Christmas get-together hosted by a friend of my parents. I had known his twin brother and his nieces for years. His brother

taught fifth grade at the school I attended as a child and I often played and spent the night with his niece closest to my age. I also taught third grade with his sister-in-law at Whiteriver Elementary School. However, in all those years I had never met Wade, only later to discover that he was in Alaska the years I was in Whiteriver. When compiling a list of possible individuals who had lived, left, and returned to the White Mountains, Wade came to mind.

Wade and I spoke several times on the phone planning a date and time to meet for the first interview. It was decided I would conduct the interviews at his home in Pinetop, and that after the first interview we would decide on times for the following two interviews. The three interviews were carried out over a period of three weeks.

Wade, age 75 at the time of this study, is a retired superintendent for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He identifies as both Apache and White and lives in a one-story house on the border of Pinetop and the White Mountain Apache Reservation. The house sits on a large lot, enclosed by towering pine trees and thick scrub oak. When I arrived at his home, two dogs with grizzled beards and aging eyes lounged lazily in the circular driveway. Firewood, construction equipment from his latest business endeavor, and tools for projects around the house lay scattered in the side yard. Inside Wade's home, an elongated dining room table, stacked high with papers and books, provided the meeting point for all three interviews. Native American artwork adorned the walls and a floor-to-ceiling volcanic rock fireplace impressively enclosed the corner of the room. Joining us in our discussions was Murphy, a large black and white cat, who would wind his way around my legs or settle on my lap during the interviews.

Cynthia. I knew Cynthia had lived in the area for many years but I was not sure if she was born in the White Mountains and, if she was, if she had ever left. I contacted her through email and inquired into her history in the area and her possible participation in my study. She was more than willing to participate and verified that she fit the protocol of someone who had lived, left, and returned to the White Mountains.

I interviewed Cynthia, who identifies as White, at her place of work. We met three times over a two-week period. Cynthia, age 67 at the time of this study, is the curriculum director for the local school district. Her office is in a portable building attached to the district office. Her small office space provided an intimate setting for our discussions. Bookcases filled with sizeable binders, folders, and children's literature lined the walls. A large L-shaped desk dominated the center of the room and behind it, a window opened to the main road that runs through Pinetop. Houseplants on the windowsill, framed crayon drawings from children, and photos of friends and family members adorned the rest of the interior. All three interviews took place in her office.

Nora. When brainstorming possible participants for this study, Nora was not an immediate choice, as she does not currently live in the White Mountains. However, upon further reflection on individuals who had a long-term history in the area, I realized Nora did fit the criteria. Age 79 at the time of my interviews, she was born and raised in the White Mountains, left for twenty-one years, returned for twenty-two, and then left again. Furthermore, Nora, who identifies as White, was quite a prominent figure in the community and her family's history in the area had been well documented.

I contacted Nora by phone and she agreed to participate in my study. As she no longer lives in the White Mountains, I arranged to travel and conduct the interviews at

her home in Cornville, Arizona. The three interviews were carried out over a two-day period.

Nora's house is situated on the high banks of a riparian-like environment. Her back patio overlooks large cottonwood trees and a creek that runs parallel to the house. The interior of the house is airy, filled with natural light, and decorated with pale carpet, cabinetry, and furniture. Framed photographs of her parents, her children and grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews rest on her bookshelves. Nora's late-husband's artwork—sculptures, paintings, and woodcarvings—brought his presence into her home.

Owen. Owen, who identities as White and was age 48 at the time of this study, currently lives in Chandler, Arizona, but fit the criteria of someone who lived, left, and returned to the White Mountains. Owen and his family lived next door to me when I attended high school in Pinetop. His family's roots extend for many generations in the area and I felt he could offer a unique perspective on place experiences in the White Mountains.

I contacted Owen through email and he agreed to participate in my study. Owen felt it would be best if I interviewed him at his place of work, so we agreed to meet in his office in downtown Phoenix. The three interviews were carried out over a six-week period.

Owen's office window looks out at the State Capitol building. The room is spacious, flanked on both sides by a conference table and a large mahogany desk. An expansive bookshelf extends behind his desk, filled with volumes of law books and court

cases. His father's cattle brand and a family portrait add a personal touch to an otherwise professional environment.

Working Toward an Understanding of the Data

Retreating into the seclusion of my study, I immersed myself in repeated readings of, and reflections on, interview narratives and field notes. As I read through the narratives and field notes, the following questions were posed and explored: What is the participant doing? What is happening in this place? How does the participant talk about, characterize, and understand what is going on in this place? What is she or he feeling in this place? What is valued in this place? And, how are experiences in this place sensed? Reflections on these questions, combined with a return look at the literature, resulted in codes and interpretive themes, and subsequently, the emergence of text.

Coding the Data

I utilized the strategies of Johnny Saldaña (2013) to code my interview data, which occurred in two cycles. In the first round of coding I selected approaches from Elemental Methods—In Vivo and Process coding—as well as from Affective Methods—Emotion and Values coding. I also wrote detailed analytic memos to reflect on my coding processes and coding choices as well as to document possible patterns, categories, and concepts that I saw emerging. I chose to use In Vivo as a coding strategy when using participant-generated words rather than my own generated codes. I decided to use Process coding to connote action (using gerunds). I found this coding strategy to be useful because places are never static and things are constantly happening in places. This also assisted me in documenting change over an extended period of time. Furthermore, I

used Emotion Coding to explore the intrapersonal and interpersonal experiences of my participants. This coding strategy assisted me in discerning which emotion(s) occurred with which specific period or experience. Lastly, I chose to use Values Coding to explore the values, attitudes, and beliefs of my participants in an attempt to understand their worldview and personal ideologies.

To winnow down the number of codes in the first cycle, I *re*coded the original codes in a second round of coding. I reorganized, reconfigured, and merged codes that were conceptually similar. From this I developed categories, which produced a smaller and more select list of codes. To capture and unify the experience of sensing place into a meaningful whole (DeSantis & Ugarriza, 2000), themes were then gleaned from the categories. Three overarching themes resulted from this process. These themes, which will be discussed in Chapter 5, served as "fasteners, foci, or threads" (van Manen, 1990, p. 91) around which descriptions of place experiences were articulated.

Researcher Reflexivity

As I pick up my pen to write this dissertation, the shape my words take and the way my words are read form part of a wider cultural, social, and historical context. As I write, I'm placed historically, culturally, economically, racially, and socially. I take up a position within a particular way of thinking or theorizing or making knowledge—a way of thinking informed by certain understandings of culture, history, and identity. My context shapes me, supports me, defines me, embraces me, differentiates me, confines me, and ultimately grounds me. This is also the place from which I write, think, research and ultimately make sense of the world.

As I conducted my dissertation work, I investigated my own theories, suppositions, and assumptions that predisposed my interpretations of place experience. Narratives in academic literature—such as those found in geography, anthropology, and education—as well as accounts in everyday language, use place indiscriminately to such an extent that the phenomena of place experience is thought to be almost commonsensical. Place is pervasive and I could not, therefore, ignore what I had already read and knew about place. Thus, as I continued to read on place, as well as collect and interpret data on place, I systematically bracketed encroaching assumptions. To do this, I kept a log throughout this dissertation journey in order to reflect on, confront, and articulate these assumptions.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that these presuppositions, as well as my position as a White, female, middle-class researcher, may have also affected the interview process. As I interviewed participants they may have reacted to me and modified their actions accordingly. As Seidman (2006) explains, "[a]lthough an interviewer might attempt to isolate the interviewing relationship…the social forces of class, ethnicity, race, and gender, as well as other social identities, impose themselves" (p. 95). By conducting three iterative interviews and building relationships with participants throughout the process, I hoped to increasingly become a member of his or her social world (a strength of the three-part phenomenological interviewing process). As we built relationships with each other over an extended period of time, I believe the participant/researcher relationship became a "We" relationship: a relationship of equal participation where the resulting discourse resembled more of a conversation than a formal interview (Seidman, 2006, p. 96).

Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation is to better understand place experiences as well as assess what it is about these experiences that are important for education. As such, this research was designed as a qualitative study drawing upon phenomenological methods to examine five individuals' place experiences within the White Mountains of Arizona. Data was collected through three in-depth, iterative interviews with each participant. Photographs, observations, and descriptions of childhood places deemed to be significant by the participants were recorded as field notes. Furthermore, books and articles written about the White Mountains provided the sociocultural and historical context in which participants' place experiences occurred. Elemental and Affective methods served as the primary coding strategies for data analysis. In Chapter 4, I will present participant profiles.

Chapter Four: People from the Mountains

In this chapter, I present participant narrative profiles of place experiences in the White Mountains of Arizona. The following profiles, as well as accompanying photographs, serve as the data for this study (Seidman, 2013). The interview material from each participant has been winnowed down to the stories and excerpts that most vividly convey place experiences in the White Mountains. The profiles present each participant in his or her context: the physical setting of his or her place experiences, as well as the social and organizational context from which these experiences arise. Moreover, the profiles serve as a narrative rendition of each participant's journey living in, leaving from, and returning to the White Mountains. At the onset of each profile I provide a brief reminder of who the participant is, including his or her age at the time of the interview and the ethnicity with which he or she identifies.

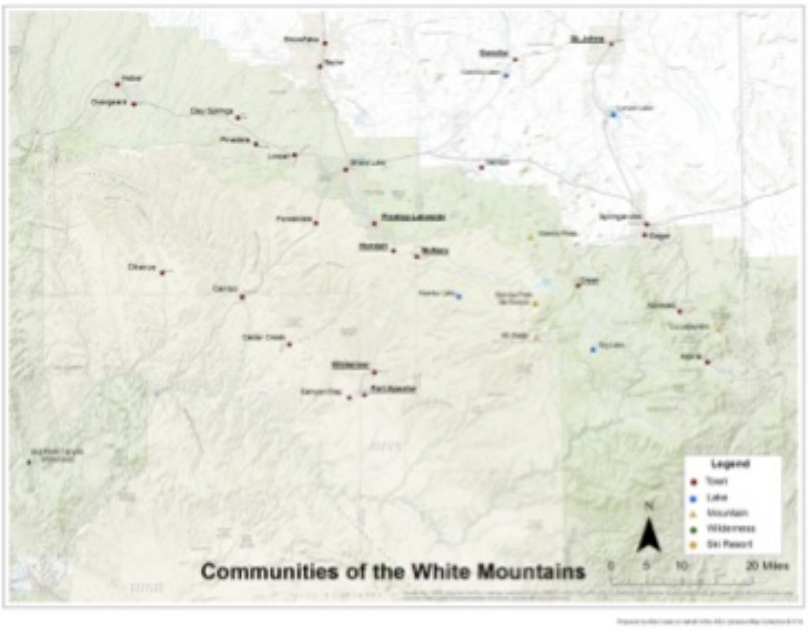

Figure 4: Communities of the White Mountains of Arizona (From Costa, M., 2014).

Participant Profiles

Daniela

As Daniela, who identifies as Hispanic, describes her sense of place in the White Mountains, she sits poised at her dining room table, her manicured hands folded neatly in her lap. Soft, curly wisps of dark brown hair frame her heart-shaped face. At age 52 when interviewed, Daniela is petite and slight of frame. She is thoughtful and introspective, but at the same time her high-spirited laugh conveys a sense of light-heartedness.

Place Setting: Concho

Daniela was born and raised as one of thirteen children in the small farming community of Concho. The town of Concho is located in Apache County at the northernmost edge of the White Mountains. Concho was originally settled in the 1800s by New Mexican sheepherders of Basque descent and, around the turn of the 20th century, by Mormon pioneering families. Interspersed with timeworn adobe structures, small farms and ranches, old homesteads, and modern houses, the area is divided into two sections: Concho (which is sometimes referred to as Old Town) and Concho Valley. Old Town Concho, where Daniela's family is from, consists of 38 people (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010).

Figure 5: Abandoned Adobe, Concho, AZ[17]

Figure 6: View of Concho

[17] This and all subsequent photographs presented in this chapter taken by the author in the winter and spring of 2014.

Growing Roots: Agricultural Opportunities

Daniela's mother and father were also born and raised in Concho. Living across from one another as children, they eventually married as young adults and chose to stay in the area. Daniela's maternal grandparents emigrated to Concho from New Mexico and cultivated the unique heirloom chili, Concho Chili. Her paternal grandmother moved to the area from the White Mountain town of McNary. She also moved to Concho because of farming opportunities. Daniela spent a great deal of time with her paternal grandmother and fondly remembers their special relationship. Eating popcorn and homemade cookies together, her grandmother shared stories of growing up in the once bustling town of McNary and the hardships of living through the town's segregation policies.

Daniela's father worked in the neighboring town of St. Johns, retiring as Deputy Sheriff, and her mother was a homemaker. During the summer months her father farmed. He raised farm animals—pigs, chickens, rabbits, goats, horses, sheep, donkeys, and cows—and grew vegetables and Concho chilies, rotating crops in the ten acres adjacent to their house. The animals provided labor and a meat source, the vegetables produced were canned and frozen for later use by the family throughout the winter months, and the chilies were sold for extra income. Daniela believes her parents had many children in part to help with the farming and, most particularly, with the farming of the family's famous chilies. Feeling like her needs were always met, Daniela remembers being surprised one Christmas when she and her siblings received donated gifts from a local charity. She

never realized her family was poor; she thought only families "in need" received such donations.

Figure 7: Spring Garden, Concho

A Placed Childhood: Concho

Daniela's childhood in Concho was far from deprived. She reiterated numerous times the peaceful, happy life she led. Concho was her world, her place of safety, and her shelter. It was everything she knew and it was enough.

> All of Concho was our yard. We lived right in the middle of downtown Concho and the school was within walking distance; the church was within walking distance. There was a little grocery store. Everything was close within walking distance and it was very comfortable, cozy. It was a feeling of comfort and security, which I guess it should be when you're a child. It should be that, and it always was.

Having a limited number of toys as well as tight restrictions on watching television, Daniela and her siblings relied on the outdoors and their imaginations when

playing. Cardboard boxes and “old pieces of junky wood” became houses and forts; a venerated oak tree on her manicured front lawn served as the meeting point for neighborhood games of kick-the-can and hide-and-go-seek; Concho Lake, a reservoir used for irrigating the farms of Concho and Concho Valley, provided children with a place to swim and play in the cool water; and the irrigation ditches that ran through the farming fields delivered endless opportunities for rock collecting and making mud cakes. When reflecting on the smells of her childhood Daniela recollected, “The color green, if you can imagine a green smell.” For Daniela, green conjures forth smells of running water and wet dirt, warm breezes and clean air, gardens and fresh fruit.

Figure 8: Tree House, Concho

Figure 9: Afternoon Reflections, Concho Lake

Places to Escape and a Place to Return

Daniela lived in a three-bedroom house and shared a bedroom—referred to as the Dorm Room—with her sisters. Each sister had a twin bed and at one time, six girls shared the room. To find solace from crowded spaces and chaotic surroundings, Daniela would hike the hills behind her house and find quiet places to read. Most of her leisure time was spent lost in Nancy Drew mystery novels. An old, broken-down, white station wagon in her backyard also provided Daniela with a place of refuge:

> Betsy [the name of the station wagon] was another place to take myself away in. It was broken down and had the old car smell. I had the back all cleaned out and would drive it to the drive-in movie theater because when the car was running that's where we'd all go. We'd pop a big ol' bag of popcorn and take a gallon of Kool Aid and off we'd go. I think even sometimes that car became a school bus,

too, because there was a barn or a shed in the backyard and that's where I'd set up and play school.

Though Daniela occasionally retreated into seclusion, a perfect childhood day in Concho still revolved around her family.

> I remember a perfect day for me would've been getting up very early before church, trying to get everybody ready because someone was always missing a slipper, or a shoe, or a sock, or something. Then we'd all go to church and come back home. We would walk into our big kitchen, which was one big, dining-room-kitchen, and mom would have a great, big breakfast ready, and we'd all eat together; everyone would sit together and my relatives would come over and spend the day with us. We just had a lot of fun times as a family in Concho.

Distressed in Place

Distinct childhood memories for Daniela consisted of childhood distresses: the tragic death of her mother's beloved poodle, Le Pepe, who was backed over and killed in the front driveway; the bloody mess of her brother's foot, the aftermath of a daredevil prank with a .22 rifle in which her brother chose to shoot himself; when her pregnant mother was knocked down by an aggressive male goat; and when her older sister was sent home from high school for speaking Spanish.

Another prominent memory concerned the birth of her triplet siblings. When Daniela was ten years old, she recalled receiving the phone call from the hospital that her mother had given birth to triplets and running across the field to tell her paternal grandmother: "When I told my grandmother she started crying, 'Oh, my goodness, what will we do? What are we going do?' Triplets were almost unheard of at that time."

Daniela's responsibilities increased dramatically after the birth of the triplets, as it was "a great time of need" for her parents. Her then two-year-old sister came under her care, which became "the biggest responsibility" of Daniela's childhood.

A Religious Place

The Catholic Church also played a pivotal role in Daniela's life as well as the life of the community. She recalled the many baptisms, weddings, funerals, confirmations, and first holy communions attended and favorably remembered the nuns who prepared the children every fall for song and dance performances to honor the church's Patron Saint. She most fondly remembered Sister Sally, "a really round and jolly nun who had a boisterous laugh and loved to play limbo with the kids."

The church not only served as a gathering place for celebrations, but also as a powerful force, guarding long-standing, traditional ways of life:

> We attended a very small, little adobe church. I remember sometimes we'd have priests that were very boisterous and loud that didn't last very long because they came in with fire and brimstone and we were like, "What's this all about?" because we were more used to the Franciscans, more peaceful. The people in the church had always been there and so knew how things needed to be done and no one else was going to come in and change anything. It was very traditional.

Figure 10: San Rafael Catholic Church, Concho

Schooling Experiences: Concho

Daniela attended a two-room schoolhouse—kindergarten through eighth grade—within walking distance of her house. Descriptions of her schooling experiences conjure images of a romantic, small-town, community-school life. According to Daniela, students felt safe and secure and freely moved between school life and home life. Children participated in song and dance recitals and school plays. Teachers were interested in students and learning was enjoyable.

> It just seemed like we were always having fun. I don't remember just sitting down and, "Okay, you're going to learn about this today," or "You're going learn about that." It's interesting. I guess we just did it as we were going along, you know? It was just natural and fun.

In particular, Daniela affectionately remembers the comforting feeling of walking home at noon to find her mom making homemade tortillas for lunch; staying after school to write, edit, and print the Concho Winnie, a school-community newspaper she and a

friend published; lighting candles and conducting séances in the school bathroom; and, most vividly, the field trips attended in fifth through eighth grade.

Adventures out-of-place. The teacher who had the most influence on Daniela's life was her fifth through eighth grade teacher, Mr. Barge.[18] As Daniela recalled, he believed in his students and held very high expectations: "He'd always say, 'I expect all of you to do great things and go off and go to college someday."' He was also their principal and the superintendent of the school. Furthermore, he organized and led extensive field trips, transporting supplies and/or students in his personal army truck, to Disney Land, to Havasupai Falls on the Havasupai Indian Reservation in northeastern Arizona, and to Puerto Peñasco, Mexico (also known as Rocky Point).

> The school didn't hire a custodian; instead, all of the kids from fifth through eighth grade, we would stay after school and we would clean. The money then went into a fund for our field trips. One year we went to Disneyland. And another year we went to Rocky Point. We loaded everything up into his great, big army truck. We camped out for about a week. Of course we'd never been to an ocean or been to the beach. I remember the first time I saw the ocean. It was incredible. I remember him [Mr. Barge] telling us, "Look. It's right there in front of you," and none of us could believe that was the ocean. It was like, "No, that's just the skyline." I just remember being so taken back.
>
> Another year we all got to hike down and camp at Havasupai Falls. We started preparing from day one, working out and hiking up and down the hills

[18] Pseudonym.

around Concho. That was our P.E. We'd have rocks in our backpacks and we'd hike up and down the hills just to prepare ourselves. We packed all our food in [to the campgrounds of Havasupai Falls], and our clothing, and we stayed for about a week and a half, close to two weeks. I remember learning about the culture of the Havasu Indians and everything that was going on with the water rights. We played games and had campfires and we had to help cook, we had to help set up tents. We had duties all the time, every day.

Adventures in place. Mr. Barge also led spontaneous local field trips in an effort to connect curriculum with real-world experience: "We'd be sitting in the classroom and talking about some stuff in science or social studies and he'd say, 'Oh, forget it. Get your coats. Let's just go get in the army truck and go out and I'll show you.'"

Daniela remembered the excitement of discovering new places in the mountains, canyons, and cliffs surrounding Concho, exploring the Petrified Forest and the Painted Desert, learning about different Native American groups and visiting the Zuni Reservation, and scouring dry arroyos for dinosaur teeth and bones. However, most profoundly, these trips represented freedom in unrestricted space: "There were times it felt like we traveled on dirt roads for miles in that army truck. On some afternoons, we would've been happy to travel forever. Oh, it was so amazing."

Figure 11: Lone Tree, Back Roads of Concho

Schooling Experiences: St. Johns

During her high school years, Daniela commuted to the neighboring town of St. Johns. At first, attending a school in a larger community was a bit unnerving to Daniela. For instance, she recalled the shock of riding a school bus for the first time, something she had never done as she was used to walking to school. She also remembered being overwhelmed at first by the diversity of the student body. A power plant had recently opened near the town of St. Johns and the population rapidly expanded as people moved to the area for work. With this population growth came new people and experiences:

> Growing up, St. Johns, and the surrounding area, was mostly made up of Mormons and the Catholics, or the Whites and the Mexicans. We all lived in a small little shell until the Power Plant opened. Boy did that power plant come in and open up our eyes, not only to other religions out there, but to other kinds of people, other cultures.

Though St. Johns High School was more populated and diverse than her elementary school, Daniela quickly found herself involved in school programs and sports, most specifically Future Homemakers of America and as a cheerleader for the wrestling team: "Attending St. Johns forced me to meet different people and appreciate different people for who they are. I got involved and made really good friends, mostly from cheerleading." Furthermore, because of her good grades, Daniela was able to work part-time her senior year as a teaching assistant for a well-known and well-loved kindergarten teacher. This experience helped influence her decision to become a teacher.

Leaving and Returning to the White Mountains

Upon graduating from high school, Daniela attended Phoenix College (PC) in Phoenix, Arizona: "Moving to the city was the goal, coming from a small area. We always told ourselves, 'We've got to get out of here and get to the big city.'" However, after one semester, Daniela decided city life was not for her and she moved back home to Concho: " PC wasn't very exciting. In Concho and St. Johns I always found learning to be so much fun. I didn't find learning to be fun at PC. It wasn't what I expected and school wasn't exciting, it just didn't cut it." Wanting to continue her higher education, she turned her attention toward Northern Arizona University (NAU) and moved to the smaller university town of Flagstaff, Arizona.

> Not only was NAU closer to home, but it was more the environment that I thought I wanted to be in. I did have relatives that had gone to school there and had enjoyed it. I think maybe I knew from their experiences it was a good place to go, especially for education. They would always tell me, "You know, if you want to be a teacher that's where you need to go." My older cousin was very influential

too. He later became a college instructor and a superintendent of a junior college in California. When I was at NAU he'd show up sometimes and say, "Okay, how are things going?" He'd take me out to lunch or help me out. He was very influential and I always admired him and what he did and where he was headed. I wanted to be like him.

