A HEURISTIC INQUIRY: EXAMINING THE NEGOTIATIONS OF IDENTITY, SELF AND

BORDER CROSSINGS OF RURAL FEMALE TEACHERS IN NORTH DAKOTA

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The Supervisory Committee certifies that this ***disquisition*** complies with North Dakota State

University's regulations and meets the accepted standards for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

This heurisitc study examines my voice, through a stream of consciousness, as an immigrant who moved from rural East Yorkshire, UK, to rural North Dakota, USA. I use the feminist lenses of intersectionality, the borderlands, and identity theory to examine my experiences as a rural female teacher; I also utilized those lenses to analyze other rural female teachers' experiences. As a self-positioned outsider in the rural community where I have made my home, I expected to find that other women had different experiences than me. After conducting 18 semi-structured interviews, I coded the data using landscape coding, thematic coding, and emotional coding to emphasize the importance of place, relationships, and the experiences that these women shared.

The findings revealed that women place a far greater emotional burden on themselves as they attempt to satisfy the cultural and place-specific needs. As such, a woman's' identity can become fragmented as she attempts to perform many different aspects of her identity in differing places. In times when these identities collide, the rural female teacher may speak out against societies expectations as she showcases an identity that does not seem to fit in that place.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my children. You have inspired me and in turn, I hope to inspire you.

To all the rural females I applaud your ability to juggle your many roles in society and hope that

each day, you are able to take a moment and breathe. To my dear friends at The Mount School –

you changed my life. And finally, I would like to dedicate this research to my mum– you live on

in my heart and mind.

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CHAPTER 1: THE EVOLVING SELF

Burnt Norton

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards,
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.
I can only say, there we have been: but I cannot say where.
And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time.
The inner freedom from the practical desire,
The release from action and suffering, release from the inner
And the outer compulsion, yet surrounded
By a grace of sense, a white light still and moving,
Erhebung without motion, concentration
Without elimination, both a new world
And the old made explicit, understood
In the completion of its partial ecstasy,
The resolution of its partial horror.
Yet the enchainment of past and future
Woven in the weakness of the changing body,
Protects mankind from heaven and damnation
Which flesh cannot endure.
Time past and time future
Allow but a little consciousness.
To be conscious is not to be in time
But only in time can the moment in the rose-garden,
The moment in the arbour where the rain beat,
The moment in the draughty church at smokefall
Be remembered; involved with past and future.
(T.S. Eliot, cited in Kegan 1982 p.111)

The Voice of I: My Bid for Social Inclusion

"When we women offer our experience as our truth, as human truth, all the maps change. There

are new mountains" Ursula Le Guin cited in Solnit's article in The Guardian March 8, 2017)

A scene from the *Titanic* (1999):

"Rose: It's not fair.

Ruth: Of course it's not fair…we are women….our choices are never easy…"

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(Stage directions: tightening of Roses' corset)

When I first started my graduate- school journey, I did not realize how I felt as an immigrant who had tried to assimilate into another English-speaking country. I noticed a change in the vocabulary I used and a slightly blended "twang" I had developed as I attempted to make "Americans" understand my accent, but I had not taken the time to fully process how who I am, how I do things and my way of being has changed. Throughout my graduate school education, I had the opportunity to reflect, journal, talk and listen to other men and women. Most of the men and women around me, in the rural community where I live, are not immigrants. In fact, most of them have historical roots in the area and are multi-generation families who have stayed in the same area so I felt that while we had some commonalities, I anticipated that my experiences were somewhat different than theirs.

The year before I started my doctoral journey, my husband and I experienced a trauma: Our son was born with a spinal condition that required surgery in a hospital located six hours away. We had to leave our oldest daughter with my husband's parents for at least a week while my son underwent this surgery. We were unable to pick him up for a week while his back healed. We slept in hospital chairs and ate hospital food; we found our way through each day and listened to the doctors who told us that our son may never walk. Going into this, we were naively under the assumption that "all would be well"—we would have the surgery and be on our way to recovery without any lasting impacts. The news from the doctor that our son may have nerve issues that may affect his bladder, mobility and cause other such issues came as a thundering storm into our lives.

Fast-forward a year: Our son was recovering, but as I always have when stressed, I began to eat . . . and eat and eat, and as a result I gained almost 80 lbs. I was far from "home" (where I

had grown up in England) and faced with life-changing realities that would not only impact our son but also our daughter and the lives we had imagined for ourselves. I began to feel irritated with where we lived, with the services that were available to us and with how the church "prayer chain" was more of a way of spreading gossip about families. I felt trapped in a rural hell where winter existed for 6 months of the year and where I was unable to visit the indoor swimming pool or exercise in the gym like I was used to, nor could I visit the local fresh food market on Saturday like I did as a young professional "back home." I began to resent the way people cooked food; it seemed that everything was high in fat, sugar or included a can of Campbell's condensed soups. I began to see myself as different from other women, other families and other professionals.

When I went out to restaurants in nearby cities, my girlfriends would always have to help the waiter or waitress translate what I said. I distinctly remember one example when I was 9 months pregnant and a girlfriend and I went to a Mexican restaurant. The waiter asked what I would like to drink, and I replied "water." He, however, heard "vodka." He then jokingly asked me, if I would like that "on the rocks," as it was apparent that I was heavily pregnant and should not be drinking liquor. I laughed and said "yes." After a few minutes the waiter returned to our table with a concerned look on his face and said "Ma'am are you sure you would like 'v-o-d-k-a'?" with an over exaggerated pronunciation. I looked at him with shock, wondering why he would ask me such a thing. It then became clear that we were separated by a common language which caused a misunderstanding, which, although funny in hindsight, is a common source of frustration for me.

More frustration occurs when I speak on the telephone. Since beginning my doctoral journey, I have become much more reflective and notice my own positionality in social and

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family situations. I have found that while face to face with people, they generally (now 8 years after immigrating) understand me, but on the phone I find myself having to spell my name after saying it. I have to wait for the elongated pause from the other person on the phone as they translate what I have said. I know when they have not understood me, as often they will simply reply with "yes" or a similarly non committal word to answer the question.

My experiences as a native English speaker living in an English-speaking country have created a feeling of exclusion in me. People notice that I am "not from round here" as soon as I speak to them, and while almost everyone is friendly and welcoming, I have found it more difficult to forge solid friendships since people who have grown up in the area have their groups of friends already established. As I see myself as an outsider, especially when it comes to language, I can only imagine how excluded non-English speakers must feel living in America and the trials they must endure.

As I began thinking about the journey on which my dissertation would take me, I wanted my research to be about voices, about how people feel, and as such I knew that I did not want to conduct a numerical-based study, but rather I wanted to understand whether other rural female teachers felt the same way I did.

As I set out to understand rural female identity, I realized that qualitative research would help me understand the essence of what it means to be a rural female. Throughout my preliminary research, I tried a number of different methodological approaches including narrative and phenomenology until I arrived at heuristic inquiry. As Moustakas (1956) states, "In true experience every expression is creative, the creation of the person is and is becoming. There is only the exploring spontaneously expressing self, finding satisfaction in personal being" (p. 3). It was then that I knew that through spontaneous expression and discussion of my own experiences

I could reflect upon my own individual experiences and try to listen to the voices of other rural females.

As I approached the study, I did so as a self-perceived outsider I came expecting to feel different and to have had different experiences than the participants, and I came to the study and interviews thinking that the other rural females were going to have different ideas than my own. I anticipated feeling glad to be "strong enough" not to need to belong to "those clubs" or subscribe to the ideology of some of these different experiences, but I wondered whether others would make me feel more at home if I could and would be accepted.

In some respect, choosing heuristic inquiry was easy. I had ideas swirling around my head about what was acceptable and what was not, culturally or locally. My voice needed to be processed, organized and intentionally written in order for me to truly understand my own positionality and rural female identity. However, reflecting on who I am now and what I "left behind" became a difficult process. I found myself beginning to be frustrated with privileges and powers of institutions, the historical roots of those who have been established here. I began to see the rural community I live in as a container with boundaries from which I wanted to break free, from which I wanted to move away. These feelings were not new, they simply now had the opportunity to surface.

I viewed rural female teachers as wanting to either confirm or deny (or both) my own existence and my own experiences. I wanted to know whether I truly was an outsider or an insider or whether my experiences were both acknowledged or rejected by others (Anzaldùa, 1999, Holland, Lachicotte Jr., Skinner, & Cain, 2003;). While searching and reflecting on my experiences, I began to see where and how I had become a border crosser through my moments of frustration, through my ways of silently resisting the system in place in this community. This

resistance and act of border crossing did not encompass my whole self, but parts of me felt accepted at certain times by certain people, while at other times I felt rejected. Even though I identify as being rural, I consider myself to be a cultural outsider (being from neither the United States nor from rural North Dakota), as my personal history is somewhat different from many of my colleagues and community members. Indeed, these differences manifest in how I think about teaching as a practice, in how I have lived my life and in my ability to understand or accept that which is different from the societal norm. However, as A.G. Johnson (2005, p. 4) states, "We need to feel like we belong to something bigger than ourselves"; therefore, my attempt to assimilate and not be viewed as an outsider began shortly after my arrival.

What it means to identify oneself, as I do, as "rural" is a complex notion (Fitchen, 1991; Mooney & Hickey, 2016; Schulte, 2016; Tieken, 2014; Schulte & Walker-Gibbs, 2016). To some, rural is defined based on the number of services available or proximity to larger urban areas. To others, it may be based on the number of family farms or rural dwellings in the area. Throughout this study, I have been challenged with determining what it means to be considered to be rural in East Yorkshire, UK and whether it is the same as what is considered to be rural in the northeast corner of North Dakota. I questioned whether services and proximity to densely populated areas should be considered or whether I was struggling with the more ideological nature of the construct of identity in rural areas.

The concept of fluidity is important to my sense of relations within a place. To me, it is the people who inhabit a space and place and the [inter]woven social network(s) that creates the "feel" of a community. To me, this feeling is more important and more inclusive (as well as concurrently exclusive) than political boundaries on a map which define community lines. As Massey states, "One way of thinking about place is as particular moments in such intersecting

social relations, nets of which have over time been laid down, interacted with one another, decayed and renewed" (1994, p. 120). It is within these interactions that gender expectations are formed and reformed. This is also where a community's meaning is socially constructed and where the notions of insider and outsider may create an invisible divide (Lamont & Molnár, 2002; Morris, 2012; Sherman, 2013).

Having lived in rural North Dakota for eight years, I now find the need to examine my cultural beliefs and consider whether some of the societal issues which confound women who are considered to be outsiders are really worth my internal conflicts or whether I should let go of my resistance and fully assimilate into my new community (Brubaker, 2016). As A.G. Johnson argues, "We look to other people to tell us we measure up, that we matter and that we are OK" (2005, p. 4). Therefore, as I "re-examine" myself (Freire, 1970, p. 60), I find it possible, as (1987) suggests, "to both understand and reject, to love and detest, to be loyal and question, and above all to continue to seek enlightenment out of the ambiguity and contradiction of all social existence" (p. 5).

Through using my experiences, this study assists me in identifying my own acts and opportunities as a border crosser and whether the borderlands I find myself in are worth the emotional distress of my internal construct that "I am an outsider."

In order to understand the acts and opportunities of rural female teachers, place must also be examined. Howley and Howley (2010) suggest that in order to fully understand a particular place, a person must learn of the everyday, local life-world that is important to the people sharing that place. They also suggest that understanding how people interact together is also essential to establishing a common good and common meanings in a particular place. The research conducted by Neal and Neal (2013) emphasized that the common good and community cohesion

appeared to be constructed by people who share similar ideological beliefs. Thus, the idea of shared personal histories and/or shared ideologies assists in the construction of the invisible divide between insider and outsider (Brubaker, 2016; McHenry-Sorber & Schafft, 2014) as well as between gendered relations such as the gendered division of labor (Little & Panelli, 2003).

As a white, female, heterosexual, nonsmoking, overweight mother of five children, I share many characteristics with many other women in my community. However, my personal history in our North Dakota community began much later than many of these other women. I arrived here at the age of twenty-seven, probably slightly more adventurous than some of the other women in the community. I had dared to move to a place I had only visited a handful of times, but I put faith in the fact that this was my husband's community, where I believed it would be easier to assimilate into a new culture and community while having some of the networks and roots already laid down by his family.

Some women will at some point posses the same aspects of identity as I. Throughout this heuristic study, these experiences will provide a means to uncover my curiosity about my and other people's personal experiences—to see if other rural female teachers walk in the same or similar borderlands that I have and do. Moustakas (1990) asserts that it is through the journey of heuristic inquiry that the researcher learns to love the questions being posed, as it "becomes a kind of song into which the researcher breathes life…because the question itself is infused in the researcher's being" (p. 43).

The "Voice of I" as a Researcher

Heuristic inquiry requires a searching of the self, and the findings must be integrated into all phases of the research process. Identifying the researcher's social identities of the researchers

as well as the participants establishes or uncovers inherent power relationships between their stories. As Weis and Fine (2000) state,

> Because of how power operates in US society and the pervasive nature of power, those conducting research both within and outside their own communities and social identities are influenced. This power element requires that the issue of social identities be carefully considered so that researchers recognize their own role and not 'hide behind the alleged cloak of neutrality' (p. 34.)

Because this research inquiry includes interactions between individuals who belong to more than one social identity (race, class, gender, social class), one must reflect upon the impact this intersectionality has on the data findings. Hogg (2010) states how, that social identities,:

> [explain] how people's conception of who they are (their self-concept) is associated with their membership of social groups and categories, and with group and intergroup behavior. [Social identity theory] defines group membership in terms of people's identification, definition, and evaluation of themselves as members of a group (social identity) and specifies cognitive, social interaction and societal processes that interact to produce characteristic group phenomena. (p. 749)

Paying attention to the role of the participants' social identities as well as my own within this research, I hope to visibly weave my voice into the phenomenon of border crossings for rural female teachers. Listening to my own voice as well as those of other rural female teachers enables me to examine the visible, invisible and conscious/unconscious relationships of power and privilege that rural female teachers encounter within their roles and their communities. In order to do this, I must first introduce my own voice.

Mrs. Dalloway: The Importance of the Self and Personal Histories

The nature of a heuristic study is one where the researchers stream of consciousness is central to the research, but the voices of others are also heard to gain an understanding of whether the researchers experiences are shared with others. As such, the structure of this heuristic inquiry covers a wide array of theory, as the fragments of each part of the story are uncovered. These fragments are highlighted at different times throughout the inquiry and studied from differing perspectives.

This study examines many aspects of my life and includes focus on both conscious and unconscious streams of thought. The intention is for the reader to infer or analyze aspects of my and other rural female teachers' lives, because as human beings our instincts compel us to find either similarities with each other or distinctions. Virginia Woolf's style of writing is reflective of the self as she became more and more cognizant of how to communicate a "sense of self" (Marchi, 1997, p. 1), which is how relationships are formed with others. As Acker (1995, p. 26) found in a study of female elementary teachers, women particularly find a strong bond with other women as they focus on building relationships based on "their children" of a common "mothering style."

To find these commonalities, one often draws on personal histories. The story of *Mrs. Dalloway* has stuck with me since I was a junior in high school. As a prescribed novel, I read *Mrs. Dalloway* (Woolf 1925) with the rest of my class and analyzed the text. Everything about this novel engulfed me in a new world of understanding what life was like for women compared to what life is like now. While learning more about Virigina Woolf and the mechanics of the book, there was also a multitude of other changes occurring in my life that embedded this book in my personal history, such as attending an all-girls boarding school as a weekly boarder, my

brother leaving for university (the first in our family) and dealing with fashion and friends as a teenager. It was during these life-changing few years that I made (and have since maintained) some of the best friends who have seen me change from a girl, to a young woman, to a professional, to a wife and a mother. Through both the good years and the turbulent ones they have stood by my side, even as my identity erodes, shifts and is restored. It is due to this, my personal history, that I have chosen to present this study's findings as a stream of consciousness, and it is also due to the book *Mrs. Dalloway*, where we shared, argued and bonded over the feminist studies associated with *Mrs. Dalloway*, that my mind works the way it does.

The analysis chapter is presented in two ways, firstly with a look at the selves (or the voices) that participated in the section on the diversity wheels. The second phase of analysis examines "the place" by looking at a hand-drawn sketch, which is a map that identifies the rural community frequently visited or discussed by the voices in this study, just like in Virginia Woolf's story about Mrs. Dalloway.

Virginia centered the novel of *Mrs. Dalloway* on one single day in London. Mrs. Dalloway, the heroine, appeared to be a whimsical but ordinary woman who was defined by her social class and her marital status, as the title suggests. Her identity is submerged in her husband's identity as a conservative politician. The main duties of Mrs. Dalloway are to run the household and to entertain. In the opening chapter of the book, Clarissa Dalloway is to look for flowers for the party that evening, and yet we follow her "thoughts, memories, anxieties and epiphanies from morning to night" (Showalter, 2016). Like Mrs. Dalloway, this research inquiry examines my own thoughts, my own identity and the changes to my identity immigrating to another country has caused over the last eight years.

The Stream of Consciousness

Virginia Woolf represents the stream of consciousness by presenting Mrs. Dalloway with a multilayered identity, a self with many prisms as she transcends her past and present experiences, or as Marchi (1997, p. 2) suggests, with a "tension between the past and the present." Virginia Woolf believed (Showalter, 2016) that the single voice of one narrator was not sufficient to tell the story and that this should be replaced by presenting many points of view. In this way, Woolf was able to present a depth of character of each voice and incorporate the past into the single day during which the novel takes place.

Like Woolf, who embarked on a "quest for self-understanding," (Marchi, 1997, p. 2), using a stream-of-consciousness method is an effective aid to my showing the multi-voiceness (Bakhtin 1961) of rural female teachers, as during conversations, journals, interviews and more, the participants of the study share glimpses of how they perceive themselves in rural places as well as glimpses of which borderlands through which they have walked over the years.

Woolf herself walks through a borderland at the end of the novel when she holds the "life affirming pageant" (Showater, 2016), where Clarissa expresses "life in every variety and full of anticipation; while S. dies." While the party itself was a happy occasion with people arriving full of the pomp and swag of the formative years to which Mrs. Dalloway had become accustomed, Clarissa finds herself changing. Shocked to learn that one of the soldiers she had known had killed himself, she seeks solitude in another room of her house (away from the party). During this time, she undergoes a transformation, a loneliness, during which she questions her purpose and her mortality. As a rural female teacher, the same retreat into silence and into questioning one's purpose has happened to me and to others for whom I have compassion.

It is as rural female teachers that we move forward with, like Virginia Woolf's heroine Mrs. Dalloway, compassion for one another regardless of whether we are church-going or not, and we have endurance, survival instincts, fellowship and joy. It is not without hope that time is our friend. We have more than the one day afforded to Mrs. Dalloway to make our voices heard, and we have more than one party to attend, to show the communities we live in that we are more than what is expected of us.

Histories and Metaphors

In order to provide further background regarding the place of my upbringing as well as my own experiences which frame this study, I first refer to "the quilt," which acts as a metaphor for understanding each person's personal experience and how these experiences come together to form a quilt. To relate some significantly personal history, I secondly refer to Virginia Woolf's (1925) novel *Mrs. Dalloway,* which I studied as a junior in high school. Understanding the stream of consciousness used by Woolf helped me choose heuristic inquiry as a study method. Thirdly, the geographical process of longshore drift will be referred to in terms of identity change. Understanding of this process was ingrained in me from an early age, as the East Yorkshire coastline is constantly subjected to erosion from the North Sea, which thus places the lives of the residents in my county at risk. As an elementary and high school student, the study of the local environment was important and it was during my geography degree studies that I fine-tuned my conceptual understanding of the mechanics longshore drift. Each of the three histories and metaphors are presented in different chapters.

The Quilt as a Metaphor

Block quilts can be likened to the container (Corbett 2016) that rural females often find themselves in – within a box, as a way of being, entailing expectations of ways to behave. As

quilters use a variety of stitches, some can be decorative and some can add to the image, by creating minute details only seen from up front. One such example would be portraying a woman's face and using stitches to attach the layers of fabric (to give her depth of character) but they also show the apparent scars on her face from the border crossings she has encountered.

Such scars may be encountered from an expectancy of service, nurture and care associated with what it means to be a rural female, just as a quilt will keep someone else warm, look nice on someone else's wall as a decoration, or simply be stored out of sight. Like the quilt, teachers are expected to serve, to be caring in nature or to extend their motherly nature to their teaching profession.

What is not visible in the metaphor of the quilt is what it took to make all the seams come together, such as the pricked fingers or the straining over dim lights. The energy it took to choose the fabric or the design pattern is not seen by the recipient. This idea represents the choices that we make as rural female teachers, the border crossings we transgress over and over. These borders feature the historic and current expectation that rural female teachers will provide care for children and help nurture them, playing into Munro's idea that teaching "is a women's true profession" (1998b, p.3) which is discussed later.

It is easy to look at the whole quilt in admiration and make assumptions about rural female teachers. However, by making assumptions one misses out on the story of what and how each piece of fabric (or each teacher) has to contribute to the larger whole, whether it is her household, family, school or her community. Without studying the stories of individual rural females, the struggles and the border crossings that each teacher has negotiated will remain unheard. The voices, however, only partially contribute to providing a view of the whole story.

Listening to what is implied, inferred or left out adds to the understanding of individual teachers'
bids for identities.

It is my hope that analysis of those with whom I have interacted and interviewed will
represent their viewpoints from multiple angles, which represents the uneven shapes and
scrappiness of an Art quilt.

Longshore Drift

All men are islands. And what's more, this is the time to be one. This is an island age. A
hundred years ago, for example, you had to depend on other people. No one had TV or
CDs or DVDs or home espresso makers. As a matter of fact they didn't have anything
cool. Whereas now you can make yourself a little island paradise. With the right supplies,
and more importantly the right attitude, you can become sun-drenched, tropical, a
magnet for young Swedish tourists. (Words from the film "About a Boy" 2002)

Coming from the UK (an island) and having a passion for the study of geography as a
way to interpret my surroundings, I find the use of longshore drift appropriate here (particularly
since this method of erosion is prevalent where I grew up in East Yorkshire, UK).

The metaphor of longshore drift is fitting not only because it is a major geological
problem on the coast of East Yorkshire but also due to the motion of the sea greeting the beach
and cliffs, retreating and carrying part of the sediment (either through solution, suspension or less
frequently through saltation) south down the coastline before they are re-deposited and other
particles picked up and the process repeats itself.

This process is similar to Kegan's (1982) Evolving Self theory. According to this theory,
Kegan suggests that as a person matures their identities evolve in successive layers and that the

more a person experiences the world, the more they understand of the world. As a person becomes able to appreciate abstract and tangible knowledge, they begin to see things only from their own perspective and thus their opinions are subjective. As people mature (or as their experiences lead them further down the proverbial coast of life), their identity shifts again, enabling them to become more objective and to imagine how they appear to others.