Four and half years later, Daniela graduated with a degree in Elementary Education from NAU and chose to return to the White Mountains. Daniela never believed she would return to the area. As teenagers, she and her siblings found life in Concho to be stifling at times and longed to live far away from their small hometown:

> We would always tell my mom and dad, "Far, far away. I'm never coming back to Concho. I don't want to be this close to here anymore." My mom would say, "Okay. We'll wait. Just wait. We'll see." It's interesting, my siblings are all pretty much back in the area. I have a couple that are out of state but pretty much everyone is back. Everyone kind of left, went off, did their own thing and eventually came back in the area.

A family's embrace. Daniela returned to the White Mountains as a single mother to a two-year-old boy and wanted her family's support in raising her son. Daniela's family had always been very accepting of her son, particularly her paternal grandmother who "loved him to death." Daniela applied to several different school districts in and around the White Mountains and was eventually offered a teaching position at Whiteriver Elementary School on the White Mountain Apache Reservation. She taught for nineteen years on the reservation and an additional seven years in Pinetop. At the time of this interview she had been retired for two years.

A Place to Retire: Greer, Arizona

Daniela currently lives with her husband (whom she married in 1995) in the small town of Greer located 60 miles from Concho, becoming, when they moved, the 99th and 100th full-time residents. Situated in a valley at an elevation of approximately 8,300 feet, Greer is surrounded by the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest. Greer is the headwaters for the Little Colorado River and is located near the towns of Springerville and Eagar. Since retiring, Daniela has enjoyed hiking in the surrounding mountains of Greer, working in her yard, and relaxing, reading, and watching for wildlife on her front deck. Her son returns to the White Mountains often to visit Daniela and her husband in Greer, his grandparents in Concho, and his aunts, uncles, and cousins who also live in the area. Daniela also spends a great deal of time driving to Concho to assist her aging parents and attending the many events of her nieces and nephews in neighboring towns. One of her favorite activities is her daily walk to the Little Colorado River to feed her duck, Lucky. Lucky is the only surviving duck in Greer and Daniela has become very fond of this lone duck. Every day as Daniela walks toward the river, Lucky climbs the hill to meet her: "I feel like a nutty, loony lady with her crazy duck, but Lucky gives me a sense of purpose."

Daniela and her husband plan to live the rest of their lives in Greer. Greer is Daniela's place of "serenity and peace." It offers her a quiet place to reflect on her past career, the beauty of the natural world, and her love for her family. She recently experienced a powerful moment on a hike in the mountains surrounding Greer:

> I was on my walk two days ago, and of course, had my brother, who is very sick, on my mind and as I was walking I realized I had never seen the sky so blue. It was the bluest blue I had ever seen it, not a single cloud in the sky, not a smudge.

> I twirled around and around trying to see. I couldn't see anything except the blue, the edge of the trees, all the way around along the sky, and just the darkest blue sky imaginable. It was incredible.

Living in Greer has afforded Daniela the opportunity to experience such fleeting moments of wonderment: moments, she believes, that could only happen for her in the White Mountains.

Owen

Owen, who identifies as White, is tall and stately. He dresses in professional attire: dark slacks, white button up shirts, and ties. Beneath short auburn hair, his eyes express a sense of kindness and keen intelligence and brighten when he chuckles. He is soft-spoken and thoughtful as he describes his experiences living in the White Mountains. At the time of this study, he is 48 years old.

Place Setting: St. Johns

Owen, the second youngest of seven children, grew up in the community of St. Johns, "a small, sleepy town" thirty miles from the New Mexico border. St. Johns, the county seat of Apache County, is located in the northeast edge of the White Mountains. At an elevation of 5,686 feet, St. Johns is an arid landscape, a combination of high plateaus, open sky, space and distance, blowing wind, and sage, juniper, and cedar. Farmers of Mexican descent, as well as Mormon pioneers, originally settled the area in the late 1800s. As of the 2010 census, the population of St. Johns was 3,480 (U.S. Bureau of the Census). The town consists of farmland and ranchland interspersed with modern housing subdivisions, and an almost abandoned downtown of stone buildings and false

fronts. A public park comprised of a pool, a recreation center, and a library offers a place for community gatherings. In the distance, two white columns of steam rise above the Coronado Generating Station north of town and, to the west, rolling hills ascend into mountains.

Secure Roots: Missionaries and Cattle Ranching

Owen's roots in St. Johns extend four generations. Owen's paternal great, great grandparents were living in Utah when they received orders from Brigham Young, the Mormon prophet, to settle the St. Johns region (St. Johns was not a town at this time) along the Little Colorado River. Owen's great, great grandmother was not too fond of the area: "She disliked the hard winters, the constantly blowing wind, and isolation." Finding the conditions to be difficult, they returned to Utah. In the meantime they gave birth to Owen's great grandmother who later married and returned to the St. Johns area with her husband. They made the place their home and became founding members of the St. Johns community. They also established a summer homestead in the nearby mountains, which was densely forested with pine trees, and opened a sawmill for lumber to help in the construction of the town. His great grandparents had nine children, of which one was Owen's grandmother. Owen's grandmother grew up in St. Johns, married his grandfather, and eventually gave birth to Owen's father. Owen was very close to his grandmother, who became a widow when his grandfather died from cancer in 1961, visiting her often and assisting in her garden.

Every two years the descendants of Owen's great grandparents meet at the old homestead for a family reunion to commemorate their heritage. Several thousand people attend the reunion, camping for several days on the property. As Owen reflected, "It's

pretty amazing the posterity of my great grandparents." Owen believes the actual number of descendants is close to 4,000.

Intimately connected to St. Johns by way of lineage, Owen's father served in the Arizona legislature, both in the House and the Senate, for 36 years. According to Owen, his father "loved public service and loved serving his community. It was in his blood as his father, my grandfather, was the general postmaster in St. Johns." When not in session, his father ran an extensive farming and cattle-ranching operation. Owen's mother was from Scottsdale, Arizona, and moved to St. Johns when she married Owen's father. Committed to family life, she worked at home taking care of the house and children.

Figure 12: Front Yard, Owen's Childhood Home, St. Johns, AZ

Farming and Ranching: An Agriculturally Based Childhood

The family's farm and ranch both played an integral role in Owen's childhood: "Working on the ranch and the farm was just something that we did. We lived it. We breathed it. It was everything. It was just a part of us." The ranch was a conglomerate of grazing fields near St. Johns and grazing allotments in the mountains. The farm, several

hundred acres on the outskirts of town, was the head of the ranching operation. Here, alfalfa was grown, horses were put out to pasture, and equipment such as saddles, trucks, and trailers were stored.

During the winter months, the cattle—Hereford, Angus, and Beefmasters—were kept on grazing lands near the farm. During the summer months, the cattle were driven into the mountains. Owen's family had three grazing permits granted by the Forest Service. Two permits were by Green's Peak and the other permit was by Big Lake (see Figure 1). The cattle drive to the mountains would start right when school was out for the summer, toward the end of May. Over a period of a week and a half the cattle would be driven toward the Green's Peak grazing allotments and then farther on to Big Lake. Once the cattle were dispersed throughout the mountains, they would be continuously rotated to keep fields from becoming over-grazed. By mid to late October, before the winter snowfall, the cattle would be driven back down to St. Johns.

Figure 13: Cows Grazing, The Ranch, St. Johns

Working in place. Growing up in an agriculturally-based environment, Owen learned the importance of hard work and resilience at an early age. From the age of five he began acquiring the skills necessary to contribute to the care of the family's livestock, crops, and equipment. He learned to milk a cow (a responsibility that would continue each morning until he left St. Johns for college), helped in the cultivation of the family's garden, and assisted his father and older brothers on the ranch and farm. He remembers feeling "so excited" when asked for assistance as he felt like a contributing member of the family. In one particular instance, he recalled the disappointment when an injury prevented him from going to work with his father:

> When I was five years old I remember waking up at the crack of dawn. I couldn't sleep. I was so excited. I ran out of the house to go to work with my dad. I wanted to go so badly and the dog, the dog tripped me. The dog came running, tripped me, and I slammed my chin on the cement. I had to get stitches and I didn't get to go and work that day. I was devastated.

Figure 14: Barn for Milk Cow, Owen's Childhood Backyard, St. Johns

When he did get to assist his father and older brothers on the farm and ranch, he often found himself riding a horse named Smoky. This was Owen's first, and favorite, horse. Smoky was a medium sized gray horse, a mix between a Welsh pony and a Shetland. His older brother trained Smoky to assist in driving cattle:

> Smoky was incredible. He would go and go and go and go all day and would never get tired. He knew how to drive horses. He was placed behind the cows, and he would go back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. He would just work it, work it, work it all day. Smoky and I spent a lot of time together!

Running a cattle ranch and a farm is a year-round job and Owen was fully immersed in its operation until he left for college. During the summer months most of his time was spent herding cattle in the mountains, branding and counting calves, and finding lost cows. "Sometimes I would go back and back and back and back for four or five days

in a row to try and get the cows. They'd be so spread out and would hide in the trees. It was hard work." When Owen wasn't in the mountains herding cattle, he was working at the farm, irrigating the fields and cutting and bailing hay. He recalled working long hours in the sun, the relentlessly blowing wind, and the incessant dust clouds stirred by the constant movement of animals. During the winter months when in school, he was still held responsible for his daily chores: "I was not only tasked with milking the cow every morning but after school, if I didn't have track or basketball practice, I was at the farm feeding sick cows and calves that were just weaned from their mother."

Figure 15: Horse Grazing in Pasture, The Farm, St. Johns

Remarkable moments. Owen has many recollections of his days working on the ranch. Most notable are experiences that made him step back from his everyday tasks and revel in the power and beauty of nature: "I just remember trying to soak it all in: the clarity of the sky, usually an exquisite blue, and the clouds rolling in in the afternoons during monsoon season." On one particular occasion he found himself caught in a

torrential thunderstorm. He was herding cattle on the Big Lake allotment and was at the Black River, a favorite place of his:

> Black River was amazing. Gray volcanic rock, running water, cliffs. I would ride my horse for several hours along the river and get cows and it was just amazing. I mean, that's the only word I know to describe it. I do remember one time being caught in a rainstorm. I had to wait, literally sit, for three hours. The nature, the lightning, the echo from the thunder, it was incredible. It was like watching fireworks, the echo was tremendous! It was just an incredible experience.

Another beautiful place he recalled was located on the White Mountain Apache Reservation. The family's Big Lake grazing permit extended toward the base of Mount Baldy and bordered the reservation for seven miles. Occasionally, cows would break through fences and cross over onto the reservation:

> They [the Apaches] were pretty strict about going onto their reservation but were always pretty decent to work with. When I had to cross and collect cows I just remember some of the most beautiful places, like at the foot of Mount Baldy. I remember just standing there, looking up at Mount Baldy. It was so beautiful. There were streams and little cienegas. Looking at those meadows and that mountain, it was just like, "Wow, where did this beauty come from?" It was like a postcard.

Figure 16: Fenced Cienega, Big Lake

Learning from place. At times awe-inspiring and at times rough and tedious, Owen's experiences on the ranch and farm affected him deeply: "My educational experiences are not just from school. A lot of my learning came from working on the ranch and it's what has really formed who I am, as far as my background and my work ethic." Most importantly, he believes he learned how to be responsible. For instance, he was responsible for knowing intimately every place on the ranch: every pasture, every stream, every hilltop, every corral.

> When my dad would give directions, you were expected to know. He'd say, "Go to the east pasture, or the west pasture on the Black Ridge. Go open the north gate and let these cows go in here. Take these cows from here to there." You'd get your assignment and you were expected to do it. It was your responsibility and if you didn't know where these places were, you could affect the whole operation.

Appreciating place. Owen learned a great deal from Hispanic workers on their ranch as well. Many of the workers came from Mexico and Owen spent a great deal of

time working side-by-side with them, learning Spanish and listening to their stories of life in Mexico. As the workers were dedicated to supporting their families back in Mexico, Owen developed a great appreciation for their hard work.

> The Hispanic men who worked for us were wonderful. They were so nice and humble and taught us a lot of things, like how to speak Spanish. It was so much fun to work with them. Some worked for us for a long time, working to get citizenship. We had one gentleman who worked for us for 25, 30 years. They really taught me to appreciate the opportunity of having work. They talked about their families, and I mean they loved their families, and a lot of the time they were apart from them. A lot were sending money home. It was really hard. It was really tough. I learned to have a lot of respect for them.

Present place. Today, Owen's older brother has taken over the ranch and farm from their father. When time permits, Owen returns to St. Johns with his son in the early summer and late fall to help his brother drive cattle to and from the grazing allotments. Much has changed since Owen's days on the ranch. The family no longer has the Big Lake permit and All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and cell phones have taken the place of horses, pickup trucks, and CB radios. Owen believes the use of new technology has brought more efficiency to the ranch:

> It's so different now. You used to have to drive a pickup and bounce around for hours and hours checking the water, the fences, putting out salt for cows or feeding them. Now you can buzz around on an ATV much quicker. Even when you're getting the cows together, instead of using horses you can go around on ATVs, especially in those huge open pastures, the ones out on the plateaus.

> There's a lot of open area and ATVs don't get tired like horses do. It used to take all day to get the cows together, calling each other on CB radios. Now, you can go up to the top of the mountain and use your cell phone and binoculars. You can say, "Hey, there's some cows in the other corner you missed." It's pretty amazing how that's all changed so quickly, the ranching experience.

At times, Owen and his wife play the "what if?" game: "It's like, what if we picked another route? What if I was the one to go on to run the ranch?" Occasionally an old country song will come on the radio and Owen will remember the smell of an old pickup truck and driving the back-roads to one of the grazing allotments. He said sometimes the song will even take him back to a certain place or event and he'll miss the life he once led. Though sometimes nostalgic, Owen expressed what a difficult life ranching is and all the uncertainties that go along with it: losing cows, brutal weather, equipment maintenance, early mornings and late nights, and little time off. He admires his brother for continuing the ranching tradition but doesn't regret the profession he chose.

Excursions at the Homestead

Besides the ranch and farm, Owen spent a great deal of time at the family's homestead. The homestead is tucked into the mountains, at an elevation of 8,000 feet, about an hour drive from St. Johns. Once homesteaded by Owen's great great-grandparents for its proximity to timber, it now offers 160 acres for family get-togethers and reunions. It's interspersed by small summer cabins, picnic tables, outdoor kitchens, sports facilities for games of basketball and volleyball, and play areas for small children.

Too cold and snowy in the winter, the homestead is mostly used as a place to escape in the summer.

Figure 17: Summer Cabins, The Homestead, Greens Peak

As a child, Owen's father always took an interest in the homestead because his ranch lands surrounded its borders. It offered a place to stay on long nights after herding cattle, repairing fences, or branding cows. His father volunteered many hours of his time to keep the place up, most notably, establishing a water system and putting in a water storage tank. When staying at the homestead, Owen's family shared a summer cabin with his paternal grandmother. He recalled the many hours spent playing with siblings and cousins during family reunions and holidays such as Memorial Day, Labor Day, and the Fourth of July:

> We spent a lot of time there. I have a lot of memories with my siblings and my dad and we also had lots of cousins to play with. One of my favorite memories is this swing, what we call the Rope Swing. It's on a great, big, old ponderosa tree that's on the side of the hill, which is still there today. It has a rope hanging down

and you can grab this rope and run, just take off running. Because it's on a hill, you lift in the air and go all around the tree, like in a semicircle, and land on the other side. We could go up at least five, six feet in the air. We would get all scraped up when we landed. If you look up at it today there are probably 10, 12, 15 rope ends that have been cut or broken off. The homestead, it's just a neat little place.

Figure 18: Rope Swing, The Homestead, Greens Peak

A hallmark of the homestead is the mountain Sierra Trigo, Spanish for "Wheat Mountain," so named because of the high mountain bunch grass that grows on top as well as on the south-facing slope. The north-facing slope is more densely populated by ponderosa pine. Climbing Sierra Trigo was, and still is, a favorite activity of Owen's:

You know, it's not a great big mountain, but it's a significant climb. I've been up there a time or two on the Fourth of July to watch the fireworks. In the distance we could see them at Lyman Lake, Show Low, Snowflake. It was usually just a

puff in the sky, but it's still kind of exciting. It is a pretty incredible view from up there.

Owen is not sure what will become of the homestead in the future. In the meantime, he continues to bring his own family back to the property for reunions and holidays. His dream is to one day build his own cabin on the property.

Figure 19: Sierra Trigo, The Homestead, Greens Peak

Schooling Experiences

Owen was heavily involved in school sports: baseball, running track, and playing football, a sport he felt he was not cut out to play as he lacked the "killer instinct you need to hit somebody hard." He also played in a band and sang in a choir. His greatest passion, however, was basketball:

> I loved basketball. All through elementary school and junior high, any waking moment that I had when I wasn't milking the cow, or doing chores, or working on the ranch I would be outside shooting baskets. The hoop and backboard were home built. My dad built the backboard. It was great because it was nice and big

> and square. We used it to shoot bank shots. We played on dirt, just dirt, and shot thousands and thousands of baskets.

Besides involvement in extracurricular activities, Owen remembered few specific details of actual learning in school. He did recall field trips to the Petrified Forest and to the sand washes east of St. Johns. A dry river bed, the sand washes afforded the perfect "natural playground" and was a favorite place of Owen's: "We would go out there and have a picnic and play in the sand. There was a little cliff on each side of the wash and we would jump off. It was great fun!"

Learning to learn. Owen believes he doesn't remember specific details because, rather than emphasizing mastery over a subject, his teachers emphasized *how to learn*.

> See, right now I'm working on a difficult case involving insurance law. I don't know a great deal about insurance law. So, I've had to learn it. I think that's what St. Johns high school teachers taught me. I've learned how to learn and I practice it every day.

Teachers played an important role in Owen's educational experiences. For instance, he fondly remembered his fourth grade teacher who created an exciting learning environment through the use of games and competitions, and his high school English teacher who taught him to love writing. Many teachers were raised in the area, or had been in the community for years, and because of this Owen believed teachers in St. Johns were invested in students since they were invested in the community. The teachers had a shared interest with students as many of them owned and operated their own small farms and ranches and understood "the importance of hard work." It also wasn't unusual to see teachers at church, ball games, or town picnics.

A Change in Place

Prior to the opening of a power plant near St. Johns, Owen remembers St. Johns as a "small, small, sleepy, ranch town." It was mainly comprised of Mormons and Catholics and, for the most part, people got along peacefully:

> I'm not going lie. I'm not going to say that we were all best friends. There was some kind of divide. I mean not necessarily a divide to do with racism but more to do with religion. But we did do things together and would play together and we would support each other. We would often attend big barbeques at the Catholic Church and the Catholic kids would come to Pioneer Days. We were mostly good friends. So you had sort of the Mormon and the Catholic populations, that was how it was, the dynamic was like that for a long time but that all changed.

In 1977 a massive power plant was installed at the north end of St. Johns. The population exploded from approximately 1,300 people to more than 6,000 (including temporary construction workers). New schools were constructed, subdivisions were developed, and commercial development skyrocketed. St. Johns experienced change rapidly and drastically. The power plant brought jobs and growth, but also challenges:

> I noticed in grade school more students started coming to class. A new junior high and high school were built. That's why St. Johns has such a beautiful auditorium, the only high school auditorium I've seen that has a hydraulic orchestra pit.
>
> I mean a lot of people loved the changes because of the energy it brought and things, but it also brought riffraff; drugs followed, and the things that we weren't really used to. People didn't have the same sort of hometown, homegrown, live-off-the-land type of thing. It was a new world. It was quite different.

Upon reflection, Owen believed that, overall, the building of the power plant brought a positive dimension to the community. It gave the town an economic boost, modern facilities, and job opportunities. Most importantly, however, he believed it "really mixed up the community" and gave its members a broader perspective on life.

Fear of Place: Downwinders

Owen believed St. Johns was a wonderful and diverse place to grow as a child, and yet, simultaneously, it was also a place he feared. Since the 1950s, a quiet threat has plagued Owen and his family. Owen lost his grandfather, mother, two uncles, an aunt, and multiple cousins to cancer, all of whom lived in St. Johns. He has always been very disturbed by these deaths: "It's kind of scary, kind of creepy, kind of weird." Owen and his family believe that the cancer deaths were caused by radioactive fallout from nuclear weapons testing in Nevada in the 1950s. Communities and individuals who were exposed to such nuclear fallout are referred to as Downwinders. The community of St. Johns is considered a Downwind site and, as such, Owen's family has received money from a settlement program set up by the federal government to compensate victims. Believing radioactive material to still be in the soil and water, Owen has always felt uneasy about his childhood home:

> It's sad. It's scary, thinking of those things that blew down wind into St. Johns. I want to learn more about what the heck they were doing in Nevada, I mean it's kind of like a secretive thing. It makes you question the weird things going on. It's just all really strange and unsettling.

Leaving, Returning to, and Leaving Again: The White Mountains

Upon graduating from St. Johns High School in May of 1983, Owen attended Brigham Young University (BYU) in Provo, Utah. After attending school for one year, Owen was called to serve a mission for the Church of Latter Day Saints in Peru. He served his mission for two years and returned to BYU to finish a degree in business, with an emphasis in computers. He also applied to law school and was accepted to BYU, ASU (Arizona State University), and UA (University of Arizona). Owen, by then married, chose to attend ASU. He and his wife decided to leave Utah as they felt Provo, primarily consisting of people of their same faith, was a bit too sheltered from the outside world:

> We wanted to get out of The Bubble. We call Provo, "The Bubble." It's really cool to be in The Bubble but after you're there a few years, you kind of want to get out, because you're like, "I know the world is harsh out there, but I want to live in the world and be with a more diverse group of people."

After law school, Owen, his wife, and their small children moved to the White Mountain Community of Pinetop. Two of his brothers, also lawyers, had recently opened a law firm and asked Owen to join. Involved in contractual and real estate law, Owen ended up representing the White Mountain towns of Show Low and Snowflake. Living in Pinetop was a "new place" for him and he felt it was a great place to raise a family. Most particularly he liked Pinetop because it wasn't St. Johns, a place he felt great affection for, but also a place he never wanted to live again. If you weren't a rancher, a teacher, or worked at the power plant, Owen felt there was little career opportunity. Rather, he enjoyed assisting on the ranch when needed and taking his family to the homestead in the summer months, but was always glad to return to Pinetop. After living for fourteen years

in Pinetop, he was appointed a judge for the Arizona Court of Appeals and he and his family moved to Chandler, Arizona.

Future places. Moving away from the White Mountains was a difficult decision for Owen but he feels like it was the right one:

> I love Pinetop. What can you say? We loved living there. It was really hard for me to leave, but it [the judgeship] was something I was passionate about. I don't have regrets for leaving. I mean, I do miss the White Mountains a lot. I think I'll always have a more of a connection to up there. But we live in a really nice neighborhood out in Chandler, and the kids love their schools.

Currently, Owen and his wife are "hunkering down waiting for their kids to leave home." Owen tries to return to the White Mountains at least once a month. When he retires, he hopes to have the best of both worlds: a cabin at the homestead and a condo in Chandler.