This development allows for a person to possess or bid for multiple identities as well as to acknowledge that in different places and in different times, they are different people. As this process cycles through emergence and re-emergence, layers of a person's identity shift like the sand on the coastline; over time they change, partly due to the evolving self (experiences which are internalized, reflected upon and as a result change occurs), but also due to external forces (the sea battering against the cliffs) where society presents social normalties and expectations of conformity such as carrying a cell phone. In the case of longshore drift, the sea acts as the force of change, but for people, the place, culture or community they live in acts as this force.

Research Problem

Many people think they understand what it takes to be a female teacher in rural North Dakota. They see the finished products of concerts, art work and tournaments but fail to see the hard work, practice and emotional labor that it takes to manufacture and achieve the polished look of these products. In contrast, rural female teachers often do not realize that they are constructing their own identities through quiet, unspoken actions every day and can act as border crossers, or as Anzaldùa states, "those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of 'normal' every day" (Anzaldùa1987, 1999, p. 25). Often intersecting multiple and contradictory identities occur simultaneously. Wetherall (2008, p. 75) suggests that "the story of how a specific self lives [the] available cultural slots, actively realizes them, then takes responsibility and owns

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them as an agent, turning social category memberships and social roles into ethical and emotional narrated choices."

In an attempt to honor the patchwork of narratives and voices of rural female teachers, I hope to engage in a deep self-reflection of where and when I transgress the borders of 'insider' and 'outsider' in rural communities. In doing this, I intend to listen to other rural female teachers' stories about their acts of border crossing to see whether my experiences are isolated or are a common experience.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of how rural female teachers live within, negotiate and cross over their identities within rural communities in North Dakota.

Research Questions

1. What border crossings do rural female school teachers encounter?

2. What do these border crossing experiences reveal about rural female teachers' lives as they author themselves in private and public spaces?

3. How do my own border crossings fit with these voices?

I begin to address the first question by looking at the lives of rural female teachers and the fact that they are neither 'insiders' or 'outsiders' but instead at times are both, depending on the border crossing they transcend, and as such our differences are not so distinct.

I address the second question by looking at how other rural female teachers share their experiences using their voices (as well as what they share in a voiceless way) and the way they perceive themselves.

The third question is addressed by looking at my own experiences and border crossings to see how well our experiences "fit" together as the squares of a quilt fit together. Here, I utilize my second metaphor of longshore drift.

Limitations of the Study

This heuristic inquiry involved reviewing the notes from my journals over the past five years, field observations over a period of two years as well as conducting 18 semi-structured interviews with rural teachers (male and female) and community members. Due to the personalized nature of heuristic inquiry and the place-specific nature of the study, this study lacks generalizability. Heuristic inquiry instead intends to "explore how individual or groups of individuals who share specific characteristics, personally and subjectively experience, make sense of, and account for the things that happen to them" (Goodson & Sikes, 2001, p. 39).

In addition and due to the qualitative nature of the study, I, as the researcher have a reflexive voice or presence that is woven into the research study (Cole & Knowles, 2001) as I review my own journals, field notes and experiences. Some people find that having the researcher's voice as predominant in a study results in limitation and produces a more positivistic epistemological viewpoint. However, as Cole and Knowles (2001) argue, having the researcher's voice present in the research and findings is actually a measure of "'good' qualitative research" (p. 89).

The heuristic methodology clearly has many strengths, but it also has its limitations. One such limitation is that there are no procedures in place which means there is little control. Frick (1990) pointed out that while creative freedom can often be seen in a positive light within this inquiry framework, it could lead to irresponsibility on the part of the researcher and result in undeveloped research.

Validity is also an issue. As Moustakas (1990) suggested, the researcher has to be the primary judge of whether the material is valid and this can only be achieved by returning to the data which are collected numerous times. These data are not able to be determined by statistics or correlations but rather by creating meaning and descriptions of the lived experiences of the researcher and the participants within the research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The Rural Female Teacher and the Self

Women in rural America today juggle the same roles in household and workplace, family and community, domestic and public domains that they have managed throughout the second half of the twentieth century …What has changed for most rural women are the demands on their time and their understanding of their choices as they confront old issues (Tickamyer & Henderson, 2003, p. 110, cited in Challenges for Rural America).

The Self

To create an understanding of the Self, or the "I", I turn to the work of *permonativity* by Judith Butler (1990a, 1990). Butler suggests that individuals are social constructs of societies and are subject to regular and repeated performances in which the "I" or the Self are constructed into a "singular or stable" identity (Salih, 2004, p.3). Hall, Held, Hubert and Thompson (1996 cited in livingmeanings.com) go further, suggesting

> The subject, previously experienced as having a unified and stable identity, is becoming fragmented; composed, not of a single, but of several, sometimes contradictory or unresolved, identities. … Identity becomes a "moveable feast": formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural systems which surround us.

Because we never act in the same way twice, the performance of the Self is never perfect and never complete and often temporary, allowing for the (re)constitution of the Self. As Jackson (2004) explains, "when we act certain ways as women in particular contexts, other expressions [such as race, class, religion, or culture] are always silent, erased, hidden-to ourselves and others" (p. 677) This performance leads to the possibility that when creating identity categories

while considering performance of the Self, there is room for error and confusion as individuals have multiple selves and multiple identities. Thus, at any given time, identities could entail an expression or performance of one self versus another. The capacity for resistance against social constructed categories, agency and power therefore exists within individuals.

Ways of Knowing the Self

Belenky, Clinky, Golderger, and Tarule. (1997) discuss the different ways of knowing (silence, received knowledge and procedural knowledge), but for the purpose of exploring identity, I refer to the final two ways of knowing: constructed and subjective knowledge which offer a more dynamic understanding of how the (female) Self can be interpreted. A subjectivist woman puts the needs of others first before her own, and as such she embarks on a "quest for self" (p. 76) and tries out "new selves" (p. 78) as she moves from defining herself in terms of relationships (Mrs. Dalloway defined herself as "Mrs. Dalloway," rather than "Clarrissa" – she referred to herself as belonging to Mr. Dalloway and all that was entailed with being a wife) to putting the needs of other before her own needs.

In order to "try on" these new selves, protected spaces are used which are free from external influences and authority. However, as Belenky et al. (1997) recognize, this freedom can lead to isolation, loneliness and the inability to perform in public spaces. In contrast, the constructed self includes a process of "self-reclamation," where "moving outside the given" (p. 135) is adhered to as the female integrates both external (knowledge of others) and internal knowledge. According to Belenky et al.:

> The women [practicing a constructed way of knowing] want to embrace all the pieces of the self in some ultimate sense of whole-daughter, friend, mother, lover, nurturer, thinker, artist, advocate. They want to avoid what they perceive to be a shortcoming of many

men-the tendency to compartmentalize thought and feeling, home and work, self and other. In women, there is an impetus to try to deal with life, internal and external, in all its complexity. And they want to develop a voice of their own to communicate to others their understanding of life's complexity. (p. 137)

However, Belenky et al. (1997) interestingly raise questions regarding whether the historic and gendered perspective of female teachers is not embedded within this way of knowing. Belenky et al. describe how constructivist women are "caring" or have a "moral[s]" (p. 149) or seek to empower the lives of others. In suggesting this, Belenky et al. create or recreate a one-dimensional home for female teachers to fit into, but what about the rural female teachers who do not fit so neatly into this historic box?

The Troubled Self

In an attempt to answer this question, Judith Butler questions the predetermined identity categories in which women find themselves (caring, mother figure). Butler argues (1987, p.37) "What happens when individual women do not recognize themselves in the theories that explain their unsurpassable essences to them?" For Butler (1990a, 1990b, 1996), categories that appear designed to "fit" women should raise a cautionary flag of oversimplification, social construction and as a means of social control. In fact, Butler goes as far to say that by naming an individual but using one specific label such as "women," society creates a boundary. These boundaries are then invisible walls which allow inclusion and exclusion to occur.

However, as much as Butler argues that social identities are products of social construction, she also notes that the participants and individuals are not victims of social boundaries, or social oppression. Women often take pride in fulfilling their roles within their

cultural identities, just as Mrs. Dalloway set out to fulfill her role by getting flowers for the party that evening.

Intersectionality and the Self

Walkerdine (1990) argues that it is the sites of rupture, or the variation between the expressions of the multiple selves that leads to, often contradictory, identities of the Self. These intersecting and multiple positions of performance and identities are both powerful and powerless and may be considered contradictory. The identities ascribed are not equally available to all women, with some being "open to them [women], while others exist only in the margins" (p. 116). These negotiated boundaries may create a plurality of the self (Lugones, 1996), or a multifaceted or improvised self (Li, 2002). Li suggests that even when considering all the parts of the self, individuals are still one person, which implies that the elements that seem contradictory to each other are woven together, often through the process of language or, more specifically, dialogue.

The multivoicedness of the dialogue of the self is something that Bakhtin discussed in the theory of polyphonic and dialogical self. The authoring of the self occurs through dialogue and can be seen as more than social interactions between the self and others (Bakhtin, 1981). Todorov (1984) suggests that the self is only able to be authored through dialogue, which Holmquist (1990) explains as, "I see my self as I conceive others might see it. In order to forge a self, I must do so from *outside.* In other words, *I author myself"* (p. 28). Holmquist's ideas are clearly based on Bakhtin's suggestions. Bakhtin (1961, p. 283) explains:

> I become conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for
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> another, through another, and with the help of another. The most important acts
>
> constituting self-consciousness are determined by a relationship toward another

consciousness. Separation, dissociation, and enclosure within the self as the main reason for the loss of one's self. Not that which the place within, but that which takes place on the boundary between one's own and some else's consciousness, on the threshold.

This consciousness demonstrates that, according to Bakhtin, dialogue presents the self with the only viable form of relationship and thus consciousness which is necessary for existence. However, Bakhtin (1984, p. 203) notes that dialogue occurs not only with others but also from within as "internally dialogized discourses" and that there are many voices of the self, some of which can cause tension.

Thus the stories from rural female teachers who share the "I" of the self often include the authoring of the self when reflecting on social interaction and dialogues with others. The more complex and subjective voices of "I" from within, including the performative or intersectional voices, are often found through deeper examination. While the social interactions of the self and "I" appear to construct an appearance of inclusion, effectiveness or equality, inherent complexities, dis/agreements and misunderstandings may lurk beneath how we want our selves to be seen. As Somers states, "all of us come to be who we are (however ephemeral, multiple, and changing) by being located or locating ourselves (usually unconsciously) in social narratives rarely of our own making" (1994, p. 606).

In this way, we are "not passive 'recipients' of identity position, but 'practice' each aspect of identity as informed by other identities we claim" (Shield, 2008, p. 302). This idea builds on the processes of social interaction and imposition (a postmodern philosophy) (Foucault, 1978; Gannon & Davies, 2007; Johnson et al., 2012; M. Gergen, 2001; Gergen, 2009). Postmodernism argues that identity is constructed narratively (Cole, 2009; Griffiths, 1995; Somers, 1994), suggesting that what we say and how we say it leaves impressions with others

regarding how we want to be perceived. As such, we are seen as coexisting as individuals in a community rather than as individual competitors in a communal world.

Social Construction and Narrative Theory

"Our sense of self is socially constructed and exists in relationship to other people" (Carey & Russell, 2003, p. 14).

Berger and Luckman (1967) first introduced the notion of social construction, which is a perspective that follows the main tenets of postmodernism and communal construction. The main idea of social constructionism is that beliefs, values and laws together comprise what we know as social realities and that they are constructed by the dominant culture and its members. The idea of living in a socially constructed world extends into how we view our identities. Social construction and narrative theory observe "the socially and historically specific cultural scripts through which our subjectivities have been formed" (Lee, 1997, p. 4) and seek to better understand the narratives that have formed and informed our identities. Indeed, we develop our own self-narratives, we decide which part of ourselves to share with others and we decide who we are or who we believe ourselves to be (White, 1995). Our identities are influenced by others with whom we come into contact and by others who have multiple perspectives, and as we transcend time and space(s), our identity becomes a process that suffers the ebbs and flows of our lives.

Freedman and Combs (1996) speak to the "interactions between the stories that [individuals] are living out in their personal lives and the stories that are circulating in their cultures" (p. 17). They note that micro, local culture and macro influences impact how we interpret our daily experiences, and thus we can determine that our identity is in a constant state of flux that shifts as we attempt to understand and define our experiences (Freedman & Combs,

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1996; Somers, 1994). As cultural and social beings, we often hold multiple relationships in different social circumstances (spouse, daughter, friend, mother, neighbor), relationships which entail different expectations. These relationships define and label our assumptions in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family status and profession (to name just a few) (Berger & Luckmann, 1967).

Does Gender Matter?

"Does being female constitute a "natural fact" or a cultural performance, or is "naturalness" constituted through discursively constrained performative acts that produce the body through and within the categories of sex?" Judith Butler (1990, p. x)

Dominant narratives or "culturally preferred ways of being" (White, 1995, p. 16) create a normative expectation regarding behavior, thought and appearance (Lee, 1997). Embedded within dominant discourse are gendered stories that shape who we are and how we live with others. Society coerces us to follow rules that have been socially constructed by dominant members of the culture, and we internalize that we must play along, we must fit in and that women must fulfil their gendered roles (Lee, 1997; Zak-Hunter et al., 2010). Just as behaviors are constructed, so too are ways of communicating. Lee (1997) suggests that society and especially social institutions create discursive fields and contexts that are prearranged forms of communication.

If we believe that our identities are social constructs, they must be maintained through a common language which enables the recreation of identity. Berger and Luckmann (1966) believe that language is the primary vehicle for norms to be established and maintained. With this understanding we must note that relationships play an integral part in our identity formation (Somers, 1994), and it is these relationships that allow us to make bids for who we think we are

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(Holland, 2003) as well as bids to those with whom we have relationships to either accept or deny us our belief. It is these woven narratives and narrative theory that allow dominant gender ideologies to be questioned. The process of recognition and integration of our identities should begin with those around us and with the cultural context in which we live (Carey & Russell, 2003; Lee, 1997; Zak-Hunter et al., 2010).

Postcolonial Feminism: Identity and Politics

"If you define yourself one way, you risk losing all other parts of yourself" (Mileris-Zylbersztejn & Freedman, 2013).

Like the viewpoint of narrative theory, postcolonial feminism emphasizes dominance in society and how this dominance holds the power to allow change for individuals regarding gender roles. Both viewpoints identify the person as a political construct which is fluid in nature. The term "political" is used in reference to power relations within society (Hanisch, 1969). Circa 1970, many women felt the need to join the liberation movement, and blame started to be laid toward oppressive institutions (Hanisch, 1969). During this collective movement, women shared their personal problems and their personal narratives, and as a result theorists asserted that personal problems are political problems, meaning that addressing problems on individual levels requires systemic change. However, creating systemic agents of change is not an easy feat on a cultural level, as one can only encourage individuals to be consciousness of relationality, positionality and situatedness (Ali, 2007; Angelique & Mulvey, 2012; Hanisch, 1969).

Traditional feminist ideologies focus on differences between genders but they omit differences within genders. Postcolonial feminists bridge that divide and include the study of ethnicity, class, race and specific histories (Ali, 2007; Carrillo et al., 2010; Mohanty, 2003). Gendered metanarratives within the postcolonial framework analyze the interpersonal co- and

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social constructions in order to determine why women retain their often, traditional (or colonial) identities, especially in rural America. Can rural America be deemed as an oppressive or marginalized space? Mohanty argues:

> So what does it mean to think through, theorize, and engage questions of difference and power? It means that we understand race, class, gender, nation, sexuality, and colonialism not just in terms of static, embodied categories but in terms of histories and experiences that tie us together, that are fundamentally interwoven into our lives (2003, p. 191)

The Female Self as a Teacher

Schulte (2016) argue that most women in the teaching profession are typically Caucasian and middle class, especially in rural America. Teacher identity in rural communities is seen as being homogenous in terms of gender, class and race, and it is the female teacher experience outside of the school that creates an interwoven life and communal experiences that bind rural women together. Teacher identity is shaped by women's place, region and country, the cultures from which they have assimilated, the religious traditions to which they ascribe and the local economic and political status of their communities (Acker, 1992). Therefore, while acknowledging foundational similarity regarding gender, class and race in rural regions, the focus of this literature review is not to prove or disprove these facts, but rather it is to dig deeper into the other ascribed identities teachers have in their communities.

Pre-existing definitions and stereotypes of who female teachers are, particularly in rural areas, often include mentions of spinsterhood (historical viewpoint), of a caring and nurturing person, of the mother figure, the dutiful daughter or the good girls. However, these understandings are often one dimensional and as such reinforce the historical traditions that regard women and female teachers as powerless, subordinate and, as Foucault (1977, 1995, p.

13) states, "docile bodies" who are denied their own abilities to negotiate power identities within the communities they live. Allowing female teachers to author their own selves allows room for the negotiation process to understand rural female lives as a whole, inclusive of their teaching profession.

Female identity and the self when coupled with the ideology of rural female teachers (and the dutiful daughter, the good girl and the mother-teacher fictions) highlights the issues of care, relationships and autonomy associated with rural female identity. However, these ideas have largely been studied through the lens of male experiences and male interpretation of female actions. Feminists have long argued that the depiction of female identity has not truly been achieved. In her 1982 publication *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development,* Gilligan listened to women's voices and discovered that they were filled with moral dilemmas and life experiences that have been misunderstood and misconstrued. The scientific community has ultimately undervalued female experiences.

These female experiences contribute to the theories and findings in scientific studies, and Gilligan's study has been attributed to finally giving females a voice in these communities (Belenky et al., 1986, 1997). Gilligan's work has also been celebrated as she herself explains, "a feminist ethics of care begins with connection, theorized as primary and seen as fundamental in human life. People live in connection with one another; human lives are interwoven in a myriad of subtle and not so subtle ways" (p. 122). In this way, Gilligan explains why females may be drawn to careers that enable relationships to be developed and as such are seen as caring, mother-like figures. Thus, Munro's concept of regarding teaching as a woman's "true profession" seems to align with Gilligan's version of the female self.

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Conversely, others find that Gilligan's work confirms the patriarchal duties that a teacher is expected to perform. Female teachers are seen as subservient to males, as women are traditionally the caretakers of the family and children. Auerbach, Blum, Smith and William (1985) ask the question, "Does asking us to listen to women's 'different voice' ask us to work to eliminate or maintain the current sex/gender system which produces such differences?" (p. 154). Critics therefore question whether Gilligan's study reaffirms that women should place others before themselves and strengthen the prevailing social constructions of female identity.

Since Gilligan's study, Weiler (1997) suggests that many researchers now acknowledge the complexity of female identity and suggest that it is not rigid or static but subjective.

Subjectivity has been employed to try to capture this quality of the social construction of the self; it implies the struggle and contest over identity and the ways in which selves are unstable, shifting and constructed through both dominant conceptions and resistance to those conceptions and suggests the incomplete and sometimes contradictory quality of our lives both in the present and as we construct our pasts through memory (Weiler, 1997, p. 353).

Within this more contemporary research, it appears there is more of an acceptance that gender studies, especially female identity studies, can balance on a number of attributes or intersections, such as gender, class, race, religion, culture and language. This allows us to believe that female identity is no longer reduced to a single form and that there are further possibilities out there.

Intersectionality and Female Teachers

Minow (1997, p. 38) defines intersectionality as "the way in which any particular individual stands at the crossroads of multiple groups." Fernandes (2003, p. 309) explains

"intersectional analysis names and describes these hidden acts of multiple discrimination and how they obfuscate damaging power relations, and it also brings to the fore how they construct, while paradoxically obviating, identities of the self".

Acknowledging the multilayered facets of identities (Angelique & Mulvey, 2012) allows attempts to deconstruct binaries such as gender (Angelique & Mulvey, 2012; Brah & Phoenix, 2000; Cole, 2009; Hancock, 2007), but such deconstruction is futile without understanding the social context and power relations embedded in the social identity (Shields, 2008). Destabilizing the preferred narrative of social dominance helps break the silence and static of gendered rhetoric that are often imposed on females (Lee, 1997). Intersectionality can therefore be seen as breaking the "culture of silence" where certain groups and subgroups are marginalized (Cole, 2009; Denzin, 2003; Hancock, 2007; Sidanius & Veniegas, 2000). Shields (2008, 2012) examines the intersection of professional and private identities and how the power relations may vary between two different groups (such as those in rural and urban America).

By acknowledging the "whiteness," "heterosexual-ness," "religious affiliation," "middleclass-ness" and "female-ness" of teachers in rural areas, I am not ignoring the other axes that form identity, but rather I am simply stating that there is a distinct lack of diversity in North Dakota.

Indeed, rural communities in North Dakota the axes of intersectionality are more limited due to the common lack of ethnic minority presence. Although historically women have been "left out" of written and oral histories (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Valentine, 2007), once the histories of women began to be told many minority women also noticed the privilege of white women (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Valentine, 2007). The socially constructed connotations associated with being black or Asian or another ethnic minority are visible, as they are bodily.

Other bodily intersections include gender and sexual orientation. Class is the only intersectionality that may not be associated with the body.

By examining intersectionality in terms of the body, it seems logical to view the body regarding place. Socially constructed identities have meanings that differ based on place. In some cultures, females are seen as being suited only for marriage, childbearing and caring for a family, and therefore formal education does not seem appropriate (Collins & Bilge, 2016). In this respect, these women are excluded from the education system, and the social traditions and histories which dictate their role in life.

The self is not one dimensional, as no one is defined by one dimension of who they are. Overlapping social identities of lived experiences therefore need to be embraced. There is no one person who is just a single gender, or a race, or a (dis)abled body or belonging to a socio-economic class. However, in rural communities it seems that one or two of these personal attributes are amplified to a public magnitude where cultural repetition is generational (regarding expectations of one gender compared to another), particularly in certain spaces within rural communities.

Social norms are embedded into our local cultures based on how and where social identities play out in terms of the physical landscape, the historical roots and traditions formed in a place. Power distribution within communities is often determined by the institutions and services available. These institutions may centralize some people's power while marginalizing others. As Collins & Bilge (2016) argues, these dimensions are not categories to identify people but instead are embedded systems of power that mutually construct each other (Tatli & Ozilgin, 2012). Examples of these systems of power include the tendency of women teachers to find themselves serving as community leaders, such as by hosting bake sales for the church or by

being Faith In Care Leaders and organizers at church. Conversely, a women may also find her identity as a female or a wife subject to oppression or treatment as an "outsider," if she were to for example try and deal with an implement dealer, a surveyor or the local water board.