Cynthia

Beneath gray hair cut short, Cynthia's face is round and soft, her features smoothly molded. Her bright eyes and infectious laugh reflect a spirited zest for life. Cynthia identifies as White. At the time of this study she is 67 years old. As she describes her sense of place, Cynthia is at ease with herself—quick-witted and unswervingly cheerful.

Place Setting: McNary and Pinetop-Lakeside

Cynthia was born in the White Mountain community of McNary and raised in the town of Pinetop-Lakeside. The town of Pinetop-Lakeside is located in Navajo County. At

an elevation of 6,900 feet, it's a land of aspen, ponderosa pine, spruce, and Douglas fir forests, open cienegas, and mountain lakes. The town of Lakeside was founded in the late 1800s by Mormon pioneers, and the town of Pinetop developed because of its proximity to the reservation, most particularly the communities of McNary and Fort Apache. In 1984, the towns incorporated to form Pinetop-Lakeside. The community is known for its tourism and recreational activities and as such, the town consists of high-end tourist resorts and log cabins, golfing communities and hiking trails, small businesses and a corporate owned grocery store. One main road runs through town. At the 2010 census, Pinetop-Lakeside had a population of 4,282 (U.S. Bureau of the Census).

Figure 20: A Road Divides: Pinetop-Lakeside & The White Mountain Apache Reservation

The town of McNary is located on the White Mountain Apache Reservation in Apache County. At an elevation of 7,316 feet, it is the second highest community in Arizona. The land was first settled by Westerners in the late 1800s for agricultural purposes and later was leased from the Apache tribe by the McNary Lumber Company (from which it received its current name) in 1924. From 1924 to 1979, McNary was a

bustling company town, complete with stores, schools, houses, a general store, a hospital, a bowling alley, a skating rink, and even a movie theater. It was considered the hub of the White Mountains. Eventually, lumber operations and workers shifted to the town of Flagstaff, Arizona, and after a fire destroyed the lumber mill in 1979, most residents of the town relocated. All that remains of the company town are the skeletal ruins of the lumber mill. Today, the community is interspersed by dilapidated bungalows from the 1930s, modern modular houses, a convenience store, and a small elementary school. According to the 2010 census, McNary has a population of 528 (U.S. Bureau of the Census).

Figure 21: Remnants of the Sawmill, McNary, AZ

Planting Roots: Lumber Mills and Migrant Workers

Cynthia's grandfather founded the logging community of McNary in 1924. Prior to this, he owned and operated a lumber company in McNary, Louisiana. Having depleted nearly all of the yellow pine around McNary, Louisiana, her grandfather, along with his business partner, moved the lumber mill to the White Mountains. Located in the

largest stand of ponderosa pine forest in the world, this site afforded the perfect place to relocate. The two business partners leased land from the White Mountain Apache Tribe and relocated their skilled workers, most of whom were African American, via the Santa Fe Railway. Cynthia recalled hearing stories of this historic move from her grandfather:

> So my grandfather and his partner loaded up the town of McNary, Louisiana—lock, stock, and barrel—on the Santa Fe Railway: the families, their chickens, their household goods, everything. They needed skilled workers to open the community and build and run the sawmill. They couldn't have done it without them and because of this, McNary became the center of the economy in the White Mountains. It had the general store, the theater, the hospital and everything that had anything to do with anybody.

Her grandfather sold his business interests in McNary in 1952 and moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Figure 22: Deserted House, McNary

Cynthia's mother was raised in McNary. Though her family was very wealthy and she had the choice to move away as a young adult, she "loved the community and natural surroundings" and never wanted to leave. This concerned Cynthia's grandfather greatly as he felt his daughter was obtaining a poor education and learning crude manners from living in a small, isolated town. As such, he sent her out east for school in hopes she wouldn't return to McNary:

> My mother was sent back east to Yale for graduate school. My grandfather sent her back because she refused to follow the expectations of a lady of her times. He tried to cure her. He sent her back east to get them to straighten her out. She came back to McNary, regardless. Like I said, my grandfather had tried to reform her, and she didn't reform worth a darn. After graduating with two Master's, one in math and one in anthropology, she came back to McNary; she loved the woods, loved riding horses, loved being outdoors. Instead of doing the kinds of things he wished her to do socially, she went right ahead about her business and went right on doing the kinds of things that she had done before he tried to reform her.

Building place. To the disappointment of Cynthia's grandfather, Cynthia's mother returned to McNary. Wanting to buy property, which she couldn't do on the reservation, she moved to the bordering town of Pinetop, built a cabin, and became an integral member of the community. She was involved in the water company, the irrigation company, the sanitary district, and the development of the electricity cooperation. She founded the Humane Society, the Pinetop Presbyterian Church, and the Pinetop Fire Department. She also served as Justice of the Peace and was a member of the school board. As Cynthia reflected, "She was part of the development of the Pinetop-

Lakeside area. I mean, she single-handedly put together groups of people to make all of that happen."

Cynthia's father moved to McNary during the Great Depression to find work in the logging industry: "My father came to the White Mountains with the 'grapes of wrath,' moving toward California. One of thirteen brothers and sisters, he only had a fifth grade education. His family was at poverty level, barely surviving when they moved here." Cynthia's father was killed in an automobile accident when she was 12.

Figure 23: Presbyterian Church, Pinetop, AZ

Rules in place. Cynthia became very close with her father's side of the family. Her favorite aunt and uncle and their children lived a few houses down from her and Cynthia spent a great deal of time playing with her cousins. When her younger brother contracted polio and was being quarantined, and later when her father died, she leaned on this family for support: "I was taken care of by my aunt and uncle. They kind of raised me because my mother was working, my father had died, and they also took care of me when my brother became sick." This side of the family, Cynthia believed, also exposed

her to a more "natural" code of conduct. For instance, they taught her how to hunt, butcher, and skin animals, how to tame wild horses, and chop wood in the forest. This code of conduct was considered harsh compared to the refined manners of her mother's side of the family:

> Whenever we visited my mom's dad, my brother and I had to do a complete turnaround. My mom would load us up and would say, "Yes, we live according to our own rules here, but when we visit your grandfather there are certain things you have to remember." We had to remember the correct use of language, the appropriate manners, our social graces, how to use utensils correctly, and how to treat the servants of the family.

Though difficult at times, Cynthia reflected that she moved between the contrasting families of her mother and father rather easily and grew up in what she believes was "the best of two worlds, a mixture that was very enriching."

Embodying Experiences: On the Move and Sensing Place

Cynthia lived contentedly in the "heart" of Pinetop. The school, her church, and the grocery store were all within walking distance from her house. Her cousins lived down the lane and her favorite haunts bordered the family's horse pasture. A two-lane street, barely wide enough for two vehicles to pass, ran through the center of town—north to the community of Lakeside and south to the community of McNary.

Cynthia recalled a carefree childhood: "All the neighborhood kids played together and rode bikes all over. Back then there was little supervision and a lot of trust. We were free to roam and explore the area." The wild plum thicket behind her house, which was eight feet tall and densely packed, became a favorite place to play. Cynthia and her

friends transformed the thickets into elaborate forts and houses. The creek that ran near her house afforded endless afternoons of recreation. She recalled catching frogs, double-dog-dares, and dips in the cool water. When she became a teenager, the creek became a place to escape with friends and cousins and to push the boundaries of young adult life. Cynthia most vividly recalled plunking watermelons (cutting a hole in the melon and plunking a bottle of vodka in it) to store in the cool water of the creek for later consumption.

Figure 24: Billy Creek Tributary, Pinetop

Cynthia's favorite season as a child was fall. She remembered a "definite smell and definite feel to the air." In the months of September and October she most enjoyed wood-chopping expeditions in the surrounding forests: "To this day, fall is a part of my world. It's the part I like the best because I remember that's when we'd go and get wood to heat our house during the winter."

Cynthia's first memory is of her dad leading her around the pasture on an old, white Pinto horse named Princess. Cynthia's parents never allowed her to ride with a

saddle. They had too many friends who became tangled up in the strap and stirrup, dragged by a horse, and were either seriously injured or killed. Thus, her father led her round and round the pasture, teaching her to feel the muscles of the horse move and change beneath her in order to predict the horse's next movement.

Learning to ride a horse from an early age, Cynthia explored the White Mountains extensively via horseback. She rode all over the mountain with her cousins and friends, riding freely through forests and fields, pastures and ponds:

> I became familiar with every inch of this country by riding my horse. There were no trails at that time. I remember riding in water up to my knees through marshes and riding off over the edge of the rim, dropping down into the dry valley below. We pretty much rode wherever we doggone well pleased and would come home usually after dark.

Cynthia also frequently visited McNary, spending time with her relatives and friends who worked at the sawmill. To this day, the smell of wood chips transports her back to this time in her childhood: "The smell of wood chips, from ponderosa pine and spruce, opens for me an entire world of memories. I return to McNary and the sawmill and my childhood days."

Rupture in the Place-World

The most pivotal time in Cynthia's childhood occurred when she was 12 years old. Within one year, her father was killed in automobile accident and every single male relative on her mother's side of the family passed away. Cynthia reflected on this dramatic rupture in her childhood existence:

> I lost every single male relative on my mother's side of the family and my dad within a year. I went from being a child to an adult. I remember I was there when they came to tell us about my dad. I was the one who took the call when they informed us about my uncle's death and I had to tell my mom. I was with my mom when she got the call about her father's death. Needless to say, by the end of that year, I was no longer a child. I remember thinking, "I don't know how to deal with this. I don't." My little brother retreated and went to live with my aunt down the street. That's how he coped with it. I had to support my mom. I probably learned some of the best lessons in my life in how to deal with tragedy and upset and things that are absolutely annihilating. You remember the things that make a difference in who you are today.

Cynthia's father was working for the Arizona Highway Department on the Fourth of July, running a weed cutter along the road. A truck rounded a corner and struck him from behind, killing him instantly. Cynthia believes her father had a notion that he might not be around in her future. From a young age, Cynthia's father taught her skills and had serious discussions with her that she feels should have occurred when she was older: "I think he almost knew he wasn't going to be there later so he taught me a great deal when I was young." He taught her how to ride a horse, how to shoot a gun, talked to her about boys and their "drives," and, most importantly, instilled a sense of confidence in Cynthia. "He believed in me and trusted me and that has really shaped who I am today."

Cynthia's father occasionally reappears in her dreams. The first dream occurred in her twenties: "In my dream I was driving and looking in the rear view mirror. He was sitting behind me, telling me things of importance, things that I needed to remember."

Cynthia returns to this dream often and each time she feels as if her father is still part of her life. “Because of these dreams, I know he’s never been far away in my life, even though I lost him at a very early age.”

A gift to help heal. To distract Cynthia after her father’s death, her mother bought her a horse. She wanted Cynthia to keep “occupied and moving in a positive direction.” The horse Cynthia was given was feral and it became her job to tame him:

> He was a gorgeous animal, absolutely gorgeous. He was a big old barrel chested beast and wilder than a March hare. He tried to tear down fences, people, anything in his way. At one point he drove me through a barbwire fence. He would rear and strike. He was always pretty spirited. My cousin and I worked to gentle him. We used some old techniques that the cowboys used to break him. Then I started riding him and taught him to go from a jog trot to a gallop. I had him until he was probably 28, 29 years old. He died in my front yard. I rode him every time I had a chance during that period of time.

Cultivating a relationship with this horse provided Cynthia with equal measures of freedom and responsibility and helped her to recuperate from the devastating loss of her family members.

Packing Up and Selling a Childhood Home

After the death of her father, Cynthia’s mother remarried when Cynthia was in her early twenties. Cynthia and her stepfather had a very good relationship: “My stepfather was a kind, wonderful man with whom I became very close.” Cynthia’s mother and her stepfather lived together in the same house Cynthia grew up in. They have both

since passed away, most recently her stepfather. Cynthia and her brother are now in the midst of packing up their childhood home, readying it to put on the market.

Rummaging through trunks and cupboards and clearing the garden and orchard has triggered a multitude of memoires for Cynthia. Boxing up childhood books, particularly the series *The Teenie Weenies*, reminded Cynthia of the many hours spent reading together with her mother and brother. An apple tree in the garden brought forth a memory of a bad breakup with a boyfriend, the altercation occurring under its branches. And opening a cedar chest, the smell of Yardley's lavender soap wafting from its drawers, elicited memories of her mother: "It was her soap, and it was her smell. Whenever I smell lavender soap, it sets off a series of memories of her." The house itself, with an almost ineffable quality about it, also transported her back to another time.

> Walking into the house, it's quiet and peaceful, even if it's really noisy outside with the traffic and all. It's almost as if I can actually see the quiet. It brings me back to another time and in my mind, the house becomes the same as it was when I was a child.

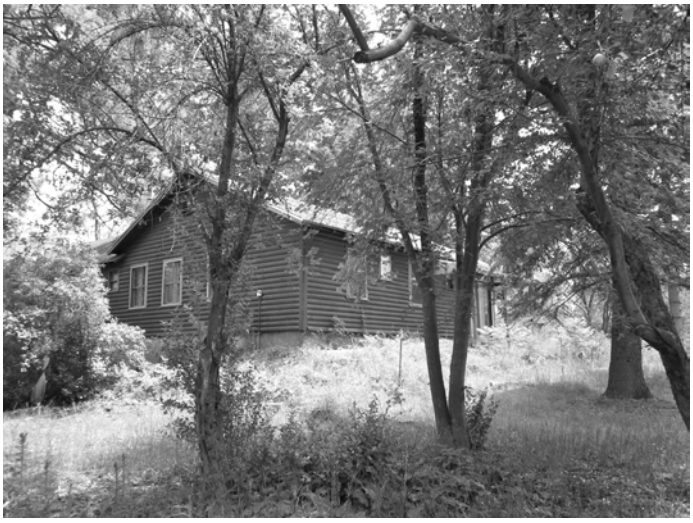

Figure 25: House of Memories, Cynthia's Childhood Home, Pinetop

Figure 26: Apple Orchard, Cynthia's Childhood Yard, Pinetop

Schooling Experiences: Pinetop

Cynthia attended a two-room school—first through eighth grade—within walking distance of her house. At this point in time, Pinetop was a fairly static community. Employment at the sawmill in McNary was steady and Pinetop had yet to become a major tourist destination. Most of the families in Pinetop were long-term residents who had invested in property in the area and were, according to Cynthia, " mostly lily White."

A tale of two teachers. Cynthia recalled that her school was "very old fashioned." They used traditional textbooks and completed worksheets and never participated in field trips. What she remembered most clearly about her early school days concerned two teachers. Cynthia struggled with a learning disability and recalled being made to feel stupid by her first through fourth grade teacher. She remembered several instances of feeling publically humiliated: being called out in front of the class, having her name written on the chalkboard, and staying in for recess while her peers dashed through the doors to play. Frustrated and discontented, she reacted by creating "pure pandemonium" for the teacher.

When Cynthia entered fifth through eighth grade, however, her new teacher realized she had a learning disability. He enlisted the help of Cynthia's mother, and together they worked with her, day and night, to catch her up with her peers. This changed the academic course of Cynthia's life and she began to improve immensely in school.

Schooling Experiences: McNary

Borders and boundaries. Cynthia attended high school in McNary, which had the only accredited high school in the area. McNary was still a segregated town at this time. Cynthia recalled the separated sections of town:

> I remember everything was segregated, even the movie theater. There was the African American community, who lived down the hill. There was the Hispanic American community and the Native American community, who lived near the lake, and the White community of workers. And then there was Silk Stocking

Row, which is what my mother called it. It was where the big shots lived on Main Street.

Cynthia's freshman year was the first time the high school became integrated. Prior to this, each community had their own schooling system. Attending high school was a complete change for Cynthia. It wasn't the diversity of the student body that shocked her; rather, it was being the new kid in town. In Pinetop, everyone knew who she was because of her mother. However, in McNary, the students didn't care about her background: "Attending McNary was a total change of status for me. Of course, the students there didn't know anything about my background. I had to establish myself there on my own."

Figure 27: Old High School Gym, McNary

Significant moments. Cynthia's most memorable high school experiences occurred during her senior year. She recalled taking the ACT, attending Friday night football games, and cruising the highway between Pinetop and McNary in her mother's "gorgeous turquoise 390 Ford Galaxie." Furthermore, she recalled the Asian flu epidemic

that swept through the community: teachers became sick, substitutes were difficult to find, and the school district was on the brink of shutting down. Cynthia was working as an office aid at school during this time. To keep the school from closing, Cynthia and her friend were given the responsibility of running a first and second grade class:

> There were no substitutes. The principal, who I dearly loved, asked my friend and me if we would substitute for a first grade and a second grade class. We thought, "Why not? Might as well. I'm sure we can manage it." We didn't have any lesson plans, the teachers were too sick to leave any, but we both said, "Okay, we can do this." I took a first grade class and ended up substituting for about two weeks.

Cynthia credits this experience as influential in her decision to become an educator.

Awareness of time. The most poignant memory of Cynthia's high school years occurred the night of high school graduation. Cynthia recalled standing in the locker-filled hallway of McNary High School, anxiously waiting with her friends to enter the auditorium for the ceremony. She stood watching the second hand on the wall clock tick toward 8:00 p.m., as this was when the ceremony would begin. When the clock struck 8:00, and her high school years came to an end, a rush of adrenaline washed through her and she remembered thinking, "Oh my gosh, now what am I going do?"

Leaving and Returning to the White Mountains

Upon graduating from high school, Cynthia attended the University of Arizona (UA). After obtaining a degree in Early Childhood Education, Cynthia returned to the White Mountains. She chose to return to the area because her husband was working as a lineman at the McNary sawmill and she would be closer to family. Furthermore, Pinetop afforded the perfect place to continue raising her beloved horses.

Cynthia was hired by her former high school principal to teach second grade in McNary. In the summer months she returned to the U of A, acquiring a reading specialist endorsement and her K-12 teaching certification. During her teaching career in McNary, she started the first kindergarten, became the director of Title One, worked for ACIL (teaching teachers to individualize instruction), obtained a Master's degree in Administration, and became the principal of McNary High School.

Out-of-place. In the midst of becoming an administrator, Cynthia also became a mother. This was a very trying time in her life as she was both a woman and a mother in a very male-dominated career track. She recalled attending a school administration meeting for Apache County. The meeting consisted of only male administrators. She remembers feeling their intense stares as she walked in and sat down. She felt they were exacerbated, as she was pregnant and still working. Cynthia also reminisced over the struggle of working full-time and trying to nurse her daughter:

> I remember working and my milk would drop and leak through my dress top no matter how many pads I wore. During my breaks I would go to the babysitter to breastfeed, she lived right across the street from the school. As a woman it was a really tough time, but I had helpful people around me and my mom was there too.

Changing places. When the sawmill burned in McNary and workers migrated to other logging towns throughout the southwest, the population of the community dwindled to such an extent that the junior high and high schools were closed. As a result, Cynthia found a new job in administration and accepted a position as a principal for the Blue Ridge Unified School District in Pinetop. At the time of this interview, she had moved to

the district office and held the position of Curriculum Director and Assistant Superintendent with the district.

Current Endeavors

Relationship building and concern for future place. Cynthia is proud of her many years as an educator. She has most enjoyed building relationships with her students, their family, and her staff. These relationships, she believes, have further strengthened her roots in the area. With a desire to continue relationship building, Cynthia has also become deeply involved in community organizations. She is most pleased with her involvement in The White Mountain Nature Center. This is an organization she founded because of her concern over the future of the environment, most particularly the White Mountains:

> At first I was resistant to joining organizations. But then I started to ask myself questions: "What strategies are we going to use to keep this community running? What are we going to do to prevent the environment from being destroyed? Who's going to protect my world?" And at the same time my friends were asking me to get involved, "If not you, who? You're the one that has roots here." Because of this I've become really active with a number of organizations in the community. But the one I spend most of my time with is The White Mountain Nature Center. We put on approximately ten educational programs every summer, which are directed both at people who are unfamiliar with the environment, as well as children. As we move into the age of computer and social networking, I believe we are moving farther away from nature. We have to get people in touch with the real world. I'm afraid if we don't convince this generation to take

responsibility, the environment will be destroyed. So I started the center to try to get people out and in touch. That's my idea of the way to make a personal impact.

Looking to the future: A place-way-of-life. Though Cynthia appreciates the physical beauty of the White Mountains and cherishes her childhood memories in the area, she believes upon retirement that she would be content living in another town, in another place. Cynthia recognizes her deep connection to the area but feels she is mostly attached to the life she leads in the White Mountains, rather than to the place itself:

> I don't know that I'm particularly so much attached to the area, as I am the way of life. If I went to another place it would have to be a place that had people who cared about their environment, people that cared about their community, people that cared about kids, and about what happens amongst the people that are there. Like I said, I guess it's more a way of life than it is anything else. Being able to walk out my door and have horses, being able to walk out my door and decide to go out into the forest to hunt and get wood. I think I'm tied to the trees and the animals that live on this earth, and I think that's what it is, rather than a particular place or a particular piece of property.

Nora

As Nora describes her experiences in the White Mountains, her long, manicured fingers tap metrically along the edge of the counter. Her eyes move quickly when she speaks and when she smiles they acquire expressions that are at once mischievous and insightful. At age 79 when interviewed, Nora, who identifies as White, is a handsome

woman with salon-styled, short brown hair and a nose that creases when she laughs. She is a gifted storyteller with a spirited fervor for nuance and detail.

Place Setting: Whiteriver

Nora, the youngest of ten children, was born and raised in Whiteriver, Arizona. Whiteriver, the capital and seat of tribal government, is located on the White Mountain Apache Reservation (previously described in the Preface of this dissertation). At an elevation of 5,164 feet, Whiteriver is situated in a valley of red cliffs and high mesas. Willow and cottonwood trees contour the White River, which meanders through the valley. Traveling north from Whiteriver, sagebrush, juniper, and mesquite give way to ponderosa pine and aspen trees. The town consists of cornfields and cattle corrals, modern houses and dilapidated buildings. One main road runs through town, parallel with the river. As of the 2010 census, the population was 4,104 (U.S. Bureau of the Census).

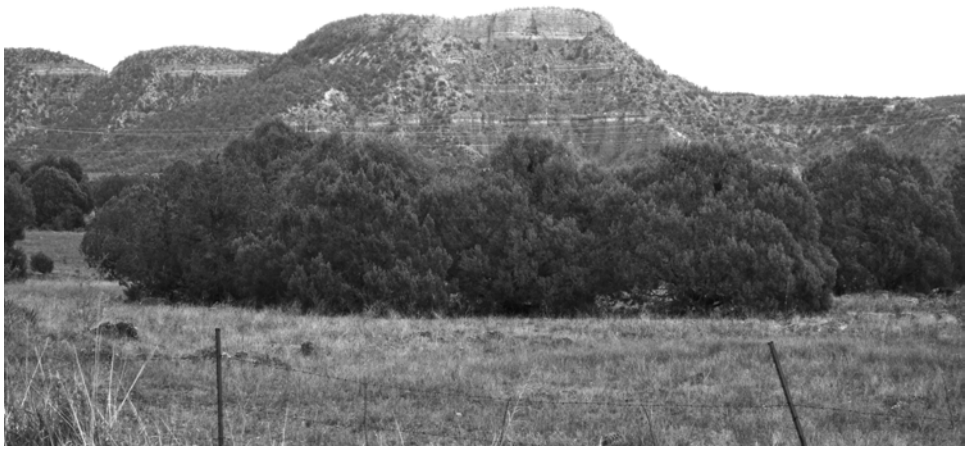

Figure 28: Red Cliffs, Whiteriver, AZ

Figure 29: White River, Whiteriver

Cultivating Roots: A Missionary's Calling

Nora's parents arrived on the reservation in 1911 as missionaries for the Lutheran Church. Young and newly married, they built a school, an orphanage, and a church in East Fork, a small settlement near the town of Whiteriver. Many of the Apache still lived in family groups and bands, residing in wickiups[19] and subsiding off the land, hunting wild game and growing corn, squash, and beans. Lacking a vehicle, Nora's parents first traveled by horseback to settlements across the reservation, learning the language and teaching the Lutheran religion.