Judith Butler (1990, p. 3) states:

If one ''is'' a woman, that is surely not all one is; the term fails to be exhaustive, not because a pregendered ''person'' transcends the specific paraphernalia of its gender, but because gender is not always constituted coherently or consistently in different historical contexts, and because gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. As a result, it becomes impossible to separate out ''gender'' from the political and cultural intersections in which it is inevitably produced and maintained

In contrast, Fuss rejects the cultural intersections argument and states that intersectionality captures the recognition that difference is located "not in the spaces between identities but in the spaces within" (Fuss, 1989, cited in Valentine, 2007, p. 11), implying that community members construct and propel their own identity. He does not consider that part of our identity must be recognized by others (Holland, 2005).

West and Fenstermaker (1995) contend this notion and suggest we need to revise how we currently view systems of oppression and the power structures that enable oppression. By rethinking intersectionality, they contend that the bodily identities (gender, race and sexuality) as well as class are not culturally constructed as many current researchers believe but instead are "Emergent properties that are not reducible to biological essences or role expectations. In other words, their emphasis is on how identities occur in interactions, not on stable or given understandings of social difference" (Valentine, 2007 p. 13.).

Although the emergent definition offered by West and Fenstermaker (1995) is more fluid in terms of understanding relations to place, the noticeable impact of historical tradition on the different intersectionalities is still important when analyzing the interactions in rural communities. Therefore, for the purpose of this study the intersections of gender and geography are examined within the context of the political, cultural and social institutions that are the bedrock of rural society.

The Borderlands

Anzaldùa first introduced the idea of the borderlands theory in 1988 as a result of gender and race oppression when she moved from Mexico to the USA. The theory extends the ideas of a double consciousness contributed by W. E. B. Du Bois by presenting a metaphor for all types of crossings, whether a physical land marker, a cultural barrier, "social dislocations, sexual transgressions, linguistic or cultural contexts" (1988, p. 6). Anzaldùa asserts that "living in the borderlands produces knowledge by being within a system while also retaining the knowledge of an outsider who ones from outside of the system" (1988, p. 7). Thus, a layered consciousness is constructed by the society or communities in which we live.

To understand 's border-crossing experiences, it is important to acknowledge and understand the three kinds of borders or border limits proposed by Derrida (1993). Derrida articulates that the first type of border "separates territories, countries, nations, states, languages, and cultures" (p. 23). This type of border is familiar to me due to my experiences transcending the physical boundaries from the UK to the USA. The second type of border is the border between "domains of discourse" (p. 23) where the words/terms used in one country is not easily recognized or used in the region of the new country. Thirdly, there is the border of "conceptual determinations" (p. 23) which defines the socially constructed boxes that are often taken for

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granted, such as man and woman, English and American or hot and cold. This clearly shows a predefined box but one in which the lines are invisible and only challenged when crossings are attempted.

Gloria Anzaldua (1987, 1999) tells her story of both a physical and metaphoric border crossing from Mexico to the USA, where she enrolled at a southern university, without making distinction between Deddira's three borderlands. While the physical border of the USA/Mexican border marked the spatial crossing to a new land, notes changes and challenges to her sexual, psychological and spiritual identity.

Through this self-examination, discovers a dichotomy between the marginalized and center, between traditional and nontraditional power relations and between "them" and "us." Although many scholars are wary of such either/ or binaries (Aoki, 2005; Cary, 2006; Ferguson, 1985; Griffith, 2009) due to their historic ties to patriarchal hierarchy, 's self-discovery and journey raises awareness of others who maybe do not fit into the invisible boxes that society creates, or as Griffith (2009, p. 11) suggests, "become aware of the others who inhabit the gaps outside traditional boundaries." Being outside of the traditional boundaries creates both ideological and spatial divisions in places (examples include areas where upper, middle and lower classes live together or bordering each other or areas which are predominately home to one race over another).

These distinctions are prevalent in settlements (both rural and urban) but are highlighted more when two different intersects come together in places such as schools (Giroux, 2005), as "schools are truly a place/space that 'shrinks with intimacy' (p. 19). However, in rural schools the metaphorical borderlands almost play a larger role than the physical ones when students or staff members find themselves outside their traditional identity role. Examples could include a

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male lower elementary teacher or a homosexual student. To Giroux (1992, p. 10), these spaces are sites of "negotiation, translation and dialog." Such dialog can occur within the self or between others.

How then do rural female teachers inhabit these borderland spaces/places? Are the neat little identity boxes carefully crafted and handed down from generation to generation a pedagogical boundary that requires not only multiple crossings but multiple voices speaking out to rewrite, renegotiate and remap rural female identity?

Establishing new identity borders requires breaching old boundaries in order to enable rural females to "move beyond limits" (hooks, 1994, p. 201), but this time could be messy, unpredictable and require the border crosser to be able to straddle the present and future border zones, which could result in living with feelings of displacement and discontentment while retaining courage. As (1987, 1999) states:

Every increment of consciousness, every step forward is a travesia, a crossing. I am again an alien in new territory. And again, and again. But if I escape conscious awareness, escape "knowing," I won't be moving. Knowledge makes me more aware, it makes me more conscious. Knowing is painful because after "it" happens I can't stay in the same place and be comfortable. I am no longer the same person I was before. (p. 70)

The pain of knowing signifies the border crosser's achievement of consciousness and awareness. The border crosser witnesses, retains, changes and holds on to the notion of contention within the self. The borderlands are places/spaces that offer a metaphorical zone for re-authoring the self, as Wang (2005) notes, "the movement of the self in the process of decentering, or de-marginalizing, or both leads to individual and social transformation" (p. 57), while hooks (1990) also contends that borderlands can be a space of resistance or of possibility.

Places (both metaphorical and physical) serve as the interconnection between the human world and the physical environment and thus are central to the social world and lead to social change. Places both enable and restrict a range of human processes, emotions and memories (Sampson & Goodrich, 2009). Places should not be "inert container[s]" (Cheng, Kruger & Daniels., 2003, p. 90) but instead should be cultural constructions where identities are formed and a sense of belonging is forged.

For , border crossers who survive one or more border crossings recognize that bridges exist within borderlands, and while being a border crosser can often be lonely, inviting others on the journey on the less-travelled path can create positive change, a change that may be recognized, although perhaps not vocalized, by others (Griffith, 2009).

Border Crossing: Walking into the Unknown

The crossing of borders is both a metaphorical and physical reality for me. Having lived in England, while growing up I transcended the political boundaries of European countries without much thought, as my parents took us on vacations here and there that did not require much additional expense compared to traveling to places within the United Kingdom Now, having permanently transcended the USA border as an immigrant, border crossings have taken on a whole new meaning of taking on a new identity, a new self which includes a new way of communicating or a new dialogue. While there was initial excitement about moving to my new life with a new family, there was also fear of the laws of the USA, a fear that the same border crossing rules do not apply to me as they did to my husband.

In order to make sense of my literal border crossings, examination of the metaphorical public- and private-space border crossings must also take place. The geographical or physical movement across a border must also create an internal shift in one's identity and self to allow for

elements of the old self to be taken over, dropped (intentionally or not) or retained (intentionally retained and worked at to retain and improve). Examples of these metaphorical shifts include the intention of using the word "grocery store" rather than "supermarket" and the change to eating with a fork rather than with a knife and fork. Examples in teaching include the change to using long- and medium-term plans (unit plans) to create my daily lesson plans rather than turning the page in the book as well as to expecting students to justify their answers in writing rather than simply completing fill-in-the-blank questions. Whether these experiences qualify as border crossings or not, I am not quite sure, but what I am sure about is that they are illustrations of times when I have felt a force of change, a pull to be different than what I have known, or of times when I have felt isolated and different from the social norm.

Doll (1995) also contends that "we put lines around ourselves to form boxes, such that we conform to social norms" (p. 93). The question arises: How do we remap ourselves when finding ourselves in such borderlands? What questions do we need to ask to either change the boxes of social norms or fit into them? (1987, 1999) discusses the idea of borders and borderlands in her journey as a Mexican scholar who came to study in the USA.

In the spirit of and Griffith, I invite you on the path less travelled by exploring this heuristic study of rural female teachers who may, at times, find themselves to be border crossers

The Rural Place

What is Place?

People live in geography but also take an active part in creating the places and spaces in which they live. Places are breaks or stoppages in space. But what is space itself if it is not simply understood as a static container for historical analysis and social action. (Corbett, 2016, p. 142)

To Corbett (2016), places are active; they are social; and they create an interwoven history; they stop the continuum of place. The notion of rural seems to conjure idyllic images of nostalgia (Massey, 1995) or romanticized versions of reality (Pini & Mills, 2015; Schulte, 2016; Tieken, 2014). The US Census (2016) defines rural as an area with a cluster of fewer than 2,500 people (census.gov, 2016); however, other definitions refer to geographical isolation (USDA, 2016). Defining what rural means is not always as easy as designating a place or space with a bounded area or as defining it by a generic number of "things" whether people, distance from services or cow barns.

As a place or space, Massey (1994) identifies a "place" as being nostalgic and having a past with traditions interwoven with the idea of becoming. She states, "One way of thinking about place is as particular moments, such intersecting social relations, nets of which have over time been laid down, interacted with one another, decayed and renewed" (Massey, 1994, p. 120). In this way, places are not necessarily bounded areas but instead are fluid networks of input and output of social capital. This sense of place identifies that people will have multiple identities, as social interactions within rural spaces are complex.

However, not all researchers or theorists of place have such a warm notion regarding how place is constructed. Tieken (2014) considered both population density as well as number of livestock barns as criteria for defining rural place. After being dissatisfied with what the US Census Bureau, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Economic Research Service offered as definitions of rural, Tieken (2014) suggested that being "rural" is often more of a feeling and a sense of belonging than a bounded place or a number of people. Although Zembylas (2003) did not offer a direct contribution to the theory of place, she did suggest that

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emotion is central in the construction of identity, and thus feeling and belonging are emotions

that are instrumental when considering identity construction (Schulte, 2016).

Massey's (1994) concept of place can be used as a beginning to understand communities.

Gallay, Marckini-Polk, Schroeder, and Flanagan (2016) suggest that the terms *commons* and

community are similar in the sense that they refer to the "environmental resources on which life

depends and the public spaces where people gather to negotiate how they want to live together"

(p. 2). They argue that the (multiple) role(s) of people within those places must share some

cultural, social or practical tradition, beliefs and knowledge in order to function in harmony.

Thus, the idea of place-based education is central to elaborating these commonalities in the realm

of education.

How Does Place Become (Rural) Community?

"Human Interaction is the foundation of all communities" (Flora & Flora, 2003, p. 214).

Flora and Flora (2003) articulate that in order for a place to become a community,

proximity to others is vital, as is having personal history. In order for a place to function as a

community, they state that interactions and configurations of power, differences, inequalities as

well as historical and structural interactions must be understood.

When people pass through or spend time in places, often a symbolic relationship is

formed which gives people a shared sense of purpose. Hay (1998) describes a certain amount of

"rootedness" or "alienation" with particular places. (p. 6) This cultural construct of the place is

often reflected by the social cohesion of the community, such as whether community members

are welcoming or whether there is a shared value such as religious belief or ways of living.

Other symbolic links that culturally create "communities" stem from individuals creating

symbolic links to places such as through marriage, birth, family history or reminiscing (Low,

1992). Rural communities tend to impose a closeness and friendliness, but they can also be lonely and intrusive (Goodnough & Mulcahy, 2011).

Kenny, Harreveld and Danaher (2016) note that "rurality emerges . . . as a contested notion" due to its multiple definitions (p. 184). Having multiple definitions allows these spaces to be lived in by people, and as such they are interwoven with emotion. Corbett perceives space as "being neither innocent or neutral" (2016, p. 143), whereas Pini and Mills (2015) contest that rural areas are "seen as an innocent space compared with the urban" (p. 586). The term *rural community* therefore has multiple definitions, and constructing its meaning depends on the need to define rural. To understand what rural means, key ideas from three scholars' theories are used to gain a better understanding of the fluid nature of rurality: Harre (2004), Baudrillard (1983) and Lefebvre (2009).

Harre's theory looked at how everyday life unfolded and revealed "explicit and implicit patterns of reasoning that are realized in the ways that people act towards others" (Walker-Gibbs, Ludecke & Kline, 2015, p. 82). In this way, storylines have a significant theme in Harre's work: "If we take the view that life unfolds as a narrative, with multiple contemporaneous interlinking story-lines, the significance of the actions that people carry out, including speech acts, is partly determined by then-and-there positions of the actions "(p. 82). Despite the fact that Harre discusses "in the moment" storylines, personal histories are also important to teacher identities within rural communities. In any community (rural or urban), Adams (2011) and Acker (1995) concur that people acquire identities based on their personal characteristics and histories which may be real or imaginary.

Benedict Anderson (1983) used the term "imagined communities" to discuss nationalism. In his theory of *Imagined Communities* Anderson suggests that nationalism is founded on the

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idea of comeradory, a common belief and understanding between people who have never met, never heard each other speak or seen each other face to face. While there is more familiarity between people living in rural communities, there is a significant rural pride in being able to say that you are from a certain town and this is often due to the success of the school sports between rural communities that is historical as well as current.

Within rural communities, there is a similar pride that is tied to history in terms of holding on to a way of life. This can be referenced in terms of length of community existence, or it can be seen in institutions such as the patriarchal Free Masons, or it can be seen in the duties of both men and women as they volunteer to serve at funerals, mow the church yard, or serve on committees.

However, due to the globalization of the rural, or "rural cosmopolitanism" (Pini and Mills 2015, p. 68), how we conceptualize rural is changing (Walker-Gibbs et al. 2015). The notions of the simple and idyllic lifestyle can no longer be sustained, but instead researchers are faced with "a difficulty for any study on rural identities, spaces and places will need to engage with the deferred and free-floating . . . nature of postmodern discourse" (Carmichael, 1991). This evidence demonstrates that rural identities have been transformed from the idyllic notions of yester-year and that rural spaces are now open to privatization, marketization and individual human capital.

Lefebvre's (2009) theory of space refers to the production of its values and power struggles experienced in the social container (referred to by Corbett). Lefebvre asserts "space is not a scientific object removed from . . . ideology and politics; it has always been political and strategic . . . space [is] bound up with social reality . . . Space does not exist in itself it is produced." (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 170). The conflicts that occur in society change over time, and

within that time there are power and political struggles peoples' bids for identities are accepted and rejected (Holland, 2003) and personal histories are forged. Cohen (1985, p. 118) also echoes this feeling by saying that "people construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, a referent of their identity."

Community is, therefore, bound in power, privilege, difference and held to a historical system that webs together personal identities, in which structures and institutions have symbolic meanings. These meanings are often overtly constructed and accepted by the community dwellers, but they also convert ideologies of the power structures within the community, the roles of different genders and who is included and excluded from these spaces. McDowell (1994) defines this notion of the seen and unseen constructs of community as:

> A particular sense of places that local inhabitants feel attached to [which] is the combination of its specific history and the impact of all sorts of contemporary changes so too might other localities be defined by how they affect and reflect histories and geographies that construct particular ways of being a man or a woman in that area (p.97)

For Fitchen (1991), the definition of a rural community has become less clear along with the waning patriarchal uses of space such as agriculture. Due to the boom-and-bust years of farming in the 1980s, what it means to be considered as rural or as belonging to America's rural spaces changed as farming families suffered losses of land and property, which changed the rural familiarity and social and ideological identity as a result. Teiken (1991, as cited in Fitchen, 1991) suggests that these changes in identity link rural communities with agricultural institutions and with people, although each individual retains their own individual identity while still maintaining some sort of a collective community identity (Schulte, 2016).

The church, school and family life has been at the heart of rural community life since the western United States was settled. Within these institutions, behavior, social interaction and activities became standardized, and they also embodied the ethos of the community and projected its identity to its own inhabitants and to others who engage in these activities.

Schools have always been open to the public, with local community members being able to participate in social activities such as a Sunday league basketball game or cooking classes for 4-H. In this way, schools offered the young and old, female and male, a chance at interaction and a sense of belonging. White (2016) agrees with this characterization, "The relationships between rural schools and local communities are reciprocal, whereby success in the areas of rural leadership and community collaboration can in turn inform teacher education reform" (p. 38). Autti and Hyry-Beihammer (2014) also concur with this notion, as they note that schools are places where communities get together for celebrations at certain times of the year. They highlight that, in rural communities, schools are well placed to bring people together who are at similar life stages (such as parents with young children). In this way, social connections are made between students, parents and community members and thus become symbolic icons of rural communities and central places.

However, in recent years rural schools have suffered a decline in enrollment (Roberts, 2005), a decline in the ability to attract qualified teachers and (in some cases) a decline in the ability to finance educational endeavors. Corbett (2016) comments on this effect on rural schools, "formal schooling becomes a quintessential institution of disembedding . . . concerned with severing the attachments of individuals to particular places and making young people adaptable, flexible and mobile."(p.287) In this way, schools in rural communities have become defunct or meaningless for many rural community members as they can no longer best prepare

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students for the globalized world. It is apparent that economic and cultural shifts differ from place to place and that the success of the school and community will, as Walker-Gibbs et al. (2015) argue, depend upon the rural identity, which varies over time and place.

Community and Identity

Gendered Spheres

The notion of women occupying a separate, gendered sphere has been well documented by Schatz-Oppenheimer and Halpert-Zamir. (2010), Moreau, Osgood and Halsall (2007), Acker (1995), Massey (1995) and Zamblyas (2003). Acker (1995) notes that "Applying gender analysis to teachers' work would mean calling attention to the obvious and subtle ways in which cultural beliefs about women and men influence the nature of teachers' work and the perceptions others hold of it" (p. 114). Traditionally, the role of the woman was to tend to household needs: to make sure the food was cooked, clothes were made and cleaned, fires were stoked and flour was made. As Faragher explains, "Aside from food production, women were solely responsible for all food preparation, all household chores, all textile and clothing manufacture, childcare, and all work obviously necessary to the reproduction of the farmstead" (1981, p. 540). It is this childcare that women became known for, and as Acker (1995) states, it is the "idea that women are like this naturally" (p. 22) that leads them to the feminized culture of teaching.

Motherhood and teaching, particularly the teaching of elementary age students, have become synonymous (Acker, 1995). Schatz-Oppenheimer and Halpert-Zamir. (2010) suggest that "even in modern society, cultural and social mores continue to characterize a woman as one who acts according to stereotypes – emotions, caring, fostering relations of trust, responsive to distress, and so on" (p. 366). The fact that teachers receive long vacations and a shorter working day than other professionals allows them to be mothers, and vice versa because they are still able

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to take care of their children. Furthermore, Schatz (2010) recognize the fact that the role of women in the caretaking role is ingrained into society, rather than stemming from biological differences between the sexes.

According to the longitudinal survey of Arlie Hoschild and Anne Machung's *The Second Shift* (1989), women have been seen as having to seek employment while still maintaining responsibility for the home and children. Moreau et al (2007) note that there is still a "gendered division of labor in the home" (p. 241) and that women have to "juggle work, family and domestic responsibilities" (p. 242). The female teacher identity therefore entails time constraints and additional responsibilities that make the work/life balance a continuous stream of responsibility.

Throughout feminist literature, studies show that female teachers bring their work home with them work in the evenings and cannot compartmentalize (Acker, 1995). Some studies also show that they have to slip out to take care of elderly relatives or young children during the day or at the end of the working day (Acker, 1995). Wilkinson (1991) articulates a similar notion, where:

> [women] are likely to encounter one another in many different roles, such as parent-teacher, merchant- costumer, official-constituent, and so on; and their activities in various contexts are likely to reflect this fact . . . rural life encourages integration among many contacts by increasing the probability that these contacts will be repeated and intimate; that is, that they will be in strong ties, which, nominally at least, have some degree of integration (p. 734)

A sense of community is therefore important when discussing rural teaching and education. In addition to acknowledging this importance, Kline and Soejatminah (2016) suggest

that in education, identity is commonly believed to be "a key influencing factor on teachers'

sense of purpose, self-efficacy, motivation, commitment, job satisfaction and effectiveness"

(Kline & Soejatminah, 2016, p. 160). Butt, Raymond, McCue and Yamagishi (1992) expand on

this notion and suggest that, in return, communities should develop an understanding of teachers

as both professionals and as individuals as well as recognize their dual or multiple roles in

society.

However, the ascribed identities of being caring, moral and wanting to serve others do

not always fit female teachers. As Butler (1990, 1997) argues, the over-simplification of the

female teacher identity could wreak havoc if women are made to "fit" into certain socially

constructed paradigms such as religious affiliations (Howley, Howley & Dudek, 2016). As

Butler (1987) states, "not only are we culturally constructed, but in some sense we construct

ourselves" (p. 23). In this way, women in rural communities can be seen as accepting the

identities that are socially constructed and their work presented a female archetype that is

perpetuated in society (Schatz-Oppenheimer & Halpert-Zamir 2010). The fitting of a person into

the social mold enables inclusion to be felt in the community group, while stepping outside of

the expected paradigm may lead to achieving an outsider status or exclusion from social spaces.

McDowell (1999) dissects this ideology further by suggesting that the spaces within

communities are divided into public and private, and these divisions are where power struggles

exist. Private spaces include the home where memories and histories are made and emotions are

lived. Traditionally, the home belonged to the female identity and to some extent still does. The

expectations were for women to "keep the house" (McDowell, 1999, p. 73) Munro (1998b) states

because it was seen as being part of a woman's natural skill, and raising children was a "sacred"

duty (p. 75). Sales (1999) identifies with the power struggles between the woman's traditional role and the role of the female teacher who is seen and heard:

> Relational factors would cover the power relations within society… and the fact that women in the large majority of cases will have greater family responsibilities than men in addition to their school work, but also that the figure of a woman in a position of authority, particularly of authority over men, is threatening to existing power structures in the family and in the wider society (p. 416)

In the home, emotions are allowed to be lived and expressed, whereas in public spaces emotions are often masked or disguised and, as Schatz-Oppenheimer & Halpert-Zamir (2010) assert, women were traditionally seen and not heard. In this way, the home becomes a place of empathy, emotion and love for many (McDowell, 1999)

The social and emotional spaces found within communities are also gendered spaces, as Pini and Mills (2015) suggest: "[It] is not just constituted as a 'rural' place but as a masculine place where the feminized ways of the urban are rejected for more masculine techniques" (p. 588). Buildings, whether from an architectural or social standpoint, are often distinguishable as either female or male spaces. Historically, some buildings found in rural communities, such as the Masons' clubhouse, only allow men inside and are openly created by and for men. Nonetheless, despite gendered appearances and uses, buildings take up space in rural communities.

Historical Perspectives

From a global perspective, the nineteenth century saw an influx of female teachers in Europe and North America. These teachers were often less qualified than their male counterparts as a result of women not having as much access to higher education opportunities (Sales, 1999).