Nora's parents gave birth to ten children, all of whom were born on the reservation. Four of Nora's brothers and sisters were born in a small house built next to the church in East Fork. As the family extended and the reservation developed vehicular infrastructure, Nora's parents built a new church and a larger, two-story house in

[19] Wickiups are traditional Apache dwellings.

Whiteriver next to the main road that ran through the reservation. Nora and the rest of her siblings were born in this house:

> All the rest of us were born in this house. There weren't any doctors in attendance, but by the time I came along, my parents were good at it [delivering a child]. I guess there's nothing new by the time you get to the tenth kid. They were like, "Okay, don't worry. We know the drill."

Figure 30: Nora's Childhood Home, Whiteriver

A storied place. Nora shared many stories of her parents' lives on the reservation. Most of the stories commemorated her parents' service to people living and working on the reservation, assisting people during the debilitating influenza epidemic of 1918 that swept through the reservation, writing letters for the Buffalo soldiers stationed at Fort Apache[20], corresponding with 180 Apache soldiers fighting in World War II, and cultivating a garden to feed those in need.

[20] Fort Apache was a military outpost established on the reservation during the Apache wars (1861-1886) and later abandoned in 1922.

Nora's favorite story celebrates, she believes, the strength, courage, and moral character of her father. During World War I, soldiers at Fort Apache arrested Nora's father for being a German spy. While the commanding officer at Fort Apache was in Washington D.C. conducting business, the officer left in charge became suspicious of Nora's father. The suspicious activities that led to her father's arrest included speaking German to his wife, having a photograph of the Kaiser, and taking photographs with a tripod (it was thought he was communicating with the Germans via his tripod). Because of these offenses he was put in jail at Fort Apache. In the meantime, Nora's mother gave birth to their third child:

> My mom has three children, one a newborn, and they still kept him in jail. When the commanding officer came back from Washington and found out that my father was in the jail he felt terrible. He said, "Pastor, I cannot, there are no words. That officer will lose his rank." But father was not vengeful and said, "No, don't do that. We're raising this garden to feed the kids at the orphanage, and I need manure, and you've got the horses." That guy who put my dad in jail, he had to go back and forth between Fort Apache and East Fork, hauling manure to put on the garden at the orphanage.

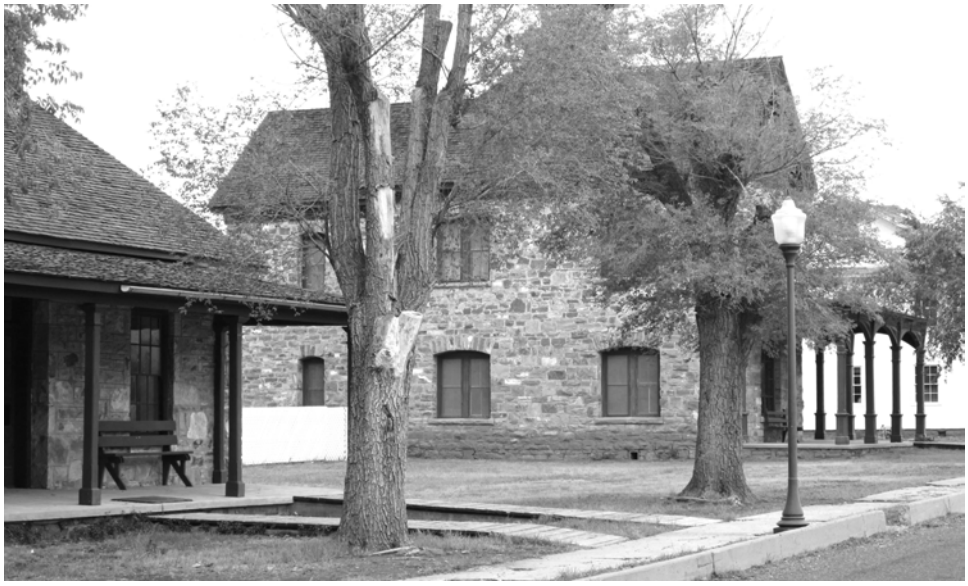

Figure 31: Original Officers' Quarters, Fort Apache

Nora's parents spent the rest of their lives on the reservation. The tribe officially adopted her father, and because of this adoption, Nora's mother was able to stay on the reservation after Nora's father passed away. After his death, Nora's mother lived for an additional twenty years in Whiteriver. Nora's parents are both buried in the Whiteriver cemetery.

Memories in Place: A Childhood in Whiteriver

Nora's childhood consisted of traditional Apache ceremonies and Lutheran church services; Apache myths and legends shared by elders of the community and biblical stories preached by her father at the pulpit; drum circles and violin lessons; Apache verbs and German nouns; and acorn stew and sauerkraut. Nora stressed that she was taught from an early age that both cultures could coexist.

> We had a very unusual upbringing, which I'm eternally grateful for. I learned that there was such beauty in another culture and yet I was proud of my own. I was fortunate enough to be a little girl when most of the [Apache] people were still

> living in wickiups. I went out a lot with my dad, and we would visit camps. My parents and most of my older sisters and brothers spoke Apache fluently. We were also all carried in a cradleboard. Four Apache kids were raised with me. Understanding the culture and learning about it, living the way we did, it was just a part of growing up. That's all I knew.

Her favorite experiences were attending Sunrise Dances with her friends:

> The ceremony lasted all night. There are crown dancers and a huge fire and people dancing and the beautiful girl who's "coming out." There's something about it that's almost mystical. In the morning, they have the sunrise ceremony, and she continues to dance. As soon as the sun hits the abalone shell on her forehead, it means that that day is over. I loved attending the ceremonies and I loved dancing with my friends.

Awareness of place. Growing up on the reservation afforded Nora the opportunity to become immersed in Apache language, culture, and history. And yet, at the same time, it heightened her Protestant/Western background. Religious life played an important role in her childhood. Christian principals and biblical teachings were practiced daily and Sundays were devoted to attending church and missionary work. Christmas was a particularly favorite holiday of Nora's. It was a time when her family came together and prided themselves on their services to others. Most specifically she recalled ascending Round Top Mountain every year to select the Christmas tree for the church, later adorning it with white lights, blue and silver balls, and stuffing bags full of fruit and candy for the children of the congregation.

Figure 32: Lutheran Church, Whiteriver

Nora said her parents knew she and her siblings would have to leave the reservation one day and they wanted their children to be prepared. As such, Nora recalled sitting attentively, along with her siblings, in the family's living room listening to classical music in the evenings and reading Western literature. She remembered discussing philosophy with her father as the family worked in the garden, exploring Western thought while tilling the soil.

Venturing in place. Distinct childhood memories for Nora consisted of wild adventures and dangerous endeavors. Nora and her siblings had unrestricted access to most of the reservation and had "magic, secret places all over." Willow breaks along the river provided secluded hideouts; the Fort Apache cemetery served as a site for ghost stories and games of hide-and-go-seek; the pond by the rodeo fairgrounds furnished a place to picnic and pick bucketsful of wild currant; open fields afforded space for competitions of kick-the-can and softball games; and a school playground of merry-go-rounds and Giant Strides supplied endless opportunities for dangerous missions and

double-dog-dares. However, most thrilling to Nora, her siblings, and their friends was an abandoned building located across the street from Nora's house. Once used as a boarding house for Native American children, it became a favorite hangout for local youth.

> The building was three stories high. We'd unlock the doors with a skeleton key and sneak inside. The sleeping porch had beds side to side and we'd jump, "boing, boing, boing" from one bed to the other. It was just amazing. The basement of the building was actually pretty scary, something out of a bad movie. We were getting to be pre-teens then and I remember the boys scaring the girls. They would hide in the basement and make scary noises. I was just really freaked out most of the time but it was still so exciting. It also had the world's most dangerous slide. It was an escape slide, three stories high, and wow was it a child's dream. We'd take wax paper and slide down. I remember the first time I did it and thinking, "I'm going to die today, but I'm going to get there quickly."

Figure 33: Willow Breaks, East Fork of the White River, Whiteriver

Figure 34: Cemetery, Fort Apache

Always on the lookout for new adventures, Nora also turned to horseback riding. Every autumn Apache cowboys would drive their cattle from the high mountaintops to the low winter grazing grounds into Whiteriver. Nora recalled watching in awe as they drove their cattle through town. She became infatuated with the cowboy lifestyle and desperately wanted to follow in their footsteps. To do this, though, she needed her own horse. The first horse she acquired was named Shorty:

> I loved Shorty but Shorty wasn't long for this earth. I was around 8 years old when Shorty became sick. I remember the exact moment when my dad went and got the sheriff and told me, "You go inside the house now." I said good-bye to Shorty on the church lawn. He was lying down and couldn't move. I remember I went upstairs and put pillows over my ears but I still heard the shot. Oh how I cried.

To comfort Nora during this stressful time, her older brother used all his savings and bought her a Schwinn bicycle. Though she loved this bicycle it did not deter her need

for adventure via horseback. Nora's next horse came from an eccentric cowboy, known throughout the southwest for his rambunctious activity:

> My second horse came from Pecos Higgins, a famous cowboy/poet/drinker. I remember when he pulled up to the house in an old, derelict truck. There was a horse tied on the back. Pecos had been helping in a cattle roundup, and he was injured. I remember my mother taking him in the house. His injury was horrible but he wouldn't go to the hospital. So my mom fixed it up and, in the meantime, I fell in love with his beautiful horse, the one hitched to the back of his truck. Well, Pecos said the horse was "wonderful with children" so my parents bought the horse for me. His name was Pally, and boy did he turn out to be a renegade. I got on him one morning and he reared and I fell off and I went unconscious for quite a while. Another time, he also broke my brother's arm and my dad's leg. He was quite the infamous horse by the end.

During her childhood Nora acquired more horses, though none were as memorable as Shorty and Pally. Riding horses gave her a sense of freedom. She recalled the feeling of her long hair whipping behind her as she galloped along down to her favorite swimming hole in the river and through the open fields between Whiteriver and Fort Apache. As Nora reflected, "I went everywhere on horses, to all the heavenly spots on the reservation. There were so many magnificent places."

Figure 35: Swimming Hole, Whiteriver

Schooling Experiences: Whiteriver

Nora attended a two-room public schoolhouse in Whiteriver—first through fourth grade in one room and fifth through eighth grade in another. She expressed adamantly how much she "loved school" and yet, simultaneously, how much of a divide existed between schooling for White students and Apache students:

> See what happened was that the public school was for White kids, and the boarding school was for Apache. But, if they [Apache students] were very bright, they would attend public school with us. I never understood this as a child. I always thought it was so weird.

Nora's memories of attending school mostly concerned her teachers, two in particular. She recalled her favorite teacher who made learning exciting and meaningful and who also inspired her to later become a teacher:

> She brought the world in to us through music and food and diversity and even language. I will never forget it as long as I live. She had a son in the FBI, and he

had been stationed in South America. We were studying the Americas. We had yerba mate tea. She brought in a victrola, and we played music from the Latin American countries. We learned some Spanish. It was the best of teaching. She made every one of us feel like we were learners. I knew from that experience that I had to be that kind of a teacher.

Another teacher had the opposite effect on Nora. A young teacher and her husband had recently moved to the reservation. This teacher had a son in the same grade as Nora. The school year had just started and her son was acting out in front of his peers. To show the class how fair she was, the teacher spanked her son in front of the entire school. Nora recalled this shocking experience:

> It made an impression on me that I will never forget. We were all appalled, especially the Apache kids. In the Apache culture, you never put someone out in front of others; I mean you never humiliate someone in front of anyone else. From that day forward, I was respectful, and I got through the year, but I never forgot about it. I thought, "I will never, ever do anything like that in my career," and I hope I didn't.

Furthermore, Nora spent a great deal of time teaching young children. When she entered fifth-eighth grade she was very involved in instructing students in the lower grades to read and write. Nora also credits this experience as influential to her decision to become an educator.

Figure 36: Original Schoolhouse, Whiteriver

High School: Leaving and Returning to Whiteriver

Upon graduating from eighth grade, Nora was sent to a Lutheran boarding school in Minnesota. Whiteriver, at the time Nora was living there, did not have a high school. She recalled boarding the train to Minnesota in the nearby town of Holbrook and worrying about fitting in at her new school. She didn't realize she was poor until she started preparing to leave the reservation. For instance, her family didn't have a refrigerator, all the food was kept in a dark, damp cellar with wet burlap to keep it cool and, furthermore, most of her clothes were hand-me-downs.

> I was 12 and my brother was 14, and we got on the train in Holbrook. I was worried about not fitting in at school because I didn't have the right clothes and stuff. But my dad leaned down and said, "Remember to hold your heads up high. You have had an experience living on the reservation that none of those kids have had."

In the beginning, Nora experienced "culture shock" attending high school in Minnesota. She recalled missing her family and friends and how homesick she was for the reservation, particularly during the autumn months. This was Nora's favorite season as a child: "In the fall, the air looked different in Whiteriver and it had its own smell too, a smell of smoke coming from cooking fires in wickiups. Oh, I longed for this smell."

A place to return. During her high school years, Nora would return to Whiteriver at the beginning of each summer anxious to visit her friends and family and reunite with her favorite places. One such place was Blue Lake, a lake on the reservation that Apaches believed to be bottomless. The lake was a beautiful, deep blue, unlike any color Nora has since observed. The lake was also shrouded in Apache myths and legends and Nora remembers many an afternoon fishing from its shores and reflecting on its mysterious presence.

Another favorite place Nora liked to visit as a teenager was the town of McNary. A company town on the reservation, McNary was the gathering place, the hub of the White Mountains. It bordered the town of Pinetop and was located 40 miles north of Whiteriver. Visiting McNary exposed Nora to colorful local characters, the action and excitement of bustling town life, and rendezvous sites for a burgeoning love life:

> McNary was on the reservation, near the town of Pinetop, and that's where we went to the store, to the doctor, and sometimes even the movie theater! Everything we needed was there and I loved going. It was a typical company store town, a company town, right there on the reservation. McNary was a special place. I also loved it because that's where I had my first date, there at the McNary Theater. But I was so entranced by the boy that I don't remember the movie!

Sunflowers in bloom. Nora loved returning to Whiteriver during the summer months and dreaded the day she would have to leave again for school in Minnesota. She recalled knowing she would have to leave when she saw the sunflowers in bloom on the reservation: "Fall is around the corner when the sunflowers come out. The flowers would bloom and I would know, 'Now I have to go back to school. I'm leaving soon.' I have a funny feeling about sunflowers to this day." Years later Nora learned that her parents were remorseful for sending their children away to boarding school: "My mom was 93 and dying when she told me, 'You need to know that we always regretted that we had to send you away.'"

Leaving and Returning to Whiteriver as an Adult

Upon graduating from high school, Nora attended the University of Arizona. She received a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Elementary Education and her certification in administration. After working for the Tucson Unified School District for 21 years, she returned to Whiteriver to become principal of Whiteriver Elementary School. Nora chose to return to Whiteriver because she wanted to be closer to her mother. She was also married with two young children and wished to raise them in a small town. Furthermore, Nora's husband, who was an artist, wanted to freelance and living in Whiteriver gave him the opportunity to work in his own studio. However, leaving Tucson was not an easy decision for Nora:

> I was scared actually. I was moving from this big house in Tucson to a trailer, or linear living, as we called it in Whiteriver. I had the best job in the Tucson public schools. I had a wonderful staff. I had some of the top people in Arizona working

for me at the schools and I loved them all. I worked with the university. I was also a television teacher. It was a hard decision.

Pivotal moments in place. Two pivotal moments in Nora's life and teaching career occurred soon after she arrived in Whiteriver. The first was a life-changing visit from a revered Apache elder:

> The first day in my office as a new principal, the matriarch of the Apache people came into my office and sat down regally. She asked, "Why did you come home?" I said, "Well, you know, I want to be here, and my mother's still alive." I was trying to think quickly on my feet because I actually came home because my husband and I wanted to raise our boys in a small place. She said to me, "Your mother and your father saved many, many people in the great flu. Your mother and father rode around the reservation on horseback and took food and hot soup to many people, and they saved many people's lives. Why are you here?" That moment with her left a lasting impression. It really made me ask myself, "What are you really doing?" That was really important in my growth as a teacher, as a principal, as a human being, and as a mother.

The second moment occurred when Nora was complaining to her mother about the condition of the elementary school:

> The first week there as a principal, I was so shocked over the condition of the school. Every room was filled with gum and sunflower seeds. The playground was crap. I thought, "This school looks awful!" I also realized that I didn't have a budget to do anything about it. We were staying with my mom at this time and I went home for lunch and I fell apart. I cried, and I said, "I've made a mistake. I

> will never be able to get that school ready by Labor Day." I'm crying and crying and my mother asked me what was wrong. I blurted all this stuff out. She said, "I think you're absolutely right. I think you should pack up today and go back to Tucson because obviously you can't handle this job. The kids here deserve the best and obviously you can't give it to them." Talk about a pivotal time in my life. It was the biggest wake-up call, maybe the biggest in my life, and I thought, "Oh, my gosh, what am I complaining about? Gum on the carpets?" It was a very powerful, life-changing moment.

Nora worked as a principal for Whiteriver Elementary School for an additional 23 years. Both of her sons graduated from the reservation high school. When she finally decided to retire she and her husband had to leave the reservation, as they were not members of the tribe.

Retiring and Leaving Whiteriver: New Doors Open

Eventually, Nora's husband insisted that she retire. She had worked as an educator for 44 years and he wanted them to have more free time to spend with their grandchildren. She recalled the fear of leaving her home: "When my husband wanted me to retire, I thought, 'Leave Whiteriver, my home? Where are we going to go?' It's hard realizing the place you grew up in, and later raised your sons in, may be your home emotionally but can't be your home permanently."

Nora and her husband eventually decided to reside in the small community of Cornville, Arizona. Buried in a canyon among cottonwood and willow trees, Cornville physically resembles Whiteriver and thus became the place they called home: "I

remember walking into this house here in Cornville, looking out the back at the creek and the willows and thinking, 'This looks like one of my favorite places on the reservation.'"

Once committed to Cornville, Nora and her husband, with the help of their sons, packed up their belongings in Whiteriver and headed to their new home. Nora remembers that leaving her beloved place was one of the most difficult moments in her life; saying goodbye to her friends and colleagues, her parents' gravesite, her favorite places, and her house of twenty years. However, as she neared her new home in Cornville, she believes she received a sign that life was going to be okay:

> We packed up our place in Whiteriver and we started off. We traveled in a caravan. My husband was in the Volkswagen Thing piled to the top, with the cat. I was in the Honda. My son was in his car with the dog. Near Cornville it started to pour rain and I thought, "I'm just going to unravel." But then I came around the corner and the site was unbelievable. The entire sky was just colors, filled with gorgeous oranges and pinks. It was almost overwhelming. It was the most beautiful sky I had ever seen. It was almost a spiritual thing. I thought, "I'm getting a treat from God. God is saying, 'This is okay.'" I really felt something. I thought, "Okay, this is now home." It's kind of like, mentally, you don't ever shut the door completely, but you say, "I have to open a new one." That's about the moment I did it.

Nora has now settled into her life in Cornville and yet she still carries a piece of Whiteriver with her. She recalled the story of Apache men who would leave their homes for a hunting trip. Before leaving, they would pile fresh leaves in a rock cairn and they

would tell their families they would return before the leaves dried out. Nora has a cairn in front of her house, symbolizing her metaphysical return to Whiteriver.

Wade

As Wade explains his sense of place, his hands move with rhythmic gestures and his laugh conveys an excitement and thrill for life. He is trim and wiry and dresses in Wrangler jeans and button-down western shirts. His cornflower blue eyes stand out in contrast to his snow-white hair. Wade identifies as both Apache and White. At the time of this study, Wade is 75 years old.

Forced Removal and Voluntary Return: Finding Place Anew

Wade and his twin brother were born in Whiteriver, Arizona (previously discussed in a prior profile, see Nora). Wade's grandfather, a member of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, was raised in Cedar Creek, a small community on the reservation. Wade's grandfather, when he was a teenager, was rounded up by the United States Cavalry and forced to attend a boarding school in Phoenix, Arizona. Prior to this, his grandfather had never left the reservation. After this forced removal, Wade's grandfather never returned to the reservation. He lived the rest of his life in New Mexico as a carpenter:

> The soldiers came around with the wagons. They rounded up the kids at gunpoint and sent them off to school. My grandfather was shipped to Phoenix Indian School. He was in the second graduating class at the Phoenix Indian School. When he came out of Phoenix, he never returned to the reservation. He went to Santa Fe and Albuquerque [New Mexico] and became a carpenter. That's where

my dad and his brothers were born, Albuquerque. They weren't born on the reservation.

Returning to the White Mountains: Regenerating roots. Wade's father knew little about his Apache heritage. Never having visited before and wanting to know more about his background, Wade's father and uncles first ventured to the White Mountain Apache Reservation during the Great Depression. They were part of a public works program established particularly for Native Americans, a program similar to the Civilian Conservation Core (CCC): "That's how my father got back here. That's how he got reestablished. And they [his Apache family] really accepted my dad and his brothers with open arms. They did. There was no prejudice."

After his work with the CCC, Wade's father became a night watchman, patrolling the grounds of a boarding school at Fort Apache. This is where he met Wade's mother. Wade's mother's mother (Wade's maternal grandmother) was a girl's matron at the boarding school. Wade's mother was 17 years old when she and Wade's father fell in love: "They wanted to get married in Arizona, but they couldn't. A man of color couldn't marry a White woman in Arizona in the 30s. My mother was Irish. So they had to go to New Mexico to get married." After marrying, they returned to the reservation and lived at Fort Apache.

Figure 37: Boarding School, Fort Apache, Whiteriver

All Over the Place: A Search for Financial Stability

Wade spent the first two years of his life at Fort Apache. His father then took a job with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in forest management. Wade, his twin brother, and his parents lived in government housing at the BIA complex in McNary. During this time, World War II broke out and Wade's maternal grandmother moved to Portland, Oregon. Not long after moving to McNary, Wade and his family relocated to Portland to join Wade's grandmother. In Portland, Wade's parents were hired as welders in the building of Liberty Ships. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Wade's father joined the forces and spent four years fighting in the Philippines. In the meantime, Wade's mother packed up Wade and his brother, who were five at the time, and moved to Wounded Knee, South Dakota, where her uncle owned a trading post. Wade attended first grade in a one-room schoolhouse.