Female teachers, particularly in elementary classrooms or one-room schoolhouses, were seen as being gentle and able to soften the minds of children because of having more patience than men. Wyman, (1997, p. 11) states *"Good women, who do very well, bring little ones to read and spell, which fits them for their writing."*

During the nineteenth century, a few women stepped forward to attempt reform and to bring female teacher training opportunities to the masses; however, unbeknownst to them, they were actually reinforcing the patriarchal notions embedded in the US school system. Emma Willard, Mary Lyon and Catherine Beecher became rural icons as they trained women teachers and it became acceptable for women to step into the workplace. In this sense, the school became an extension of the home, a domestic sphere of influence (Carter, 1992).

Until the nineteenth century, many rural teachers had little educational opportunity beyond what they learned in school. Professional development opportunities existed only through extension courses offered by some land grant universities, but many had not yet been established in the West at this point. To compensate for a lack of formal education, many women learned from each other. Collaborative days were scheduled where activities were planned for students and instructors.

Emma Willard wanted more than ad-hoc training events for women, which she achieved through writing textbooks as well as through making advanced classes available. Similarly, Mary

Lyon provided the equivalent of the first college class specifically for women. This class offered a blended approach of religious training with education, thus calling upon women's duty to serve others (Carter, 1992).

Catherine Beecher took reform to the next level. Having seen the exodus of men from the teaching profession due to the Civil War, Beecher saw the need for mass teacher training to become available to women in order to educate the two million destitute children (Wyman, 1997). During these times, Beecher was an advocate for female teachers and argued that by placing females in the classroom, women were broadening their domestic spheres (Sklar, 1973). In this sense, the classroom was a mere extension of the home and teachers (or mothers) who were there to care for students as they would their own children.

As a minister's daughter, Beecher continued the "work of God" by following her calling and became a role model, albeit a rather formidable one, for women teachers in America. Even so, women teachers were allowed to serve in the position only until they got married, as required by a law which continued until the early twentieth century. Female teachers were also restricted in terms of what was deemed appropriate behavior, meaning that they had to be seen as model citizens regarding behavior, hygiene, religious attendance and significant relationships with men (Murray & Grant, 1999). In this way, female teachers were not being liberated by additional opportunities and training but were instead seen as being restricted or held to a higher standard than others in the community, particularly those in rural communities.

Autti & Hyry-Beihammer, (2014) studied Vermont teachers in rural settings and found that schools were the heart of the community Within these districts, female teachers were under surveillance more than their male counterparts and in some respects were unable to fully participate in community events. Quartz (1985) comments on the notion of the dual self as

female teachers struggle between the teacher identity and the identity of the self. This blurred line between professional and personal selfhood seems to be accentuated in rural communities where everyone knows everyone else's business (Goodnough & Mulcahy, 2011), which is not always an advantage.

Questions arise as to whether the teaching profession has changed since the early twentieth century. After surveying the literature, it appears that female teachers in rural areas still constitute the majority of the workforce and still have to answer to male administration, although this is changing. There are now more female administrators but they tend to be older before they reach their promotional potential due to the conflicting dual responsibilities of home and career (Wyman, 1997).

The Gendered Myths of Teacher Identity

In the book, *Schoolgirl Fictions,* Walkerdine (1990) suggests that teaching has become an impossible fiction as female teachers are seen to be mothers, dutiful daughters and good girls who are helpful and kind. While this is clearly fictitious, the social expectations of what female teachers has to do to be seen as successful has become engrained in our internal thoughts and is often the lived experiences of female teachers. Although Walkerdine (1990) offers suggestions that there are alternatives to how we see female teachers, we choose not to because "these stories can be very frightening because they appear to blow apart the fictions through which we have come to understand ourselves." (p. xiv).

In understanding the cozy and nurturing stereotypes female teachers poses, it must be acknowledged that women, to this day, still encounter teaching as a very gendered profession. The myths that are associated with female teacher identity include:

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Myth #1: "The Mother Role"

During the nineteenth century, spaces became gendered: The home was seen as a private female space and the public sphere was seen as a male space. This division made the construction of gender easy to narrate in schools and as such the mother-teacher was seen as "the self-sacrificing, nurturing woman who complies with her natural duty, in which unconditional love of children signifies the attainment of true womanhood" (Munro, 1998b p. 3–4). Teaching was seen as a "true woman's profession" (Munro, 1998, p. 269), because women's instincts include nurturing capabilities. Indeed, as Pinnegar, Lay, Bigham and Dulude (2005) note, "it is not uncommon to hear teachers described in terms such as 'nurturer,' 'guide,' 'parent,' 'matriarch,' 'moral force,' or 'protector'" (p. 56). Indeed many rural female teachers still use these terms to describe their own experiences.

Over the course of time, the home and school became seen as two separate institutions. However, the overlapping characteristics; which were traditionally perceived as being nurturing, remained. The consequences of the separation of home and school created division meant that social changes were upon communities. As the United States emerged as an industrial nation, there was a need for repression of individuals by public entities (Theobald, 2007). As private lives entered public spheres, women were seen to be acting out the masculine curricular pedagogy. Beecher, Willard and others can be seen as the "dutiful daughters" (p. 269) whose fathers were expanding democratic notions through public schooling.

Myth #2: Good Girl and Spinster Sisters

The gendered identities of the "good girl" and the "spinster sister" can be seen as carrying out their father's work and thereby either advertently or inadvertently authenticating the father as the originator of knowledge and power. Munro (1998) gives us examples of how this

has been a recurring notion throughout history: "Catherine Beecher carried out the ideas of Horace Mann, Annie Julia Cooper of Frederick Douglas, Elizabeth Peabody of Frobel, Jane Addams, Ella Flagg Young, Mary Bethune McCleod of Dewey, and today the ideas of Foucault, Freire and Derrida" (p. 272).

However, Moyer (2004) contests this notion of dutiful daughter as she asserts that the relationship, particularly between Dewey and Clapp, was more involved than simply Clapp carrying out the work of Dewey. Their ideas were interwoven as they both offered progressive pedagogy. It is simply the fact that due to the patriarchal state of the nation, Dewey's voice sounded the loudest and was thus recorded as being the founder of progressivist thoughts. As dutiful daughters, the organization and transmission of knowledge carries on in their "father's" patriarchal name, and therefore it is not the women who are remembered but rather it is the originator: their fathers. In creating these gender boundaries, women inadvertently build an invisible stage that creates a greatness to the public spaces where the male plot is allowed to be told with glory.

Myth #3: Change is Progressive.

Change is most often seen as progressive and, in terms of teacher identity, progress is associated with John Dewey. Assuming that, at the time of Dewey's writing, teaching was already considered a feminized profession, Dewey still clearly associated females with the private space of the home. He suggested (as cited in Munro, 1998):

> The occupations and relationships of the home environment are not specially selected for the growth of the child; the main object is something else, and what the child can get out of them is incidental. Hence the need of a school. In this school the life of the child becomes the all-controlling aim. (p. 279)

Dewey is therefore suggesting that the curriculum is child-centered and that children should be taken out of the home, which is a domestic and female sphere where informal learning occurred. Even when using the progressive lens of change, it was apparent that identities were still reproducing the gender norms and maintaining the status quo of the male storyline in the social narrative histories.

Teaching has traditionally been seen as a service to others rather than as a career that offers women monetary rewards (Carter, 1992b) and regards a time when men were considered the breadwinner of the household. Today, females are overrepresented in the schooling system. As Bushnell (2003) argues:

> Working within the system means to work within a historically gendered system in which (mostly) female teachers answer to the authority of mostly male administrators. That system has been institutionalized through normal schools, schools of education and unions, which have all served to construct gendered assumptions about teaching (p. 267).

The Role of Schools in Understanding Rural Communities

Rural public schools make up nearly one-third of America's schools and house over one-fifth of American students (Fitchen, 1991). In 2011–2012, 76% of public school teachers were female and 44% were under the age of 40. According to the U.S. Census (2000), 2,442,104 teachers were women within the United States, which equated to 4% of all working females employed in the US over the age of 16. This number has declined over time, as in 1988, for instance 63% of all teachers were female. Teaching has long been a feminized profession, which is a notion that persists today; however, as Apple (1983) notes, there has been a noticeable absence of female teacher histories from the records.

More recently, female teachers employed in Canada account for 65% of the profession (Statistics Canada, 1994, cited in Acker, 1995). In England, Moreau et al. 2007) report that 69% of full-time teachers are female elementary teachers. However, Sales (1999) report that in 1991, 81% of elementary teachers were women in the United Kingdom. This number is unlikely to see such a downward shift. The geographical boundaries associated with teacher study (United Kingdom vs. England) need to be taken into account, as does the United Kingdom legislation that offered a work-study incentive for people to go back to school in the early 2000s. This shows that teaching is a predominantly female field or "pink-collared' profession, particularly for elementary teachers (A.G. Johnson, 2005).

A study conducted by Brill and McCartney (2008, as cited in White, 2016, p. 22) in the field of teacher recruitment and retention found that in California, 33%of teachers leave within their first three years and 46% within 5 years of graduating, figures which are relatively high. Rural schools in the United States also appear to have higher numbers of inexperienced teachers (Monk, 2007, cited in White, 2016, p. 22). Roberts (2005) concurs with this notion by stating that "inexperienced teachers . . . do not tend to stay long" (p. 41). However, Roberts goes on to suggest that while many rural schools churn through inexperienced teachers, the veteran staff, who have been with the same school district for most of their careers, state that there are limited opportunities for "renewal, professional learning or career progression" (2005, p. 41). It is argued that teacher recruitment and retention in rural areas are often challenged by geography, available services and opportunity.

On the surface, teachers go to work at 8 a.m. and are done with their day at 3:30 p.m. (or thereabouts). Often, those who do not teach give little consideration to all that is involved in the

profession in terms of time, effort and resources—not to mention having to juggle family responsibilities and the "extra" duties often taken on by members of rural communities.

Three important facets need to be explored further in the literature based on these findings. Firstly, what does it mean to be rural? The definitions of *rural*, *place* and *community* are examined in exploring this question. The second facet regards understanding how teachers at different stages in their careers experience rural spaces. Thirdly, I explore which mechanisms have been put in place to assist teachers in connecting with their surroundings in order to improve their experiences and help sustain rural schools and communities (Kardos & Johnson, 2007).

To date, rural schools and their communities have often been overlooked by researchers of inclusive education. This is not to suggest that the rural has been ignored entirely in research on inclusivity and schooling. For example, a number of studies have included rural case studies as part of broader research on subjects such as educational disadvantage and experiences of poverty (Pini, Carrington & Adie, 2015, p. 677).

Community and Belonging: Insider/Outsider Constructs

The topics discussed in this paper include communities, teacher identity, symbolic institutions, female histories, spaces and places. In an attempt to tie all of these strands together, before I look toward a plausible suggestion to preserve rural schools and rural communities and improve teacher recruitment and retention issues, it is important to consider the notions of insider and outsider.

There is little literature available to survey which relates directly to teachers, education and rural identity, so I refer primarily to the work of McHenry-Sorber and Schafft (2014), who identify the notion of inclusion and exclusion through a gendered lens. Despite the subtleties of

social boundaries, they note how symbolic gendered notions act as leverage for social power. This social power is used to control group identities and, when rural schools are typically perceived to be a unifying institution within rural communities, they can in fact function as areas of fragmentation and social conflict.

Teachers are faced with neoliberal educational policies that distance them from their communities and, with socioeconomic factors in play, some community members see class difference as a factor for exclusion. Other factors that may exclude teachers from the community include race, sexuality, religion/religious affiliation, experience. (Howley et al, 2016).