When Wade entered second grade, his father returned from the war and the family moved again. Wanting to take advantage of the GI Bill, his father decided to attend the

School of Mines in Rapid City, South Dakota. After three years of struggling to support his family while attending school, Wade's father made the decision to return to the White Mountains to take a full-time job:

> Attending college was a real struggle for my father. He only received about $87.00 bucks a month to go to school on and support his family. He got jobs wherever he could. He even went away to New Castle, Wyoming, and got a job for a year in the oil fields to raise some capital. He came back, and he started in school again. He was a semester in, and he could see he was never going make it on the GI Bill. At the School of Mines he met a student who was from the McNary family, from McNary [Arizona], and he took a liking to my dad. He told my dad he could get him a job at Maverick Camp, a logging camp near McNary.

Upon their return to the reservation, Wade's family moved to Whiteriver. His father worked in the logging camp during the weekdays and returned home to his family on the weekends.

Memories in Place: Whiteriver

Wade lived in Whiteriver through the seventh grade. His home was situated on Main Street, within walking distance of school, the trading post, and the post office. Wade most clearly remembered running through grasslands and hiking mountains with friends, becoming absorbed in stories shared by relatives, and scouring canyons for gold with his father. In particular, wrangling burros was a favorite pastime of Wade's:

> The whole area between Whiteriver and Fort Apache was just country. Nothing was built there yet. I just remember running in the field with my friends. We would round up a bunch of burros. There were burros all over Whiteriver back

then because there was no running water. People used the burros to pack water from the river back up to Whiteriver. Anyway, there'd be a dozen of us or so, and we'd catch these burros and have our little ride around town.

Figure 38: Trading Post, Whiteriver

Figure 39: On the White River, Whiteriver

Place and family exploration. Wade's childhood on the reservation was also one of place and family exploration—developing associations with the landscape and his

cultural heritage. Wade's father was on a continual quest to retrace his Apache roots and learn more about his own father's past. Returning to the reservation gave him the chance to do so. It also gave Wade's father the opportunity to immerse his own sons in their culture. As such, Wade's father frequently visited his father's relatives and brought Wade and his brother along. The three most often called upon Wade's father's great uncle:

> My dad was always anxious with questions. He didn't know Apache so we would talk to my father's great uncle through an interpreter. He lived in a traditional wickiup in Cedar Creek, the same place my grandfather was taken by gunpoint all those years ago. He would tell my dad what it was like growing up with a bow and arrow. He also talked a lot about the country he traveled around Cedar Creek and R-14 Ranch, which is the nucleus of our clan. This is the land where our roots come from.
>
> Our family there took us in as if we were their own. I remember we went there once, and the uncles had been hunting. They had killed a deer. We had gotten there late in the afternoon. We were visiting. They cooked this deer over an open fire. They handed this meat to us, it was burnt on the outside and they poured salt all over it. We took a bite and it was raw on the inside! Of course we accepted graciously their offerings.

Learning and respecting place-names. Wade's father had studied mineralogy at the School of Mines and became very interested in geology. He became, as Wade described him, "a rock hound" and spent most of his free time exploring the reservation for mineral deposits, most particularly gold. On visits to Cedar Creek, Wade's father and his father's great uncle would also discuss geology. Wade's father would seek

descriptions from him of unusual rock formations in the area. Wade recalled learning about Apache place-names during this time, as specific landmarks with place-names were used to guide his father to mineral prospects.

> My dad would ask, "Do you know of any unusual-looking things on the ground or in veins?" Uncle told dad of a place south of Cedar Creek where there was an outcrop of something that looked like a giant crystal. Uncle saw it when he was a kid and used landmarks and place-names to tell him how to get there, but dad never found it.

From discussions with elders, Wade learned from an early age the historical and cultural significance of place-names. This knowledge, he believes, has given him a deeper and more intimate relationship with the land, a relationship he continues to honor even today:

> We learned about place-names, their historical and cultural significance. A few years ago I proposed a mining operation for cinders from the tallest cinder cone on the reservation at 8,400 feet. I ran it through the historical preservation office at Fort Apache. They said, "No, the old-timers say there is something about that place, and we shouldn't mine it." I found out it has a place-name and that's important so I didn't pursue mining it.

Prospecting expeditions. Wade and his brother often joined their father on prospecting expeditions, helping him to stake claims, haul supplies, and assay potential deposits. The most frequented place was the Salt River Canyon, a deep canyon that cuts through the lower portion of the reservation. This time spent with his father was profoundly ingrained in Wade's memory. He recalled walking for miles in the hot sun,

learning intimately the landscape around him. Though his father never found enough gold to make it worth his while to process, he did instill in Wade a love of geology and hard work, kindling a sense of adventure and quest for the unknown.

Placed stories. Wade, as a child, also took great pleasure in listening to stories about places and events that occurred on the reservation. These stories served to further immerse Wade into his surrounding landscape. Wade recalled one story in particular that he still laughs at even today. Once a year government workers rounded up undomesticated horses and burros that ran wild on the reservation. They would take them to the local fish hatchery, slaughter the horses and burros, and grind them up for fish food. Wade's cousin's job was to chop the heads off the wild horses and burros:

> My cousin would run a horse or a burro into a shoot and then the guillotine'd come down and take the head off. Once the head was off, they would come drag the dead animal out and then run the animal through a big grinder. Well, this one white stallion, a particularly magnificent white stallion, came into the shoot and my cousin severed the head, opened the gate, and, instead of lying there dead, this horse got up and took off without a head! It took off like a chicken with his head off! It spooked my cousin so badly that he quit his job. He said that was a bad omen.

To this day when Wade sees a white mustang or visits a fish hatchery, this story comes to mind and he chuckles to himself.

Wade also recollected a story his father told of finding the skeletal remains of a cavalry soldier. One afternoon, Wade's father came home from work and told his sons about his discovery in a field near Whiteriver. Wade's father believed it was a cavalry

soldier because of the brass buttons scattered near the remains, as cavalry soldiers from the late 1800s usually wore brass buttons on their coats. Furthermore, Wade had a friend who found a human skull close to the site of Wade's father's skeletal sighting. His father's story, coupled with the physical evidence of human remains, ignited Wade's imagination. Wade spent numerous days retracing his father's footsteps. When Wade finally discovered what he believed to be the location, he could only speculate on events that unfolded at the site:

> My friend showed us his skull and said, "I'll show you where I found it." So we went toward Whiteriver. I think we hitchhiked. We came down to a draw that crosses the highway and runs out toward the rim and drains off the canyon. There's a rock wall there, built about as high as a kitchen table, I suppose, in a kind of semi-circle. I found brass buttons scattered around that rock fortress. I bet you that's where my dad came across that skeleton, probably right below that site. I never did find the skeleton. But, what I think happened at this site is the Apaches must have cornered the cavalry and the cavalry built this fortress up to protect themselves. One by one, I think, they were picked off. I never could find out any specific information about this battle even though I looked.

On the Move Again: New Mexico

At the beginning of his 8th grade year, Wade's father was offered a job in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The family packed up their belongings, loaded their old Plymouth car, and set out on their new adventure. In Santa Fe Wade's mother found employment working as a maid for Ernest Thompson Seton, the founder of the Boy Scouts of America. Mr. Seton's specimen collection and graphic artwork left a lasting impression

on Wade. Wade credits this experience as influential in his decision to later become a wildlife specialist:

> He was an amazing man and he took my brother and me in. He had a mounted museum collection of all the birds and mammals he could get his hands on across the country: drawer, after drawer, after drawer, after drawer. I mean it was massive. I remember how good his specimens looked. He did such an articulate job. It was the kind of thing that would light a fire under most any kid, I think. He was also a painter, an artist as well. Over his fireplace, he had this massive rock fireplace, was this painting of a wolf eating off the skeleton of a man. Now was that vivid to a youngster? Boy he really had it right down! I was so young and it left quite the impression.

After a year stint in Santa Fe, Wade's father obtained employment with the sawmill at McNary and the family returned to the White Mountain Apache Reservation.

Memories in Place: McNary

An awareness of wild creatures. Wade, his brother, and his parents moved into the same BIA housing quarters where they had lived when Wade was a small child. Wade believed McNary was a "great place to return to and to grow up because it was *the* place to be on the mountain." Not only was McNary the social and economic hub of the White Mountains, but it also afforded Wade the opportunity to fully immerse himself in the outdoors. Wade's favorite activity was running trap lines behind his house in the mornings before school. Raccoons and skunks were by far the most common catch. Wade kept the skunks alive and resold them to a local veterinarian to later be deskunked. Raccoons, on the other hand, were killed, skinned, and consumed:

> There were a lot of raccoons. I'd bring in raccoons, and I'd skin 'em. There was a Black lady in the quarters that cooked raccoon where it tasted really great. Those people from the South sure knew how to do up raccoon. I think she parboiled them and then baked them in the oven with vegetables. I'd bring her two raccoons, and she'd give me one back. That's how we had raccoon.

Wade was also paid by the BIA to kill porcupines. It was thought, at this time, that porcupines were destroying the forests on the reservation and the BIA paid a $2.00 bounty on each scalp procured. With a .22 single-shot rifle in hand, Wade and his brother decided to make their fortune shooting porcupines:

> My dad gave each of us a rifle and said, "Okay, I'm going to buy you each a box of .22 shells, and you get one shell per porcupine." We learned to be deadly shots on our porcupine. I remember once in a great while we'd shoot one and it's claws would be holding onto a branch 50 feet above us and it'd die that way, its fingers still clinging to the tree. We had to use another shot to knock it down. Well, we'd sell the porcupines we killed. We would take the scalp with the ears on it to the BIA and they would pay us. I remember we came out of there one day, and we made $20 for our sack of scalps. We went down the alley, and the BIA had taken all the scalps we'd given them and thrown them in a trashcan. Well, we took all the scalps and went back into the BIA and sold them all again!

Most distressingly, Wade can remember killing his first, and only, bear. He was 15 years old when a black bear crossed the road in front of him, his brother, and their friend. They were wild with excitement and all three started shooting, eventually killing the bear. The three returned to McNary, proud over the kill. Wade and his brother,

however, are members of the Bear Clan and Wade remembered receiving a stern lecture from his uncle: “My uncle said, ‘We're members of the Bear Clan and you don't kill Grandfather.’” Wade learned an invaluable lesson concerning his Apache heritage that day and has never shot or trapped a bear since.

Solo trips. Besides trapping and shooting, Wade also loved to fish. His favorite place to venture was Blue Lake,[21] “a beautiful, deep, volcanic cone lake, where the water's just pure blue.” Often accompanying Wade on his fishing expeditions was his favorite companion, Solo. Solo was a 40-pound dog, a mix between cur and terrier. On one particular fishing trip, an ideal day was hampered by the possibility of Solo’s death:

> One day before school, I took a sleeping bag, some salt and pepper, a fishing rod, and my .22. My plan was to camp out and fish. My mom said, "No, you can't go," but I went anyway. Solo and I were headed off into the woods and I stepped over a log, and this rattlesnake buzzed. I stepped back, and I went to load the .22. Well, Solo had been turkey hunting enough with me that he knew when I was loading the gun, there was game. He jumped right over the log and into the middle of that rattlesnake, and it struck him on the neck. I tried to coach the dog to follow me back up the hill, but he went and laid down. The rattler had struck him right in the jugular vein. So I hid the rifle and the sleeping bag and the stuff I was carrying and I put Solo on my shoulders. I carried him all the way back up the hill and to the general store. The pharmacist at the general store was about half-veterinarian. He said, "Bring him in." There was a boardwalk outside. We

[21] This is the lake that also left an impression on Nora.

laid him down, and he shaved Solo. He gave him an anti-venom shot and said, "Go next door in the store and get horseradish and onion." The pharmacist lanced Solo's neck and made a poultice from the horseradish and onion and wrapped this bandage around the bite. I carried Solo back to the complex there, where I lived. That dog laid around for two or three days. He hardly got up at all, even for a drink of water, he was so sick. But he came out of it and totally recovered from that rattlesnake bite. In the meantime, I snuck off over the hill, and got my gun and my sleeping bag and stuff, and came back home. I don't think my mom ever knew I disobeyed her.

Figure 40: Mill Pond, McNary

Seasons in place. Wade's favorite season as a child was fall, when the "colors in the mountains were at their best." He particularly loved when the aspen leaves turned from green to bright oranges and yellows as this signaled the start of hunting season. Wade felt this was the time of year when he was most "tuned into nature." He recalled

the exhilarating feeling of leaving the comforts of home behind and setting up hunting camps on the edges of cienegas and washing his face with cold, clear water from natural springs. Etched deeply in Wade's memory was a particular hunting trip that occurred in October:

> There was a cowboy my dad knew and he lived in an old cowboy shack in the mountains because he spent all summer there herding cattle. He invited dad, my brother, and me to come and spend the night in the cabin. My dad wanted to get an elk and this cowboy knew about a secret meadow where there'd be lots of elk. I remember it was October and staying in that cabin. It was so darn pretty. I remember listening to the pitter-patter of raindrops on that corrugated tin roof. It was just like being in heaven. The cowboy camp had a coal-woodstove over in the corner and some bunks for us to sleep on with our sleeping bags. I remember getting up early in the morning and walking, tippy-toeing, over to the meadow and seeing about 50 elk in the clearing. It was like magic for a kid.

To this day, Wade returns to this location and reminisces on the time when "being in nature as a kid was such a delightful thing."

Figure 41: Aspen Grove, Mountains near McNary

Learning Experiences

Wade moved eight times by the time he graduated from high school. Moving from place to place and from school to school proved to be very unsettling for Wade. There were places he felt he never stayed long enough to develop associations with. Wade credits his parents for supporting him and his brother through these tumultuous transitions:

> It's a wonder we survived at all. We bounced around a lot. But I have to thank my folks, more than the school environment, for their support because when you tear a kid away from his friends and his social circle and go on to another one and another one, that can be devastating. But my parents helped us to overcome that. I have to give my folks credit for staying with us and encouraging us.

On account of being constantly uprooted, Wade did not recall specific details in his schooling experiences. His only prominent recollection was being sprayed for lice at

his elementary school in Whiteriver: " I remember they'd take us outside and line us up. They'd go down the line and 'spray, spray, spray.'"

Rather than learning conditional knowledge from a schooled teacher, Wade believed he learned imperative life skills from individuals on the reservation—individuals whom he speculated were deemed "uneducated" by the academic world. "There were a lot of people with lots of brain power on the reservation. Some of these people impressed me so much as a young guy growing up. I remember thinking, "Dang! I know some don't have much education, but they must be well read in some respect or something."

Wade learned to read his natural surroundings from his cousins and uncles, relatives who had never been to college but knew intimately the land they lived in. He acquired the necessary skills to construct roads and recognize quality aggregates from a self-taught Apache man who worked for the BIA. And he learned the value of commitment and loyalty from a venerated Apache elder.[22] This particular Apache woman, considered the matriarch of the tribe at that time, accidently ran over Wade's twin brother. Wade's brother bounded out in front of her as she drove her truck across a bridge in Whiteriver. Wade's brother's pelvis was broken in two places and it was feared he would never walk again. Fortunately, he was up and running again in three months. From the moment of the accident, she took Wade and his brother under her wing, caring for them throughout their youth, and even helping them financially in college.

A father's influence. The most influential teacher in Wade's life was his father. His father valued reading, writing, and arithmetic and felt the local public schools were

[22] This is the same elder who left a lasting impact on Nora.

failing his sons in these areas. As such, Wade's father took it upon himself to instruct Wade and his brother in the educational needs he felt required attention:

> The teachers didn't teach algebra in school so my dad did. He was very good at math and English composition. He would make us sit down after school and he would teach us. We did resist though. Can you imagine him grabbing us after school, when we just wanted to be outside, and trying to teach us algebra? Poor dad, he tried his heart out. He did impress me greatly.

Wade respected his father and his attempt to give him and his brother a more formal educational foundation. But what affected Wade even more was his father's visionary foresight:

> He wrote an article for an agriculture magazine. It was about land management, forestry and grazing, and everything on the Fort Apache. He was a man 50 years ahead of his time, because he predicted what this place was going to look like in terms of degradation of forest and rangelands here. I was so impressed at what he wrote in that article. It all came true, too.

Wade also learned, from his father's experiences, the harsh realities of discrimination. Wade stated his father was continually passed over for promotions or not hired for a specific job because he was Native American: "As a man of color, my dad couldn't get anywhere in the 40s or 50s." In high school, Wade recalled his father offering him two pieces of advice: "My father said, 'Son, don't ever work for the BIA, because it's so racially prejudiced, and don't ever join the army, because men of color are not treated well.'" Wade's father felt particularly discriminated against when he was employed by these two institutions:

> When my dad was in the army, my mom would send him care packages with baked goods and different things. They were always broken open and pilfered before he got what was left. If you were a Mexican or an Indian or Black, you were treated as lower class citizens, even though you were serving your country. That's the way it was in the army.
>
> In the BIA, in those days, it was 90 percent Anglo. Prejudice against bringing Native Americans on was tough. As a Native American you really had to be extra good, or have extra good credentials. There were hardly any educated Native Americans in the ranks. My dad had three years of college but he was still continually passed up.

Leaving the White Mountains

Wade attended his senior year of high school in Aberdeen, South Dakota. Upon graduation he went to Haskell Institute, the All American Indian School for Trades, in Lawrence, Kansas. After a few years, he transferred to South Dakota State in Brookings, South Dakota. Wade enjoyed his years at South Dakota State, most particularly taking wildlife classes and heading the school's Indian Club.

After completing a degree in Wildlife Conservation, Wade accepted a position at Fort Huachuca, a military base in Arizona, conducting range wildlife studies. Wade worked at Fort Huachuca for thirteen years and then took a position with the Forest Service working as a wildlife conservation specialist in the Kaibab National Forest near Fredonia, Arizona. After three and half years in Fredonia, Wade transferred to Petersburg, Alaska. He ended his career working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in

Bethel, Alaska, as the agency's superintendent. Ironically, against his father's wishes, Wade worked for both the army and the BIA.

While working in Alaska, Wade "fell in love" with the outdoor amenities the state offered. He became an avid salmon fisherman and even obtained a commercial halibut permit. Wade believes part of his heart is still in Alaska.

Returning to the White Mountains

During his career, Wade would return to the reservation. He would take time off in the fall, as well as the month of December, to hunt elk and deer in order to supply his wife and child with meat for the year.

Upon retirement, Wade dreamed of wintering in the White Mountains and summering in Petersburg, Alaska. As such, he bought a house in Pinetop two years prior to his retirement and was making plans to buy property in Alaska when his world radically changed. After forty-four years of marriage, Wade and his wife divorced.

> I had the world by the tail, and I was doing pretty good at it but something went wrong. Unfortunately, I lost a great deal of money in the divorce. That's why I'm 75 and still working. I'd enjoyed life right up until that point immensely. I had so many opportunities.

Though his divorce was difficult, Wade feels incredibly fortunate to be back in the White Mountains: "I'm lucky and blessed in that regard. I have the health and the motivation to keep going here and I'm enjoying a good social life and everything." Wade's nieces—his brother's daughters—played an important role in his recovery: "They'd tell me, 'You need to get back out and get social again. Sitting around the house is not your thing.' My nieces are like daughters and really encouraged me." Furthermore,

Wade gained strength through the support of his Apache relatives, and subsequent re-immersion in his culture:

> I'll tell what you helped get me through here. The word got out what had happened to me with my Apache relatives, and I had one sunrise dance invitation after the other. They took me in like I'd never been gone away from here. That's when I became re-immersed in the culture. I had five or six sunrise dances every season, invites to one thing or another, and different ceremonies. What really helped keep me afloat was the culture side of it and my relatives.

Looking to the Future: Chasing Rainbows

Wade is now fully retired from the BIA but is working on several different forestry-related projects with the tribe. He spends his free time in the outdoors, reflecting on the White Mountains of his childhood: “This land, this country, has changed so much through forestry, logging, grazing, land management. It's nothing like it used to be. As a child I saw it in its infancy before the changes.” To combat drastic changes occurring to his beloved place, Wade has developed a new vision. He wants to build and open an aspen mill in McNary. Wade believes that to revive wildlife populations in the area, particularly elk and deer, the aspen stands on which they depend need to be regenerated. And, in order to regenerate, the aspen must be appropriately harvested: “I developed my vision way back in the 60s and I'm not giving up.”

Wade is deeply committed to the White Mountains and the reservation of his youth. As such, he believes the aspen mill would be his chance to give back to his place, his family, and the people of the area who have supported him throughout his life:

> If we are to be judged, I don't think we'll be judged by what we take from the world, but what we give back. If nothing else, I'll give something back to the world; you can't take the world with you when you die anyway. That's my philosophy. Helping to revitalize the aspen and animal populations is my way of giving back to this place and the people here. This is the rainbow I'm chasing. That's my rainbow.

Conclusion

These narratives, rooted in local landscapes and family and community structures, illustrate a deeper understanding of the topographical and social intimacy of lived experiences in place. They portray a people that are a part of their place, in-tune with its daily rhythms, responsive to its fluctuations, and deeply familiar with its textures, sounds, and smells. The narratives in this chapter present experiences of place that are at times wondrous and sublime, and at other times harsh and frightening. Place experience emerged both tangibly and ephemerally as participants recalled living in the White Mountains as a child, as an adolescent, and as an adult. A discussion on the unique qualities that emerged from participant place experiences will be addressed in further detail in the following chapter.

Chapter Five: A Place-Way-of-Life

As participants narrated their place experiences in the White Mountains of eastern Arizona, they emphasized a *place-way-of-life*. A place-way-of-life is a way-of-being, a way of interacting with place as it, in turn, interacts with people. It is a way-of-life shaped by historical, genealogic, economic, cultural, metaphorical, social, linguistic, and narrative ties to place. In the White Mountains of eastern Arizona, a place-way-of-life for the participants in this study was influenced by forests, fields, and rivers; by the height and aerial breadth of the sky; by fertile gardens and arid land; by the tactile sensations of changing seasons; by family, community, and institutions; by confronting issues of race, class, and gender; and by the people who came before. A place-way-of-life can also be understood as a way of sensing place. But what are the specific, phenomenological qualities that make up this relationship to place?

In this chapter, I return to my first research question and discuss the elements that compose a person's sense of place, or what I consider to be an individual's place-way-of-life. Drawing again on Keith Basso's (1996) quote at the beginning of Chapter 3, I attempt to "selectively sample and separately assess" the sometimes "ineffable" qualities that make up a "sense of place" (p. 84). As such, I discuss in the following pages the elements that emerged through coding and analyzing interviews for common themes (discussed in Chapter 3), as well as through crafting participant profiles (presented in Chapter 4) of place experiences in the White Mountains. These elements, along with accompanying subthemes, emerged as Part-of-Place (play-and-exploration, cultivation-of-place, stories-of-place, dangerous-endeavors, and care-of-place); Place-Sensations

(remarkable-moments, sensory-triggers, and features-marked-in-time); and Ruptures-in-the-Place-World (pivotal-moments, barriers-borders-boundaries, drastic-changes, and injuries).

I begin this chapter by reviewing the phenomenological concepts that inform and facilitate a deeper understanding of the elements of sensing place that emerged from participants' place experiences. The concepts include "place," "insideness," and "outsideness" as defined by Edward Relph. I also introduce the concept "place-worlds," a term I will be using throughout this chapter. Next, I discuss how participants experience varying degrees of insideness through *part-of-place* and *place-sensations*. I then address the ways in which participants experience varying degrees of outsideness through *ruptures-in-the-place-world*.

Place, Insideness and Outsideness, and Place-Worlds

Place, insideness and outsideness, and place-worlds are concepts that will be discussed frequently in the following pages of this chapter. I have presented both place and insideness and outsideness, as informed by Edward Relph, in previous chapters of this dissertation (see Chapters 1, 2, and 3). However, in this section I relate these concepts specifically to the ways in which I discuss my findings. As such, I provide a review of each concept, as well as a brief examination of how these concepts inform a discussion on peoples' place experiences in the White Mountains.

Place

Place, according to Relph (1976), encompasses the following elements: place consists of a physical setting (the landscape and material qualities); the activities,

situations, and events (people's everyday movements and behaviors) that occur in that setting; as well as the meaning (significance, value, and emotion) created through human experiences in regard to that particular setting. These elements are not separate entities but should be understood as a constituted totality. Places can range from an immobile station wagon, to a two-room schoolhouse, to a family homestead, to a fort in the plum thickets, to the banks of the river, to a participant's home, to a community, and to the White Mountains themselves.

Place-Worlds

Furthermore, building from Relph's understanding of place, I use the term *place-world*[23] in my analysis of participants' experiences. I define a place-world as the most frequently covered place-scape in an individual's world. In other words, the range of an individual's lifeworld activities occurring across and within a particular place where home serves as the center of the radius. Or, said another way, the familiar places a person encounters on a frequent basis. This range includes domiciles, neighborhoods, communities, and natural settings. As a child, one's place-world might consist of fields traversed repeatedly, gardens cultivated, yards consistently played in, and institutions (home, school, church) frequented on a regular basis.

Insideness and Outsideness

Additionally, Relph provides a framework to better understand how individuals *experience* place. According to Relph, people (and groups) experience place through a continuum of "insideness" and "outsideness." For Relph, insideness is the existential crux

[23] Edward Casey (1993) uses the term place-world to refer to the "phenomenal particularization of 'being-in-the-world'" (p. xv), a phrase that he extends from the Heideggerian concept of being-in-place.

of place experience: “To be inside a place means to belong to it and to identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are the stronger is this identity with place” (p. 49). If an individual is inside place, he or she strongly identifies with a place and feelings of *being at home* emerge. As Relph explains: “It is insideness that most people experience when they are at home and in their own town or region, when they know the place and its people and are known and accepted there” (p. 55).

A sense of outsideness, on the other hand, in the most extreme form, is to feel homeless and alienated from place. But it can occur in less extreme forms as well. According to Seamon and Sowers (2008), when people experience place through outsideness they may “feel some sort of lived division or separation between themselves and world…” (p. 45). In the context of this study, a sense of outsideness for a participant emerged when the everyday familiarity of his or her world was abruptly interrupted causing him or her to feel estranged or separated from place.

Relph presents seven modes of insideness and outsideness grounded in various levels of involvement and meaning with place: existential outsideness, objective outsideness, incidental outsideness, vicarious insideness, behavioral insideness, empathetic insideness, and existential insideness. As I discuss the findings in this chapter, I do not examine each element of sensing place in relation to these specific modes. Considering the dynamic and complex nature of the participants’ senses of place, categorizing their experiences into these seven modes proves problematic. By imposing categories and labels on experiences, I risk essentializing these experiences and missing what might be an important aspect of sensing place. In this chapter, then, I use the understandings of insideness and outsideness as interpretative lenses rather than as

analytic categories to apply to an empirical study. As such, the multifarious intersections and negotiations of insideness and outsideness, in broader terms, provide a conceptual language by which to better understand the elements that compose a person's sense of place in the White Mountains.

Elements of Sensing Place

Part-of-Place

"Working on the ranch and the farm was just something that we did. We lived it. We breathed it. It was everything. It was just a part of us." —Owen

As Owen and the other participants discussed their childhood experiences, a deep intimacy of lived involvement in place emerged. From an early age participants were immersed in place. Participants experienced place on a daily, seasonal, and annual basis. They had access to fields, farms, and forests. Schools, grocery stores, and churches were all within walking distance. Friends and extended family lived within close proximity. This close-knit world provided participants with ample opportunity to become involved in their place-worlds to such a degree that they sensed they were *part-of-place*. As a result, participants' descriptions of place experiences, both as children and as adults, were characterized by a deep sense of rootedness, of knowledge, of ownership, of comfort, and of ease in place, all elements that constitute an insiders' perspective of place (Relph, 1976; Seamon, 1979).

Participants became, and continue to be, part-of-place through participation in everyday, familiar, lifeworld activities. The most frequent activities that emerged in

participant narratives of place include play-and-exploration, cultivation-of-place, stories-of-place, and dangerous-endeavors.

Play-and-exploration. As children, participants experienced their place-worlds through active play *in* and exploration *of* their surrounding areas. Participants recalled traipsing through neighborhood streets, parks, and vacant lots. They reminisced about hunting and fishing trips to nearby forests and lakes. They remembered playing in rivers, streams, irrigation ditches, yards, and playgrounds and escaping to such places as abandoned buildings and old cars. Active engagement in place was often manipulative: building forts in wild plum thickets and willow breaks, and constructing houses from cardboard boxes and old pieces of wood.

The feelings that characterized participant place experiences through play and exploration were overwhelmingly positive. A sense of being adventurous, captivated, and enthralled emerged. Most prominently, a feeling of intimacy of place surfaced as participants recalled exploring their place-world via horseback (and burro back) and on foot, or, in the case of Daniela, in the back of a teacher's old army truck. As participants partook in unrestricted movement and play across a variety of landscapes and community-scapes, their explorations simultaneously represented a sense of familiarity and a sense of ease with place.

As adults, play-and-exploration also emerged as elements in participant place experiences. Participants were still actively engaged in recreational activities in their place-worlds. They spoke of exploration by means of hiking and walking; of returning to explore and play in specific areas, like Owen's homestead, with their children; and of hunting wild game and chopping wood in the forest. A lifetime of playing and exploring

resulted in a deep affection for place as well as a deep connection with place. As such, a strong sense of insideness emerged.

Cultivation-of-place. Participants, as children, also illustrated characteristics of insideness through cultivation-of-place. As a means to supplement income, participants' families' livelihoods were largely dependent on a subsistence way of life. In contributing to meaningful work that was central to their family's well being, participants learned to be resourceful and responsible in their care of gardens, livestock, crops, and equipment. Participants nurtured and cared for place and living things by tilling the soil, hunting, trapping, chopping wood, herding cattle, and taking care of horses. As such, forests, farms, ranches, gardens, yards, fields, corrals, canyons, and orchards served as tangible arenas in which to cultivate relationships *with* place, and animal husbandry provided a means by which to nurture relationships *in* place. Although difficult and arduous at times, cultivating relationships with place provided participants with a sense of purpose. As a result, participants felt they belonged and their presence mattered.

Stories-of-place. Stories that concerned the place-world of the participant further immersed her or him within place. Stories told by grandparents, parents, relatives, and hired workers offered apertures into other peoples' experiences of a particular place. Place became worlds composed of the here and the there, the past and the present. As such, place came alive through stories of animated events, fearless actions, and moral deeds. For example, places became for Wade the sites of headless horses, cavalry skeletons, place-names, discrimination and segregation, forced removal and voluntary return, and self-determination. For Nora, places became sites of Apache oral tradition,

cowboy shenanigans, and her parents' service to others. Stories of place, for all participants, offered poignant additions to their own personal experiences with place.

Moreover, origin stories further rooted participants in place. Through rich narratives of ancestral beginnings in the area, participants discovered how they came to be a placed person. These narratives articulated complex, storied relationships with place: missionaries settling the land, spreading the word of God, and serving others (Nora and Owen); a company owner pursuing timber resources (Cynthia); farmers seeking acreage for heirloom chilies (Daniela); and a father's quest to discover the land of his roots (Wade). Genealogical ties to a particular place provided participants with historical connections and highlighted an increased sense of stability. A degree of insideness with place not only emerged by way of the participant, but by those who came before.

Dangerous-endeavors. A sense of insideness also emerged as participants spoke of their childhood enthusiasm to push the limits of their place-worlds through dangerous endeavors and daredevil acts. Thick descriptions of place surfaced as participants recalled these moments. Owen vividly described the rope swing at the homestead; the big, old ponderosa pine; and the subsequent feelings of flying through the air as he held tightly to the rope knowing that if he let go, serious injuries might occur. Cynthia recalled in detail the dangerous ordeal of taming a wild, barrel-chested beast of a horse, and breaking laws by plunking watermelons with vodka. Nora's sense of place was heightened by scary sounds as she crept around an abandoned boarding house and played hide-and-go-seek in an old cemetery. Adrenaline rushes further intensified her sense of place as she zipped down slides and rode renegade horses. And Wade experienced a heightened sense of place through hunting and trapping and encounters with wild animals and rattlesnakes.

Encountering place in the extreme, and the accompanying feelings of alertness, brought everyday place-worlds fully into being. This created intimate moments between person and place and developed an extended sense of self and of place-worlds. Participants felt they could partake in dangerous endeavors as a sense of confidence with place emerged. This confidence resulted in a deep sense of insideness.

Care-of-place. As children, the participants conveyed a deep sense of belonging and identification with place, and as adults, they expressed a deep affection for and a great desire to give back to this place that nurtured them as children. Participants have been, or continue to be, very involved in and committed to the place of their childhood. Cynthia returned to teach in both McNary and Pinetop. She has developed enduring relationships with students, their families, and her staff. Concerned over the future of the environment, she has dedicated her time and energy to the creation of an organization centered on getting people outdoors and in touch with nature. Daniela returned to teach in the White Mountains and served both the children of Whiteriver and Pinetop. She continues to care for place by attending to her aging parents in Concho, supporting extended family in the area, and taking care of local wildlife populations in Greer. Returning to the White Mountains to open a law practice with his brothers, Owen established commitments with place and the people he served. He strengthened relationships in the area by representing the communities of Show Low and Snowflake. He continues to return to St. Johns to help his brother work the land and round up cattle, and he still cares deeply about the homestead and wishes to return. Nora returned to her home community of Whiteriver. She dedicated her career to educating children, teacher advocacy, and assisting with community endeavors to strengthen Apache culture and

language. She served as an ambassador for the rights of all children to have the best of public education. To combat the drastic, detrimental changes to the environment of his youth, Wade dreams of building an aspen mill for forest and wildlife regeneration. He plans to remain in the White Mountains, caring for the people and place that cared for and supported him through difficult transitions in his life.

A sense of commitment to and deep respect for place emerged as participants continue to nourish a deep relationship with the place of their childhood. Through care-of-place, participants continue to be part-of-place.

Place-Sensations

> The entire sky was just colors, filled with gorgeous oranges and pinks. It was almost overwhelming. It was the most beautiful sky I had ever seen. It was almost a spiritual thing. I thought, "I'm getting a treat from God…" I really felt something. —Nora

A variation of insideness emerged as participants reflected on their place experiences. Participants reminisced on moments when an intense affective bond with place materialized in response to a particular occasion, feature, or event in their place-worlds. In these moments, place was sensed aesthetically, tactilely, and emotionally, and the familiarity of everyday place-worlds was more clearly felt. In these moments, the capacity of place to hold time emerged. The senses gathered the past into the present and, in some cases, the future. Time seemed to stand still as they absorbed the beauty and magic of their surroundings, or as a certain smell brought forth fond memories of childhood.

Experiencing place-sensations is what made place distinctive. Place was seen more clearly, heard more loudly, smelled more penetratingly, felt more intensely, and tasted more acutely: a sky the darkest blue, the sound of echoing thunder, the smell of cooking fires, the feel of fall air, and the taste of raw deer meat. Attentiveness to such profound sensations resulted in sustaining relationships between people and place and further intensified a sense of insideness.

To demonstrate this, I present, in the following pages, three subthemes of place-sensations. These include remarkable-moments, sensory-triggers, and features-marked-in-time.

Remarkable-moments. Participants described experiences with place that simultaneously consisted of both discernible and ineffable qualities. These qualities emerged as remarkable moments in participants' lives. In these moments, participants stepped back from their everyday life activities and reveled in the mysteries of place.

Owen, Nora, Daniela, and Wade defined remarkable moments that occurred in nature. Owen recalled noteworthy moments when herding cattle in the mountains as a teenager. He remembered the clarity of a summer blue sky before the monsoon clouds rolled in; being caught in a rainstorm, the lightening flickering around him, and the thunder echoing like fireworks; and coming across the most beautiful meadows and mountains, streams, and cienegas as he searched for wandering cows. Reminiscing on a spiritual moment, Nora recalled witnessing the unbelievable beauty of a sky filled with the most gorgeous pinks and oranges as she arrived at her new home in Cornville. Walking through the forest near Greer, thinking of her terminally ill brother, Daniela recalled glancing up to the clearest, most brilliant, dark blue sky she'd ever seen. Wade

recollected the heavenly night he spent in a cowboy camp and his magical encounter with grazing elk the following morning.

Cynthia described remarkable moments that did not concern nature or being out in nature. Rather, she recalled the moment she stood in her high school hallway and watched a clock count down her time to graduation, signaling the end of her teenage high school years. She also spoke about the recurring dream she has of her father speaking to her about things of importance. In this dream, and in this significant moment, she feels he is still part of her life.

Participants' descriptions of these moments revealed a deep and profound sense of place. But what made these experiences so remarkable were the mysteries that shrouded them: "Where did this beauty come from?" (Owen); "Was it a gift from God?" (Nora); "What is next?" and "What is my father telling me?" (Cynthia). Attempts to translate these experiences consisted of words like "exquisite," "amazing," "beautiful," "overwhelming," "incredible," and "so darn pretty." Remarkable moments emerged as ephemeral extensions of the physical boundaries of participants' everyday lifeworlds.

Sensory-triggers. Participants recalled strong sensory elements that triggered recollections of past experiences. Daniela responds to the color green as it brings forth the smells of her childhood: running water, wet dirt, warm breezes, clean air, gardens, and fresh fruit. Furthermore, for Daniela, the smell of tortillas cooking triggers comforting feelings of her mom and her childhood home. For Owen, an old country song on the radio transports him back to his years working on the farm and the ranch. As he listens to the song, he smells the inside of an old pickup truck and remembers driving the back roads to grazing allotments. Cynthia, Wade, and Nora spoke of a certain feeling and

look to the air, as well as a specific smell, that accompanies the onset of fall. When Nora feels the beginning of fall, she recalls the reservation of her youth and the smells of cooking fires in wickiups. Whereas Wade, upon sensing the beginning of fall, remembers hunting camps and the feeling of splashing his face with cold water from mountain springs. For Cynthia, the feel and the smell of fall elicits childhood memories of her family venturing into the forest to chop wood for the winter months.

Cynthia spoke of additional sensory triggers as well: the smell of wood chips from ponderosa pine and spruce trees and the smell of Yardley's lavender soap; the former engendering memories of her childhood days at the sawmill in McNary, and the latter, memories of her mother. She recalled recently coming across the book *The Teenie Weenies*, triggering memories of time spent reading with her mother and brother. An apple tree in her late mother's orchard also brought back memories of an altercation with a past boyfriend.

Participant descriptions of sensory triggers revealed very personal links to the past. As participants came across a familiar sense and remembered an experience in a past place, a pause in their current place-worlds followed. For a brief moment, through sensory triggers, participants returned to a place of their past and, in doing so, their present place receded to the shadows. And yet, instantaneously, sensory triggers also heightened specific features of current place-worlds. A specific cedar chest, when opened, smells of Yardley's lavender soap and reminds Cynthia of her mother. In observing and paying close attention to the environment throughout the seasons, memories were elicited of childhood place experiences. Participants wove in and out of

senses and memories, from current place to past place, and became more thoroughly engaged with place.

Features-marked-in-time. Participants spoke of specific features in their current and past place-worlds that held and encapsulated time and memory. This included natural elements, landmarks, and institutions. For instance, when Nora was a young woman, sunflowers in bloom marked her time in the White Mountains. Sunflowers represented the end of summer, the time of year that Nora would have to leave behind her beloved place for boarding school in Minnesota. Another example includes Daniela's childhood church, which she looks upon as representing and embodying the long-time traditions of her faith, family, and community. Owen's relationship with his family's homestead provides an additional illustration of a place marked in time, as it has become a place that holds his past memories, current experiences, and future dreams.

Features-marked-in-time evoke time and place in a metaphorical way. The rock cairn outside of Nora's current house in Cornville personifies her metaphysical return to Whiteriver, capturing and holding her feelings of the place she considers home. And Cynthia's childhood house forever holds the ineffable qualities of quietness and peacefulness and, as she walks through its doors, becomes the home she experienced as a child. Place-names, for Wade, also elicit time and place. They hold historical, cultural, and spiritual significance for the Apache people and, as such, Wade has learned to respect and revere such timeless features in his landscape.

Features-marked-in-time signify the bonds made between the participant and his or her place and connects the past with the present and future. Features-marked-in-time

illustrate the ways in which participants, upon recognition of such features, experience an ongoing sense of insidenesss with place.

Ruptures in the Place-World

"I probably learned some of the best lessons in my life in how to deal with tragedy and upset and things that are absolutely annihilating. You remember the things that make a difference in who you are today." —Cynthia

As insiders, participants embodied place as senses of stability, belonging, commitment, confidence, and care-of-place emerged. These feelings oriented participants in their place-worlds and, because of this, their place-worlds became a familiar place to be. However, as insiders to place, participants also had moments when they experienced varying degrees of outsideness. This occurred when participants experienced place beyond the boundaries of daily concerns. In other words, a participant felt estranged from place when his or her place-world—the everyday familiarity of his or her place—was abruptly ruptured. When these place-worlds were ruptured, place presented itself for reflection. While participants experienced place as insiders—playing and exploring, caring for, listening to stories, pushing the limits of, and overall engaging in everyday place-world activities—there were moments when something happened that caused participants to become aware of their place. This might be the result of something as simple as tripping over a dog or as tragic as the death of a loved one. In these reflective moments, a heightened sense of place emerged and participants experienced place as outsiders.

In the next section, four subthemes are presented that illustrate ruptures in participants' place-worlds. These include pivotal-moments, barriers-borders-boundaries, drastic-changes, and injuries.

Pivotal-moments. As participants discussed their place experiences, they highlighted prominent pivotal moments that occurred in their place-worlds. Most of these defining moments transpired as irrevocable ruptures, most notably in the death of parents, pets, and marriages, as well as the birth of siblings. And in that moment of rupture in their place-worlds, participants experienced place as outsiders. Once ruptured, participants looked at place, as well as their selves in place, in a new light and *that place* in *that moment* became ingrained in their memories. For example, Daniela remembered running across the field to tell her grandmother about the birth of her triplet siblings and how her responsibilities increased dramatically after their birth. Cynthia vividly recollected receiving the phone calls concerning the deaths of her father, grandfather, and uncle, the annihilating feelings that followed, and going from a child to an adult almost instantaneously. Nora recalled burying her head in her pillow to block out the sound of her horse being shot to death. And Wade described the moment he felt like life ended as a result of his divorce and, simultaneously, his subsequent re-immersion with his relatives and culture.

Pivotal moments materialized when an event occurred that caused participants to consciously question their identities and roles in life: when an Apache elder questioned Nora's intentions upon returning to the reservation, and when Nora's mother berated her for her self-pitying acts in regard to the condition of her new school; when Wade and his brother, as members of the Bear Clan, shot and killed a bear, later to realize it was against

cultural practice to kill a member of their own clan; and when a student was publicly humiliated in front of his peers and Nora knew, from that moment on, exactly what kind of teacher she did not want to become. Pivotal moments, or ruptures, in the place-world altered the course of participants' lives and remained indelibly impressed on their memories. Not only did they become outsiders during the rupture, but they also became outsiders upon reflection of the event.

Barriers-borders-boundaries. Participants experienced varying degrees of barriers, borders, and boundaries in the White Mountains. These included physical, natural, emotional, racial, cultural, social, economic, and linguistic divisions. Participants were very cognizant of these divisions: donated Christmas gifts (Daniela) and hand-me-down clothes (Nora); fenced-in cattle ranges and away-from-home ranch hands (Owen); a segregated town and an integrated high school (Cynthia); racial prejudice and institutional discrimination (Wade); a banned language (Daniela) and a language interpreter (Wade); religious principles and cultural divisions (Nora); the Mexicans and the Whites, the Catholics and the Mormons (Daniela and Owen); gender bias and class differences (Cynthia); interracial marital laws (Wade) and separate, segregated schools (Nora); and a reservation boundary (all participants).

These divisions, revealed in participant place narratives, illustrate the ways barriers, borders, and boundaries keep people *in place* and *out of place*. When participants crossed or recognized these divisions, their place-worlds and their place in the world acquired a new significance. A participant's sense and understanding of place and self was heightened as he or she subsequently experienced varying degrees of insideness and outsideness in place.

Drastic changes. Participants sensed their place when drastic changes occurred in a relatively short time frame in their place-worlds. This was most vividly portrayed in narrative renditions concerning the rapid expansion of St. Johns during the building and opening of the power plant, and in the emergence and subsequent abandonment of the company town of McNary.

St. Johns, described by Daniela and Owen as a once sleepy, sheltered little town, experienced change rapidly and drastically when the power plant was installed. The population and infrastructure of the town exploded, and as outsiders moved to town to build and work in the power plant, Daniela and Owen's place-worlds expanded rapidly as well. They came across new experiences with different peoples, cultures, and religions; they witnessed the transformation of land as new buildings and subdivisions emerged; they felt the energy of opportunity; and they feared a way-of-life soon to change.

Participants recalled witnessing the demise of McNary. Once the economic and social hub of the White Mountains, McNary was the *place to be*. Today, all that remains of this once extravagant company town are the skeletal relics of the sawmill, boarded up bungalows, and abandoned foundations. McNary has become a place almost unrecognizable to the participants. As participants reminisced on their time spent in McNary, a sense of nostalgia emerged for a place they once knew, a place that vanished as quickly as it materialized.

Rapid change to place has also come in the form of technological advances. Owen highlighted how new technology has brought more efficiency to the ranching trade: the use of cellphones instead of CB radios, and the use of all terrain vehicles in favor of horses and old pickup trucks. In a more dire form, technological advances in the shape of

nuclear weapons testing may have also been the cause of a rapid succession of cancerous deaths in the community of St. Johns. This unknown element of place created a subsequent fear of place.

In all cases, a sense of place was intensified when drastic changes transpired in quick succession in participant place-worlds. As changes occurred, a new experience with place emerged and the once familiar features of participant place-worlds receded to the background. As this new world remolded itself, participants experienced place as outsiders until the new world became familiar once again.

Injuries. Throughout the interviews, participants spoke of injuries they experienced. Sometimes painful and sometimes traumatizing (or sometimes both), the injury and the place the injury occurred remained etched in the memories of the participants. Nora reminisced upon her head concussion, her brother's broken arm, and her father's broken leg, and Cynthia remembered being flung against a barbwire fence: all injuries a result of bucking, out-of-control horses. Owen remembered tripping over his dog and receiving stitches. And Wade and Daniela both recalled injures that occurred to people and animals: a brother shooting himself in the foot and an aggressive male goat knocking down her mother (Daniela); and a beloved dog who received a life-threatening rattlesnake bite, and a twin brother crushed beneath a pickup truck (Owen).

Place was fully sensed in these scenarios. The barbwire fence, part of the familiar landscape, was fully experienced as soon as Cynthia felt the barbs inflict pain on her body. As the site of a terrifying accident, the bridge, which Wade and his brother crossed every day, took on new significance. Injuries, always occurring in a specific place, brought the everyday familiarity of place to the forefront. Injuries not only marked the

body, but the place where the injury occurred became permanently marked in memories as well.

Conclusion

The elements that composed a sense of place for five individuals in the White Mountains of Arizona emerged as a dialectical relationship between insideness and outsideness. Through a sense of insideness and outsideness, participants perceived, engaged in, and made meaning of their place experiences.

The participants experienced place in such a way that they felt they were part-of-place—that they belonged to place and it belonged to them. As children and adults, they experienced place completely and felt a sense of insideness as they played and explored, cared for, listened to stories of place, and felt the rush of adrenaline and the subsequent clarity of place through dangerous endeavors. Furthermore, aspects of insideness were felt as participants experienced place through place-sensations. Participants reveled in the mysteries of remarkable moments, relived past experiences through sensory triggers, and reminisced on features in their place-worlds that evoked feelings of timelessness. Here, the past and the present merged with the future in such a way that place held time. Place-sensations sustained relationships between people and participants, further strengthening a sense of insideness.

However, as the findings in this study illustrate, there are moments when a sense of insideness devolves into a sense of outsideness with place. The participants in this study felt a sense of outsideness to place as they experienced pivotal, life-changing moments that ruptured their way-of-life: as they crossed and recognized the barriers,

borders, and boundaries that kept themselves and others in and out of place; as their place-worlds expanded and contracted rapidly before their eyes; and as they were marked by injury. Some experiences of outsideness were more extreme than others, but in all cases an interrupted sense of place emerged.

In the next chapter, I discuss the implications of phenomenological understandings of place, as well as the interpretive findings from participant place experiences to theory, practice, and policy. Most specifically, I take the position that place-based education and culturally relevant pedagogies are mutually supportive pedagogical methods and call for a synthesis that blends the two methods into a place-responsive pedagogy.

Chapter Six: Moving Toward a Place-Responsive Pedagogy

The purpose of this dissertation was to (1) bring forth deeper understandings of place experiences and subsequently (2) open new ways of thinking about place in place-based education. In an attempt to answer these questions I have presented a phenomenologically oriented study of place and place experiences. Guiding this undertaking were the following research questions:

1) What are the elements that compose a person's sense of place?

2) In what ways might these findings inform discussions of place and place experiences for place-based education?

The first question was addressed through: a review of the major theoretical understandings of place in geography, philosophy, and education; in-depth interviews with five participants who were born and raised in the White Mountains of eastern Arizona; the crafting of participant narrative profiles; and the coding and analyzing of interviews for common themes. The phenomenological qualities of sensing place for five individuals emerged as Part-of-Place (play-and-exploration, cultivation-of-place, stories-of-place, dangerous-endeavors, and care-of-place); Place-Sensations (remarkable-moments, sensory-triggers, and features-marked-in-time); and Ruptures-in-the-Place-World (pivotal-moments, barriers-borders-boundaries, drastic-changes, and injuries). A phenomenological framework of place and insideness and outsideness provided an interpretive framework that informed and facilitated a deeper understanding of the elements of sensing place that emerged from participants' place experiences. While the research was exploratory and only investigated a limited number of place experiences,

the findings strengthen a discussion of how place is experienced and how these experiences matter in people's lives.

In this chapter, I address the second research question of this dissertation. In the first section I consider how a phenomenological understanding of place, as well as the interpretive findings from participant place experiences, may inform theoretical discussions of place in place-based education. In the second section, I speak to education practice and policy more explicitly. Taking the position that place-based education and culturally relevant pedagogies are mutually supportive pedagogical methods, I call for a synthesis that blends the two methods into a place-responsive pedagogy.

Theoretical and Conceptual Connections

Current theoretical perspectives of place in place-based education are broad and diverse. A phenomenological understanding of place proposed by scholars Edward Casey (1996, 1997, 2009), J.E. Malpas (1999, 2006), Robert Sack (1997), and most specifically Edward Relph (1976), provide sophisticated theorizing of place, which may be of value for place-based education. As discussed in Chapter 2, Casey, Malpas, Sack, and Relph conceptualize place as prior to the construction of social meaning because they view place as an irreducible, essential quality of being human and, therefore, an integral part of the human experience. Place, for these phenomenological scholars, becomes meaningful for humans through social interactions that occur within and through its structure. In contrast to purely constructivist accounts of place, phenomenological understandings make it necessary to reflect on the inherent qualities of place. Place, in such a view, is

part of the human condition. To be human is to be "in place" (Cresswell, 2004). As Casey (1997) posits:

> To be at all—to exist in any way—is to be somewhere, and to be somewhere is to be in some kind of place. Place is as requisite as the air we breathe, the ground on which we stand, the bodies we have. We are surrounded by places. We walk over and through them. We live in places, relate to others in them, die in them. Nothing we do is unplaced. (p. ix)

In a place-centered and human-centered approach, priority is given to examining and clarifying events, meanings, and experiences as they are known in everyday life (Seamon & Sowers, 2008). What becomes most important for place-based education is the primacy that such a perspective affords to place and to human experiences in place. Phenomenological understandings of place may, therefore, offer place-based education a conceptual anchor as well as a rich theoretical tradition from which to draw.

More specifically, in this dissertation, I have taken up Relph's (1976) phenomenological definition of place. As discussed in Chapter 1, current understandings of place in place-based education are defined and conceived somewhat differently by various educators and scholars (Gruenewald, 2003a; Nespor, 2008). Because of this, there is not a single definition or clear connection between conceptualizations of place in or across the literature. Furthermore, current critiques within the field of place-based education argue that little attention is given to the place-making process (Gruenewald, 2003b; Nespor, 2008; Smith, 2011). As such, place understood through Relph's conceptualization may open up new ways of thinking about place for place-based education.

Place, for Relph, is not limited to locale or physical appearances, to the wild outdoors, to ecological environments, to rural settings, or to community-based practices. Place is not a physical setting devoid of humans or a mere backdrop for human activity. Rather, place is all of this and more: it is the ultimate expression of humankind's involvement in the world. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 5, place, for Relph, consists of three components that are inseparably interwoven in our experiences of place: (1) the physical setting of place (earth, water, sky, and created environment); (2) its activities and events (functions and social constructs that are made within and through physical place); (3) and the individual and group meanings created through people's experiences in regard to that place (significances deriving from events and situations in that particular place). Taken together, the three components establish the identity of particular places. What becomes important for place-based education is that such a conceptualization of place attends to physical features of a particular place as well as to place-making processes. In future research, this conceptualization of place could enable a more holistic view of place and simultaneously a more critical understanding of the processes that go into making a place what it is. Thus, utilizing Relph's notion of place may provide a theoretically grounded definition of place for future research, offer an understanding of place that extends beyond the rural vs. urban and wild vs. man-made dichotomies that often materialize in discussions of place-based education, and attend to more explicit critiques in place-making processes.

As discussed in Chapters 2, 3, and 5, Relph uses the notions of insideness and outsideness to understand more thoroughly how individuals experience place as well as to describe the intensity of meaning individuals and place hold for each other. Seamon and

Sowers (2008) have most recently made the argument that Relph's continuum of insideness and outsideness provides extraordinary coverage and flexibility in understanding why a particular place is experienced in a particular way. Though they do not relate their argument specifically to education, what they suggest, and what place-based education can potentially draw from, is that insideness and outsideness might provide a conceptual vocabulary that allows for the precise designation of a student's, teacher's, or group's particular experience in relation to the particular place in which they find themselves. Having a language to describe place experiences might assist place-based educators in understanding how and why a particular place can be experienced differently by different students or teachers (e.g., the long-term resident vs. the newcomer) or how, over time, the same student or teacher can experience the same place differently at different times (e.g., how place may seem so different to a student after his or her parent loses a job).

Furthermore, building on Relph's notion of place, I have conceptualized the notion of place-worlds in my analysis of participants' experiences. A place-world consists of the most frequently covered places in an individual's immediate world. In other words, the range of a person's lifeworld activities occurring across and within a particular place-scape where his or her home serves as the center of the radius. This understanding, I believe, might serve as a conceptual tool for place-based education as it provides an understanding of, as well as a way to describe, the familiar places a child encounters and experiences on a frequent basis.

In the following section I turn to the place experiences of Daniela, Nora, Cynthia, Owen, and Wade. Their experiences can be understood in concrete ways through

phenomenological accounts of place such as Relph's understanding of place and place experiences—the diversity of places, how physical places become meaningful, and how place is sensed through insideness and outsidenesss—as well as through my conceptualization of place-worlds. As I have previously illustrated their experiences at length, I will merely pick one participant example each to elucidate the theoretical and conceptual connections that are arguably of value for place based education. I conclude this section with a discussion of the limitations of this study and offer suggestions for future research.

Participant Place Experiences

Places for the participants in this study consisted of physical qualities and visual forms, and became meaningful through personal involvement and activity. Places included homes, neighborhoods, communities, schools, playgrounds, open fields, backyards, forts and dens, canyons, and places of work, to name a few. Places were experienced and made meaningful through emotional moments; daring feats; lessons learned; hardships; life and death; and race, class, and gender relations. Through life-world activities that both grounded and upended them, participants reflected on place experiences that made them feel deeply involved with place, on moments that inspired awe, as well as on experiences that caused them to question their own as well as others' intentions and roles in life. Places and experiences did not exist in isolation, but rather overlapped and intertwined with one another in multifaceted ways in participant place-worlds.

Daniela's place-world consisted of her childhood home and paternal grandmother's house, the hills and back roads surrounding Concho, the church and

schools she attended, the fields and yards she played in, the gardens she worked in, and even in an old abandoned station wagon. These particular places in Daniela's place-world became significant for her through the experiences created in them. And it was through such experiences that she felt part-of-place. For instance, Daniela's grandmother's house became meaningful through the stories and the food she and her grandmother shared, and the subsequent memories they created together. Daniela's front lawn became meaningful through games of kick-the-can and hide-and-go-seek played with neighborhood children. Concho Lake became a special place for Daniela as she swam and waded in its cool waters and picnicked along the banks with friends and family; irrigation ditches and farm fields became significant through endless activities of rock collecting and mud cakes; her elementary school through participation in the editing of newspapers, séances in the bathrooms, and field trips attended; and the immobile station wagon behind her house through her own pretend adventures as well as through past memories of family outings taken in the vehicle when it was in use. The Catholic church became a significant place through song and dance performances and the many baptisms, weddings, funerals, confirmations, and first holy communions she attended or participated in. Combined with these places, Concho itself became an intensely personal place for Daniela. Daniela's experiences in place illustrate how a variety of physical places can became meaningful through social interactions that occur within, on, and through them.

Places also became meaningful to participants when an affective bond with a particular place emerged (i.e. place-sensations). Places in such instances were sensed tactically, aesthetically, and emotionally by participants in response to a particular occasion, event, or physical feature in their place-worlds. In these moments, time seemed

to stand still and places were more clearly and intensely sensed by the participants. For example, Whiteriver became more meaningful to Nora during the fall months. It was during this time as a child that her place-world most fully revealed itself to her in all its sensual particularities: the sunflowers that bloomed, signaling the change in seasons; the distinct feel and look to the air; and the smoke of cooking fires from wickiups. Additionally, Nora recalled significant moments during her teenage years when she stood on the shores of Blue Lake in McNary and marveled at the lake's peculiarities: its intense blue color, its seemingly bottomless depth, and what she felt to be its mysterious presence. As an adult Nora also reminisced on a spiritual-like moment with place: when an intense color-filled sky imbued her with a sense of awe and subsequently made her reevaluate the particular place she inhabited. Nora's place experiences demonstrate how significant emotional and sensual encounters with place can be intensely personal and profoundly meaningful to people.

Moreover, particular places became meaningful to participants when their everyday place-worlds were abruptly interrupted or ruptured. When ruptures-in-the-place-world transpired, the familiar features of participant place-worlds were significantly sensed. In a most extreme example, Cynthia can still recall the exact moment, the feelings that emerged, and the place she stood when she was told her father had died in a car accident. She can also describe, in detail, the exact physical place on the road the accident occurred. A further instance of interruption in place-worlds includes the moment a horse flung Cynthia into a barbed wired fence, the sharp barbs intensifying and marking her experience of place. Subsequently, that particular place, in that particular moment, became indelibly engrained in her memory.

The place experiences mentioned above can also be understood through a conceptual framework of insideness and outsideness. As children and adults, participants became part-of-place as they played in and explored their surroundings, cultivated relationships with land, listened to placed stories, cared for particular places, and pushed the boundaries of their everyday place-worlds. This deep intimacy with place constituted a depthful measure of at-homeness. Furthermore, a sense of insideness with place emerged for participants as they experienced place through place-sensations. As participants reveled in the mysteries of remarkable moments, relived past experiences through sensory triggers, and experienced features in their place-worlds that seemed to evoke feelings of timelessness, a sense of intense insideness emerged between participants and particular places.

For Wade, a sense of insideness emerged through daily activities in his place-world: hiking mountains with his friends, running through grasslands, attending to stories shared by relatives, scouring canyons for gold, riding burros around town, fishing in local lakes, and hunting and running trap lines in the nearby forests. Through these activities, Wade became intimately familiar with particular places in his place-world. As an adult, a sense of insideness continues to emerge for Wade through his desires and actions to give back to his home place (e.g. building an aspen mill for forest and wildlife regeneration). A sense of insideness also emerged for Wade as he experienced remarkable moments, such as the time as a child when he spent the night in an old cowboy camp, listening to the pitter-patter of raindrops on the corrugated tin roof, sleeping near the warmth of a coal-woodstove, and the magical encounter with grazing elk in meadow the following morning. In moments such as these, participants understood place as rich in meaning and

hence more deeply identified with it. Wade's examples of place experiences demonstrate how daily activities in place-worlds, as well as how remarkable moments in particular places, can intensify a strong sense of insideness for individuals.

However, there were also moments when a sense of insideness for participants was reversed to a sense of outsideness. A sense of outsideness emerged for participants when their everyday life-worlds were abruptly interrupted. This usually occurred when participants experienced pivotal, life-changing moments: barriers, borders, and boundaries that kept them, as well as others, in and out of place; when they were marked by injury; and as their place-worlds rapidly expanded and contracted.

For example, Owen (as well as Daniela) described the rapid and drastic changes that occurred in his hometown when a power plant was installed. For Owen, the everyday familiarity of his place-world quickly receded as the population of the town increased dramatically. Infrastructure expanded, new schools were built, and farm fields turned into housing subdivisions. At times, Owen felt out-of-place as he experienced sweeping changes to his place-world in such quick succession. Borders, boundaries, and barriers also emerged in Owen's descriptions of his place experiences in regard to divisions in the town of St. Johns between the Catholics/Hispanics and the Mormons/Whites. Daniela spoke of this same disjuncture as well. And though Owen and Daniela both agreed that for the most part, both sides got along well, there were certainly times when cultural and religious differences afforded a sense of outsideness for them both. This understanding demonstrates how particular moments in particular places can also be experienced through varying degrees of outsideness.

A limitation to this study is that participant place experiences, and the places these experiences occurred, are reflective of life-worlds—rural, small-town, close proximity to wild environments, and a mostly agrarian lifestyle—that have become increasingly rare in our postmodern times of urbanscape, cyberspace, continual technological advances, and high rates of geographic mobility (Cresswell, 2004; Massey, 1997; Nespor, 2008). Importantly, then, future research in place-based education might examine sense of place and the dialectical notions of insideness and outsidenss in regard to how people experience urban environments as well as places that are marked by constant change. This should also include inquires into how sense of place and insideness and outsideness emerge for people who move frequently and experience multiple places (e.g. towns, cities, countries) throughout their lifetimes. As such, how will the phenomenological qualities of sensing place that emerged for the five participants in this study stay consistent, differ, or change in future studies that take into account mobility and urban places?

Education Practice and Policy Connections: Toward Place-Responsive Pedagogies

> Back to Wendell Berry, and his belief that if you don't know where you are you don't know who you are. He is not talking about the kind of location that can be determined by looking at a map or a street sign. He is talking about the kind of knowing that involves the senses, the memory, the history of a family or a tribe. He is talking about the knowledge of place that comes from working in it in all weathers, making a living from it, suffering from its catastrophes, loving its mornings and evenings or hot noons, valuing it for the profound investment of

> labor and feeling that you, your parents and grandparents, your all-but-unknown ancestors have put into it. (Wallace Stegner, 2002, p. 205)

Participants in this study illustrated the relationship to place that Wallace Stegner evokes. They were deeply rooted to place, some having ancestors dating back hundreds of years. Participants lived in small, rural towns, attended two-room school houses, safely walked the streets of their neighborhoods, spent a great deal of time out-of-doors, and had easy access to natural environments. They were in tune with the seasons, had worked the land in varying capacities, and were emotionally invested in their place.

But not every child will have the same sense of rootedness, stability, and genealogic tie to place as the participants in this study. Not every child will live in rural settings and have access to fields and forests, rivers and streams, and experience place on a daily, seasonal, and annual basis. Not every child will reside in the land of his or her ancestors. We live in a world marked by urban environments, constant change, interchangeable locations, continuous technological advances, and geographic mobility. And yet, more often than not, the one constant in a child's life is school. For many children, then, educational settings may provide some of the few locations where a deep relationship with place, like those illustrated from participant experiences, can be engendered. Recognizing this suggests a more active role is necessary for policy makers, schools, and educators in developing strategies that foster meaningful connections between students and place.

However, as discussed in depth in Chapter 1, current education reform takes little notice of place. The increased emphasis on standardization and high-stakes accountability under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), and now the Common Core State

Standards Initiative, promotes interchangeability, standardization, and universal requirements and accountabilities and, in doing so, alienates children, youth, and teachers from the real world right outside their homes and classrooms (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Gruenewald, 2003a; Jennings, Swidler, & Koliba, 2005; Smith, 2002, 2011; Smith & Sobel, 2010). For example, this alienation from place was illuminated in a study I conducted in 2009. In this qualitative study I examined the effects of high-stakes testing, curriculum standardization, and punitive labeling practices on a public elementary school located within a Native American community (see Nolan, 2009). I found that the lived experiences of the students, as well as their language and culture, were increasingly dismissed as the school was forced to meet state and federal accountability mandates. As local knowledge systems and cultural integrity were extensively marginalized, student attendance at the school declined and community and school relationships became increasingly strained. Similar findings have been reported in a host of qualitative and quantitative studies on the impact of high-stakes accountability regimes (see e.g. Chrismer, Hodge, & Santil, 2006; McCarty, 2008; Valenzuela, 2007).

As Sanger (1998) suggests, school practices often "teach students that their relationship with their place is marginal, uninteresting, and unimportant" (p. 5). Gruenewald (2003a), as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, similarly critiques the current education system for its disproportionate emphasis on accountability and standardization:

> Current educational discourses seek to standardize the experience of students from diverse geographical and cultural places so that they may compete in the global economy. Such a goal essentially dismisses the idea of place as a primary experiential or educational context, displaces it with traditional disciplinary

content and technological skills, and abandons place to the workings of the global market. (p. 7)

In contrast, place-based initiatives recognize the significance and meaning of place and how direct experiences and encounters with the social and ecological places students actually inhabit promote student achievement and improve student interest in the environmental, social, cultural, and economic vitality of places (Gruenewald, 2003b Haas & Nachtigal, 1998; Smith, 2002; Theobald & Curtiss, 2000). Place-based educators strongly assert that current policy—initiatives that solely focus on teachers' skills and student performances—is inadequate to the larger task of community and place development, ecological literacy and identity, and environmental and cultural sustainability (Barnhardt, 2008; Powers, 2004; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Sobel, 2002).

Researchers and educators have provided rich accounts of the benefits of place-based education. As Barnhardt and Kawagley (2005) explain, there are many examples of education systems that are "under way to reconnect education to a sense of place and its attendant cultural practices and manifestations" (p. 10). Drawn from an Alaska Native context, they discuss such place-based pedagogic systems as the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative, Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge, and the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools. The underlying theme of these initiatives is the belief that students and communities will find value in learning when learning is linked "to the knowledge base and ways of knowing already established in the local community and culture" (p. 21).

Understanding the need to strengthen ties between school and place, Sharon Bishop (2004), a high school English teacher, provides a concrete example of curriculum

practices that utilize local place. In 1997, her school partnered with The Annenberg Rural Challenge to improve public education in rural settings by promoting participation in solving real-life problems, such as dwindling populations and economic insecurity. She developed a language arts curriculum that encouraged students to read literature from the region and to collect stories from community members in an effort to connect students to their families and to the elders of the community. Through research, interviews, photography, poetry, and essays, students came to see members of their families and community as real people who have made valuable contributions to their local place.

An example of place-based education in a more urban setting comes from art educator Mark Graham (2008). Teaching in a school located on Long Island, New York, Graham developed a course that introduced young people to their local place through art and art making. He encouraged students to examine aspects of their lifeworlds, most particularly, places that were deemed special to them and that were infrequently portrayed in contemporary television and films. Students depicted private places that included landscape scenes, seascapes, streets, houses, desktops, bridges, and trees. The aim of the course was to introduce students to a way of viewing the world that focused on relationships and personal meanings of place rather than conquest and consumption of place.

In recognizing the importance of place to human beings, place-based practices shift the emphasis from a discourse on the importance of accountability to a discourse on the importance of empathetic experiences in place. Such a view poses a challenge to all education policy makers to expand the scope of their theory, inquiry, and beliefs about practice to include place and place experiences in policy-making processes and school

curriculum. In short, it means making a place for the dynamics of place and place experiences whenever educators, policy makers, and researchers talk about the purposes and practices of learning.

Developing a more thorough understanding of how people experience place and how these experiences matter in people's lives would be an important step to integrating a more prominent role for place in education. In the following pages I speak more explicitly to the role of place and place-based theory—including especially the concepts of place-worlds and insideness and outsideness—for education practice and policy. Undergirding this section is the following question: how can educators and education scholars take up this research in concrete ways that not only further our theorizing about place, but also help improve education practice and policy?

As I have previously suggested in this chapter, the notion of place-worlds can serve as a viable conceptual construct in understanding as well as describing the familiar places a child encounters and experiences on a frequent basis, and the notions of insideness and outsideness can provide a conceptual vocabulary to better understand why a particular place is experienced in a particular way. Taken together, these concepts speak to place-based practices that are concerned with evoking child-place relationships.

In what follows, I discuss the significance of what I refer to as a "place-responsive pedagogy": a notion that brings together the pedagogical methods of place-based education and culturally relevant pedagogy. This includes an understanding of students' place-worlds, the importance of understanding how students experience their place-worlds in relation to insideness and outsideness, and how we can draw from these

experiences to make learning more relevant, as well as to make learning in and about places more meaningful to our youth.

A Place-Responsive Pedagogy: Place-Worlds and Insideness and Outsideness

As the findings of this dissertation demonstrate, place-worlds encompass an array of physical features, symbolic meanings, and place-specific knowledges. Place-worlds include domiciles, neighborhoods, communities, and natural settings frequented on a regular basis and, for a child, may consist of yards, fields, gardens, playgrounds, city streets, and institutions (home, school, church). Reflective of the research on children's funds of knowledge (González, Andrade, Civil, & Moll, 2001; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) and to make learning more effective and appropriate for students, a child's place-world then might serve as a natural classroom, rich with physical, cultural, linguistic, and social meaning that can simultaneously guide, ground, and motivate student learning. Such a place-responsive pedagogical approach would acknowledge the legitimacy of, for example, the language and cultural knowledge of a student's place-world as well as the multiple spheres of activity within which the child is enmeshed. By utilizing place-worlds, a place-responsive pedagogy would extend, build on, and bring together culturally relevant pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Castagno & Brayboy, 2008) and place-based education: two often disparate literatures.

Place-based educators emphasize learning in the context of local communities and environments and use particular physical attributes as well as cultural knowledge specific to a local place for curriculum development to facilitate student-driven learning. Underpinning this view is the assumption that curriculum, grounded in the local place, becomes more pertinent to the lives of students who then, in turn, become more active

participants in and contributing members of their communities (Barnhardt, 2008; Gruenewald, 2003a, 2003b; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Orr, 1992; Sobel, 2003; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Smith, 2002, 2011; Theobald & Curtiss, 2000; Thomashow, 1996).

In a similar vein, culturally responsive schooling and culturally based and culturally relevant pedagogies (all three terms are used interchangeably in the literature) have been described as educational processes that "build a bridge" between a child's home culture and the school to effect improved learning and school achievement (Pewewardy & Hammer, 2003, p. 1). Gay (2000) describes culturally responsive education as an educational process that "respects, and uses students' identities and backgrounds as meaningful sources for creating optimal leaning environments" (p. 3). For Ladson-Billings (2014) the power of culturally relevant pedagogy is its "ability to link principles of learning with deep understanding of (and appreciation for) [students'] culture" and that in doing so "[s]tudents take both responsibility for and deep interest in their education" (p. 77). By honoring and respecting students' cultural backgrounds (which also includes linguistic backgrounds), culturally relevant curriculum connects students' lives to educational process.

Culturally relevant pedagogies, similar to place-based practices, have been taken up in rural and urban contexts as well as in Native American communities and schools. The Alaska Native Knowledge Network (1998) provides an exemplary model of culturally relevant curriculum standards. First discussed in Chapter 1 (see Barnhardt, 2008) the Alaska Native Knowledge Network (ANKN) provides cultural standards for curriculum development that complement the standards set forth by state and federal policy mandates. Most importantly, ANKN ensures that local cultures, languages, and

ways of knowing rooted in long habitation in particular places (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005) are represented in school curricula in the following ways:

- A culturally-responsive curriculum reinforces the integrity of the cultural knowledge that students bring with them.
- A culturally-responsive curriculum recognizes cultural knowledge as part of a living and constantly adapting system that is grounded in the past, but continues to grow through the present and into the future.
- A culturally-responsive curriculum uses the local language and cultural knowledge as a foundation for the rest of the curriculum.
- A culturally-responsive curriculum fosters a complementary relationship across the knowledge derived from diverse knowledge systems.
- A culturally-responsive curriculum situates local knowledge and action in a global context. (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998)

Klump and McNeir (2005) provide a case study of culturally relevant pedagogy in action (also see Takano, Higgins, and McLaughlin, 2009). The Russian Mission School in rural Alaska integrated local Native knowledge with state and federal academic standards. Drawing on local resources, materials, and knowledge, the curriculum incorporated subsistence activities indigenous to the local community. As Klump and McNeir (2005) explain,

> traditional knowledge is carefully integrated with academic standards. A unit on berry picking, for example, asks students to study and identify five types of berries, learn where those berries are traditionally harvested, and then use the berries to create traditional Yup'ik foods. The berry picking activity incorporates

> benchmarks from science, health, and personal/social skills standards. Students then demonstrate what they have learned through writing assignments and using technology to create a PowerPoint presentation about making traditional foods. (p. 12)

The results of the Russian Mission School's efforts have been positive. For instance, enrollment rates increased, crime in the community decreased, connections between students, teachers, and community members improved, and students began the process of rediscovering their cultural heritage (Klump & McNeir, 2005). Five years later, Takano, Higgins, and McLaughlin (2009) conducted a follow-up study on the Russian Mission School. They found that as the school continues to utilize culturally responsive practices to integrate cultural values and activities into their curriculum, students continue to show gains in confidence and academic skills, and distrust between the school and community seems to be diminishing.

From these examples (both place-based and culturally relevant pedagogic examples) we see how place-based and culturally relevant pedagogies may be mutually supportive educational methods and, taken together, we see how these two methods inform a place-responsive pedagogy. As such, a place-responsive pedagogy would build on the strengths of students' home culture and language as well as experiences and knowledges of students' place-worlds. In the remainder of this section, I address the importance of understanding experiences of place-worlds in relation to insideness and outsideness.

To feel a sense of insideness with place is to feel a sense of belonging and identity with place. It is to feel emotionally and empathetically involved in place and, as the

findings of the participant place experiences in this study suggest, it is to feel part-of-place. Lim and Barton (2006) explored how urban children who live in low-income, immigrant neighborhoods may come to exhibit insideness. They found insideness to be necessary for children's environmental understandings, environmental competencies, and affective relationships with place. Identifying with place as insiders informed "who they are, who they want to be, what they value, and what they seek in a place" (Lim & Barton, 2006, p. 336). As such, it might be possible to assume that the more a student is inside a particular place, the more he or she might care for, understand, and invest in a particular place. But how can we, as educators, better assist students in developing a sense of insideness with place?

Relph (1976) suggests developing a deep sense of empathy with place might not present itself automatically, but rather should be sought by training ourselves to see and understand places as rich in meaning: "Empathetic insideness demands a willingness to be open to significances of a place, to feel it, to know and respect it… This involves not merely looking at a place, but seeing into and appreciating the essential elements of its identity" (p. 54). Drawing upon the experiences of the participants in this study, establishing relationships through insideness might mean: encouraging students to become involved in place to such a degree that they feel part-of-place, fostering a student's deep affection for and connection with place through outdoor play and exploration, strengthening a student's sense of purpose by cultivating relationships with land and animals, increasing his or her sense of history of place by attending to local stories, and instilling him or her with a sense of confidence to take chances in place. Furthermore, in encouraging relationships through insideness, educators would provide

students with the opportunity to embrace the senses. This might include: opening students to deep connections and empathy for place through place-sensations and profound moments, encouraging students to step back from their everyday life activities to revel in the mysteries of place, enlivening their past and present relationship with place through sensory-triggers, and evoking a sense of time through an understanding of metaphorical relationships with place.

Engendering a sense of insideness with place for students speaks to Sobel's (1996) proposed framework for place-based curriculum that begins with fostering empathy for familiar everyday places in a child's life. As discussed in Chapter 2, Sobel argues that if we want children to connect with and care for particular places, they first need to love and identify with that particular place. Sobel believes empathy for and long-lasting relationships with particular places develop during three stages of childhood development. The first stage occurs when a child is between four and seven years old. During this developmental time, Sobel encourages educators and caregivers to develop empathy for the environment by providing young children with the chance to explore the world of animals, such as insects, spiders, birds, and pets that inhabit a child's backyard or schoolyard. The second developmental stage occurs when a child is between seven and eleven years of age. In this stage, Sobel urges educators and caregivers to develop responsiveness for place by creating opportunities for children to learn their local landscape through activities such as building forts, making dens, and creating hiding places. It is in the last stage of development—twelve plus years of age—that Sobel finally advocates for social and ecological action. Sobel contends that children by this age have had adequate time to bond with and feel connected to their place and are therefore

more developmentally ready to take on the problems of particular places. As such, for Sobel, providing guided experiences that allow children to first connect, explore, and discover their particular places takes priority, at least for a time, over solving the ecological and social problems of the environment.

Though I did not specifically examine participant place experiences in relation to developmental stages, the experiential findings of this dissertation echo Sobel's framework. As children, participants experienced their place-worlds through mostly unencumbered play and exploration. They connected with place through the care of animals. They explored and discovered place by building forts and dens and by hiking, fishing, hunting and traipsing through fields and forests, wading through rivers and streams, playing in old cars and abandoned buildings, and roaming through neighborhood streets, parks, and vacant lots. It was through active participation in place that a deep sense of insideness emerged for the participants. Most importantly, participants experienced a sense of insideness with place not because they knew the name and identity of everything in their place-worlds, and not through prescribed curriculum and systematic facts to be registered. Rather, they became part-of-place through a relationship to place. Relationships emerged through what participants touched, the patterns he or she observed, the intricate history of his or her life in place.

Employing the findings of this research to education practice would mean enhancing children's sense of insideness with place through activities that enable them to feel part-of-place as well as through opportunities to experience place-sensations. Examples of such activities would include:

- Playing and exploring. Building forts, constructing houses, discovering and becoming intimate with nearby forests and fields, rivers and streams or city neighborhoods, streets, and playgrounds.
- Cultivating relationships. Caring for gardens and animals.
- Attending to local stories. Engaging with elders and long-term residents of the community, reading stories, and visiting local museums.
- Experiencing dangerous endeavors. Instilling a sense confidence to take chances in place.

Furthermore, activities might embrace the senses and provide students with the opportunity to experience profound moments that open them to deep connections and empathy for place. The curriculum, for example, might utilize a river or stream that runs through the town. By opening a child to place-sensations, the stream transforms into a world of sensory dimensions: a muddy, damp, trickling world of bugs and birds, science and magic. It allows students to see themselves as part of something that has a long history and, hopefully, a long future. Opening students to the sensory elements brings place more fully into being, which might enable students to become intimate with the elements of that particular place-world.

If we want students to develop an affective bond with place, to feel part of place and to feel a sense of belonging and security in place, then it becomes important for educators and policy makers to also understand the forces (personal, social, economic, historical, cultural, linguistic, etc.) that influence a child's sense of outsideness. Drawing upon the life experiences of the participants in this study, this would include understanding the pivotal moments that cause a child to consciously question his or her

identity and role in life; the barriers, borders, and boundaries that keep a child in or out of place; drastic changes that occur rapidly in a child's place-world; and the painful and sometimes traumatizing experiences of injuries.

Not only is it crucial for educators and policy makers to understand what influences a child's sense of insideness and outsideness, but it might be just as significant for students to understand how other people experience varying degrees of insideness and outsideness. If a child's sense of insideness comes at the exclusion of others or to the detriment of people or place, there is a risk that provincialism, xenophobia, narrow-mindedness, or exploitation of people or natural resources may emerge. Race, class, and gender, as well as ecologically damaging practices must be critically examined in terms of how people define their own insideness and outsideness. Here, a dialogical understanding of insideness and outsideness speaks to a more critical framework of place-based pedagogy as informed by such scholars as Bowers (2006), Gruenewald (2003b), Gruenewald and Smith (2008), Orr (1992), Smith (2002), Theobald (1997), and Theobald and Curtiss (2000). These scholars address current social, economic, and environmental challenges to place and, as discussed in Chapters One and Two, they offer insight into the ways in which communities and schools can work together to revitalize and sustain healthy places now and in the future. Entering into a critical discussion about the ways people feel a sense of insideness and outsideness with place, students and teachers, for example, might ask: What barriers, borders, or boundaries keep people in or out of place? In what instances does a sense of outsideness reveal forms of oppression or violence to people and place? What are the possibilities for resistance, transformation,

and a return to a sense of insideness for all people? How can we break down factors that influence outsidenss in order to move toward more just, healthy, and sustainable places?

In the context of the White Mountains, a critical discussion on insideness and outsideness might revolve around the mix of borders and boundaries, religions and cultures, expansions and losses, and drastic changes and turbulent histories of the region. For example, students and teachers might critically engage in discussions on the history of segregation in McNary and the lasting impacts of boarding schools on Apache culture and language. In its attentiveness to outsideness, such a framework for understanding place experiences allows researchers, teachers, and students to better understand the qualities and forces in our society that construct and lead to feelings of separation or alienation from place, as well as to feelings of belonging and identity with place.

Concluding Thoughts and Implications for Further Research

The aim of this dissertation is to contribute to educational discourses and practices that explicitly examine the place-specific nexus of experiences and education. The main implication of this research is that it challenges the strictures of federal policies such as No Child Left Behind and now the Common Core that continue to marginalize local knowledges, cultures, languages, and places: policies that keep teachers and students isolated from the places outside of school. Current education policies that solely emphasize teacher skills and student performances are inadequate to the larger tasks that place-informed pedagogies demand. However, these place-informed pedagogic approaches must provide a theoretical rationale to connect schools with the places in which they are located. Ladson-Billings (2014) calls for pedagogical models "buttressed

with significant theoretical grounding" (p. 83). As this dissertation demonstrates, research on place and place experiences, as well as proposed educational practices grounded in theory such as place-responsive pedagogies, can offer needed direction. Developing place-based pedagogies challenges many educators' and policy makers' assumptions about the way students and teachers should conduct teaching and learning. A place-responsive pedagogy deepens this challenge by bringing place experiences and place-worlds into the center of place-based discourse. But, as Gruenewald (2003b) firmly states, such approaches need to be "conceived not as tangential to core school curriculum, but as structures and practices that help rethink the classroom as the fundamental site of teaching and learning," and furthermore, "definitions of school achievement must begin to take account of the social and ecological quality of community life" (p. 10).

Though implementing place-based education approaches may be hindered by current policy initiatives, there are schools and educators who are employing pedagogical strategies that complement or circumvent state and federal standards and curriculum mandates. For example, as discussed throughout this dissertation, schools and educators in Alaska are findings ways to integrate Native knowledge systems, grounded in the knowledge of particular places, with state-mandated school curriculum (Barnhardt, 2008). Furthermore, states such as Vermont are finding ways to instantiate and legitimate place-based curriculum as important to classroom practice by using standards to institutionalize and enhance place-based practices (Jennings, Swidler, & Koliba, 2005). Though not specifically addressing place-based practices, McCarty and Lee (2014) use two case examples to illustrate the ways in which educators operate within and around "dominant-policy surveillance" through culturally responsive and sustaining practices (p.

103). In one case study they examined The Native American Community Academy, a state-funded public charter school serving middle and high school students in Albuquerque, New Mexico. According to McCarty and Lee, the challenge to charter schools like the Native American Community Academy is to meet their own goals, such as Native "community life, culture, and wellness," as well as the requirements of the state (p. 107). To meet state standards, teachers and administrators at the school have created a curriculum that integrates local Native American perspectives into state-required courses such as math, English reading and writing, science, and social studies. McCarty and Lee found that as teachers attended to and honored community decision-making processes and implemented local Native American cultures, languages, and knowledges throughout the curriculum, new spaces were opened for experiential and collaborative learning.

In the same article, McCarty and Lee (2014) offer another case study of a trilingual public magnet school, Puente de Hózhǫ́ (Bridge of Beauty or PdH), that serves Native and non-Native students in grades K–5. In an effort to connect the three local ethnic and linguistic groups that reflect the school's place—English and Anglo American, Spanish and Mexican American, and Navajo traditions, languages, and cultures—PdH incorporates these local cultures, knowledges, and languages into curriculum, while consistently meeting state and federal academic standards. As McCarty and Lee state, "The PdH community has managed to work around and through these systematic constraints by emphasizing high academic expectations, a robust content-rich curriculum, and children's heritage language and culture as foci and essential resources for learning" (p. 116).

What such examples demonstrate is that teachers who undertake culturally and place-informed pedagogies can still meet state and federal mandates. As Ladson-Billings (2014) explains

> In this era of state-mandated high-stakes testing, it is nearly impossible for teachers to ignore mundane content and skills-focused curricula. However, teachers undertaking culturally informed pedagogies take on the dual responsibility of external performance assessments as well as community- and student-driven learning. The real beauty of a culturally sustaining pedagogy is its ability to meet both demands without diminishing either. (pp. 83-84)

In other words, it is possible—though not without challenges—to implement and integrate place-responsive pedagogies and still meet the requirements of NCLB and the Common Core; and indeed, place-responsive pedagogies are likely to enable teachers and students to "outperform" on the narrow, universalist measures these curricular mandates prescribe.

A place-responsive pedagogy offers a pedagogical method that builds from and brings together three bodies of knowledge: literatures on place, place-based education, and culturally responsive schooling. In addition, it offers a beginning look at the ways researchers and educators might systematically include students' place-worlds to enhance student-driven learning in classrooms and schools. Further research on place experiences and the ways in which place-worlds might be taken up by place-responsive pedagogies requires continued attention.[24] Such research should delve further into how place-

[24] In the context of this dissertation it would also be important to include additional Apache participants in future studies of place within the White Mountain region.

responsive pedagogies look in practice. In addition, what are the future possibilities, tensions, and challenges of such a place-responsive approach? How can educators weave in place-responsive pedagogies while still attending to state and federal curriculum mandates? What additional pedagogical practices would complement or support a place-responsive pedagogy? Most importantly, the implications of continuing research into place-responsive pedagogy means that policy makers, educators, and researchers must be open to alternative models of pedagogy that meet the needs of students and the places where they live. In spite of current state and federal policy mandates and the continual changes and challenges that our world faces today, place continues to be an irrevocable part of our lives.

In conclusion, theoretical and conceptual understandings of place anchored in phenomenological perspectives, coupled with narrative descriptions of place-experiences provided by the participants in this study, offers essential insight for making sense of place for place-based education. The findings of this study strengthen arguments in place-based education that relationships with place do matter and are important. This study also adds to the literature on place-based education as it illustrates the depth and breadth of place; demonstrates the richness and significance of human experiences in place; affords a conceptual vocabulary to describe as well as understand particular experiences in relation to particular places; provides a conceptual tool to describe and understand an array of physical features, symbolic meanings, and place-specific knowledges in an individual's immediate world; and supports a blend of pedagogical methods of place-based education and culturally relevant practices into a place-responsive pedagogy.

Perhaps most importantly, this dissertation may serve as in impetus for further reflections of what it means *to-be-in-place*, in the first place.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

First Interview

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this first interview. This interview should take approximately 90 minutes. I would like to audio-record your interview, but will not do so without your permission. Let me know if you do not want the interview to be recorded or if you change your mind after we begin. Your answers will be kept confidential. Participation in this interview is voluntary, and you are free to skip questions or withdraw from participation at any time and without penalty.

Please tell me a little bit about yourself.

- Where are you from?
- Married, single, children?
- Occupation?
- Interests?
- Leisure time activities?

Please tell me your history in the White Mountains. I would like you to take me back as far as possible.

What are your first memories here?

Does a certain experience stand out in your memory?

- How old were you? Where were you? What were you participating in?
- Please visually walk me through the place you were in.

What kind of feelings do these memories bring forth?

What was it like living here?

- Please describe your experiences.

What kinds of activities were you involved with growing up?

- Individually?
- Socially?
- With family?

Who were your best friends growing up?

What were they like?

What did you do together?

How would you describe a perfect day when you were young?

What did you imagine your life to be like when you were older?

Do you have any favorite stories from your childhood? If so, would you mind sharing?

Did you enjoy school? Why or why not?

What kind of student were you?

What would you do for fun?

How would your classmates remember you?

Are you still friends with anyone from that time in your life?

What are your best memories of grade school? Jr. High? High School?
Worst memories?

Was there a teacher or teachers who had a particularly strong influence on your life? Tell me about them.

- In what ways has this person(s) influenced your life?
- What experiences did you share with this person(s)?
- Activities?

Do you have any favorite stories from school? And, if so, would you mind sharing?

Did teachers utilize the White Mountains?
In other words, did you take field trips to places around the White Mountains?
Do you remember doing activities outdoors?
Did you learn about local culture, local history, and local places? If so, how did you learn these things?
Were you involved in community activities or community events?

Besides the teacher mentioned previously, is there a person that particularly inspired you when you were young? Or was there a particular event?

What did you learn from this person/event?

What were your favorite play areas as a child?

- Please visually walk me through this place.

As a young adult, did you have a place where you escaped? If so, please describe this place in detail.

Now that we are coming to the end of the interview, is there anything that has come to mind that you would like to share with me?

Second Interview

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this second interview. This interview should take approximately 90 minutes. I would like to audio-record your interview, but will not do so without your permission. Let me know if you do not want the interview to be recorded or if you change your mind after we begin. Your answers will be kept confidential. Participation in this interview is voluntary, and you are free to skip questions or withdraw from participation at any time and without penalty.

In this interview, I am going to have you think back to specific places or experiences in places that you had in your childhood.

Please describe a place in the White Mountains that, as a child, was significant to you. Keep in mind, this place can be man-made, nature-made, indoors, or outdoors – any place of meaning.

Please visually walk me through this place.

How did you come to discover this place?

Was this a place that was shared with others or did just you experience it? In other words, did someone share the experience of this place with you?

What did you call this place?

How often did you go there?

What did you do in this place?

How did you make this place yours? In other words, was this place marked in a personal way? Did you do something that identified this place as yours?

Who were you in this place? – What role-playing occurred there?

Did you have any rituals or ceremonies that went with this place?

How did this place make you feel?

Where do you believe these feelings came from?
Cultural, spiritual, religious, linguistically?

If you close your eyes and think back to this place, what do you see? Hear? Smell? Feel?

Is there a particular sense that stands out more than the others?

What brings forth memories of this place? Or is there something that helps recall this place or triggers memories of this place?

What did this place teach you? Or what did you learn from this place?

What did you leave behind in this place?

What about this place has stayed with you into adulthood?

Was there more than one place that was significant to you? If so, please explain.

Now that we are coming to the end of the interview, is there anything that has come to mind that you would like to share with me?

*If you think of anything else you would like to share with me, jot it down and we will talk about it during the next interview.

Third Interview

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this third interview. This interview should take approximately 90 minutes. I would like to audio-record your interview, but will not do so without your permission. Let me know if you do not want the interview to be recorded or if you change your mind after we begin. Your answers will be kept confidential. Participation in this interview is voluntary, and you are free to skip questions or withdraw from participation at any time and without penalty.

How old were you when you left the White Mountains?

Why did you leave the White Mountains?

How did leaving the White Mountains make you feel?

Where did you move?

Why did you choose to move to _____?

Did you, or do you, have a place(s) that was significant to you in _____?

Please describe this place to me.
What was the name of this place?
How was/is this place different from your special places in childhood?
How was/is this place similar to your special places in childhood?

What brought you back to the White Mountains?
Why did you return?

What did returning to the White Mountains mean to you?

Now that you've returned, do you still visit the special places of your childhood?

Are these places from your childhood still significant to you?

*If you do return to the places of your childhood in what ways have the places stayed the same? How have they changed?

Do you experience them differently? How so?

Do you share them with anyone now?

Do you have new places that are significant to you? If so, please tell me about them.

Are they shared with anyone?

What memories are you currently making in these places?

What does this place teach you?

Having talked about all of this and looking at your experiences in your special places, what of this could be significant to schools? In other words, what can local schools (administrators, classroom teachers, curriculum designers) learn from your experiences in places that were and are significant to you?

Furthermore, what role do you think local cultures, histories, peoples, and places should play in education?

Now that we are coming to the end of the interview, is there anything that has come to mind that you would like to share with me?