Within schools, teachers can find themselves being "othered" (McHenry-Sorber & Schafft, 2014). This "othering" manifests in a range of ways, such as veteran teachers finding themselves being left behind, new teachers not feeling a sense of place within the building and other teachers being perceived as not working hard.

As global-local politics come into play in rural areas, a sense of cohesive moral purpose is needed from communities, school administration and teachers in order to recruit and retain teachers in rural schools and communities. This is crucial in order for local education to thrive, especially in light of the imposed neoliberal educational policies.

Becoming a Rural Female Teacher

Teacher identity has been well researched in both rural and urban areas in terms of the teacher's identity and its impact on the classroom. However, little research has examined the teacher, who is often female, within the multiple roles which are both assigned to us by others and often taken on ourselves. Identities such as "schoolmarm" (Munro, 1998), "dutiful daughter," "teacher," "caretaker" (O'Connor, 2008) and "(school)mother" (Wyman, 1997) have all been ascribed to female teachers (Munro, 1998b).

The becoming of a teacher, as Munro (1998) calls it, is not a simple process and involves complicated negotiations to first recognize who a person is or is not. Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) term this process the (un)becoming and state further that "learning to teach meant taking up a new and often complex identity" by "engaging in acts of forgetting, discarding, silencing, and ignoring" in order to fit the "identities" of a school teacher (p. 78). The identities of school teachers, particularly elementary school teachers, can be seen as exceedingly "pink collared" (A.G. Johnson, 2005). Such stereotypes, particularly of elementary teachers, are grounded in historical binaries and directly correlate with the traditional "schoolmarm, dutiful daughter and spinster sister" roles (Munro, 1998).

In a general context, the jobs women occupy can be viewed as gendered professions. Feminist researchers such as McDowell (1999) identify that the social expectations of women require that they be more nurturing, supportive and caring. She states, "In the United States for example, women account for over 90 per cent of dental hygienists, secretaries, childcare workers, registered nurses and pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers" (McDowell, 1999, p. 126). This shows that women not only still hold stereotypically female jobs but they also do not rise to management or administrative levels as quickly or as early in their careers (Kaufmann, 2012). Although it is tempting to engage in these debates and arguments, the focus of this study is not on the "glass ceiling" discussion (Moreau et al. 2007), instead, my purpose, here is to consider teacher identity in rural spaces and how it can be preserved.

Negotiating Rural Female Teachers' Identities

Many arguments have been made in the claim that teaching has become a feminized profession (Grumet, 1988; Moreau, et al. 2007; Sales, 1999; Schatz-Oppenheimer & Halpert-Zamir, 2010) as the role of males in teaching has declined, and thus the status of teaching has

also declined (Beutel, Aide & Hudson, 2011). Although females filled the teacher roles which were once held by men, their voices were not necessarily heard or recorded in the literature over the course of time (Faragher, 1981)

Historically, the voice of women and women's roles have been studied by males. As Faragher (1981, p. 198) states, "Historians have not heard rural women because they have listened to the powerful, not the powerless." This maintains that rural women, particularly farm women, have been underrepresented in history since men and women have separate spheres and thus separate identities.

Identity theory has been well documented in research from a number of different perspectives, including psychological, sociological, sociocultural and historical viewpoints. From a development research perspective, Mead (1934) examined a person's ability to coordinate their social and professional actions by trying to understand how they engaged in social life. In this theory, Mead expresses the ability for a child (and later as adults) to objectively view the roles or positions of others by assessing their personal and social qualities. Holland, Lachicotte Jr, Skinner and Cain (2003) exemplify this by suggesting that such social positions may include being a mother, daughter, friend, teacher and the like. Using the theory offered by Mead, it appears that identities are self-objected (Holland et al., 2003). Like Mead (1934), Erikson (1958, 1964, 1968, 1974) examined the self in relation to a social context.

Criticisms of development theories suggest that the notion of compartmentalizing one's self into different boxes (Cote & Levine, 1998; Penuel & Wertsch, 1995; Zembylas, 2003), such as in a daily routine of a teacher (e.g., mom, wife, taxi driver, teacher, mom, wife), is not realistic. Although one identity held by the self may be more prevalent at one time, it is in fact the case that all the identities are still being maintained. This appears to also be true for teachers

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in rural schools, as many of the faculty's children attend the school and the teacher has to make the choice at different times of the day to be "mom" or to be "teacher." Indeed, as Acker writes, "Few teachers could compartmentalize home and school. Teachers took paperwork home, sometimes every night. Extracurricular duties cut into family time" (1995, p. 130).

The concept of identity is inherently tied to the present moment, the person and the collective space or place that forms a community. Communities are cultural, social and emotional places where new activities and new ways of being can exist, even as the notions of the place's past are maintained. The world to which the self belongs is one of social products and interactions, and it is through such interactions that both the inner perception of the self as well as the recognition by others of our identities are created and confirmed (Holland et al., 2003). If this view is accepted, the development theory suggested by Mead and later affirmed by Erickson must be dismissed, in part because it provides no recognition of emotion, power relations or an understanding that identity can be a social construct (Haviland & Kahlbaugh, 2008; Zembylas, 2003).

Vygotsky (1978, 1986) assesses identity through a sociocultural lens. Vygotsky was not primarily concerned with identity as a focus however, as he was more concerned with the individual's development (Zembylas, 2003; Holland et al., 2003). In this theory, individual development can only be understood by examining the interactions in a social, cultural and historical context.

Symbols have been historically used in society as a way to measure feeling and emotion. As a society, we experience symbols differently, but it is through this social interaction that identity theory can be brought to the fore (Zembylas, 2003). Identity formation, from a sociohistorical perspective, weaves encounters, cultural tools and choices made by individuals

into context. For example, Acker (1995) suggests that the choices made by female teachers are often dependent on a woman's stage of family life, the needs of her spouse and any unexpected life events that may occur in a teacher's life. Moreau et al. (2007) further assert that women tend to follow their spouse's career since traditional family roles still exist, where men are the breadwinners and women are the child-bearers and raisers. Thereby, the choices made by a teacher to move in or out of a rural school district may have an impact on their personal identity but may also be more a reflection of the family demands.

Critics of Vygotsky argue that analyzing identity formation from an individualistic perspective does not address the complex power structures and relations found in society. In the poststructuralist theories of Foucault (1984), Alcoff (1988) and Butler (1990, 1997), identity formation is a constant process that consists of dynamic emotions, processes and experiences. As a person transitions from childhood to adulthood, their histories and identities are being constructed, weaved, accepted or denied. Multiple voices, emotional experiences and personal relations evolve within this rich tapestry of sociocultural interaction. Thus, the cultural context to which a person belongs is foundational in the development of their identity. Acker (1995) suggests that teachers, while being individuals (mothers, wives, daughters, etc.) in private spaces, can also be seen as a homogenous group and part of the cultural makeup of communities.

Cultural identity, or recognition of the same cultural beliefs, provides the glue that binds community identity together, particularly in a rural context. Being identified as belonging to a minority racial group, or being a lesbian, is a salient identity that is not coterminous with the normative female status. McHenry-Sorber and Schafft (2014) suggest that a further dichotomy is created in communities for teachers. Neoliberal educational policies, such as No Child Left

Behind (2001), place the practice of the classroom in a placeless land that is tied to neither community nor state.

In rural areas, it is apparent that identity formation partly contributes to the gendered, racial, religious, political and historical homogeneity of the person (Holland et al., 2003). Knowing the history of the people located in a given community is part of what makes the insider–outsider identity place-specific.

Feminist identity theorists have argued that patriarchal histories, social interactions and cultural values (racial, religious and political) have been culturally privileged. Bakhtin echoes this in his reflections of Dostoevsky's work, while Hohne and Wussow (1994) draw parallels between feminist theory in Bakhtin's statement and the "vitalizing force of dialogism-that is, the incorporation and interweaving of various voices to create a sum far greater and more generative" (p. viii). Emphasizing a similar effort to recognize the outsider feminist identity, Hohne and Wussow (1994) state that the female way of doing "concern(s) itself with points of view, with the interlocative dialogic self investigating both of its own positions and languages and those of others" (p. xiii).

Although Bakhtin is not a feminist theorist, Holland et al. (2003) concur by suggesting that it is important to accept a multi-voiced sociocultural history of identity and female teachers. Indeed, Wyman (1997) notes that the election, hiring and work of female superintendents and principals are far less chronicled than their male counterparts, partly due to the gender divide in women' occupying management positions and also due to the infrequency of women entering leadership roles (Acker, 1995; Schatz-Oppenheimer & Halpert-Zamir, 2010; Starr & White, 2008). Kaufmann (2012) notes that females do not enter leadership roles until they are in their

40s, primarily because of the dual roles, or burden, of both running the home while maintaining a career outside the home.

Rebuttal: The "Good" Teacher at the Intersect of Now and Then, Here and There

Much of the literature does not refer to gender specifics in terms of teacher identity, so in order to level the playing field so to speak, I analyze how teacher identity is constructed in a genderless way and utilize sociocultural perspectives. When studying the identity of teachers, it is important to note that many of their experiences and demeanors are constructed through personal life experiences (Knowles, 1992; Kline & Soejatminah, 2016). Middleton (1992) articulates this point as she shares her personal history:

> It was assumed that I would finish secondary school, then go to the city and train as a primary school teacher. Although my true vocation as a woman was to get married and have children, it was also seen as important for me to 'have a life' beforehand (p. 28)."

Knowles (1992) proposes that teacher identity, especially as an emerging or pre-service teacher, hinges on four factors: "childhood experience, teacher role play models, teaching experiences and significant or important people and significant experiences other than early formative experiences" (p. 127).

Goodson (1992) argues that teachers change as they gain experience, creating a fluid identity; thus, finding commonalities in the way teachers interact, think and act will lead to improved efforts toward understanding change in rural education. However, there must concurrently be understanding of the environment or spaces in which teachers work. Kline and Soejatminah (2016) agree that "teacher identity is shaped by active location and social space" (p. 160). Thus, the classroom where teachers work must be considered as an active space.

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As Goodson (1992) asserts, "classrooms are special places and in these special places it is almost as if a separate species of life exists" (p. 2). He notes that classrooms are identifiable by the emotions that they resonate with visitors:

> Even the odors of the classroom are fairly standardized. Schools may use different brands of wax and cleaning fluid, but they all seem to contain similar ingredients, a sort of universal smell which creates an aromatic background that permeates the entire building. Added to this, in each classroom, is the slightly acrid scent of chalk dust and the faint hint of fresh wooden pencil shavings. In some rooms, especially at lunchtime, there is the familiar odor of orange peels and peanut butter sandwiches, a blend that mingles in the late afternoon (following recess) with the delicate pungency of children's perspiration. If a person stumbled into a classroom blindfolded, his nose alone, if he used it would carefully tell him where he was. (Philip Jackson, cited in Goodson, 1992, p. 2)."

In addition to classrooms being their own distinct special space within the school and community (given that often many generations of the same family have attended the same school), teachers also find themselves being perceived as special. Goodson (1992) suggests that while we are at school, we wear our school-teacher identity, which is one of public service. To some, teachers appear to be a "separate species" (p. 2).

During the working day, teachers must identify with a group of people who share common ground in order to understand the classroom and the school as social spaces within the rural community (Webb, 2005). Establishing this common ground is important as much of the teaching profession relies on nonverbal attributes such as unspoken gestures or undercurrents.

Davis, Sumara and Luce-Kapler (2000) argue that "we become what we do" and suggest that, by teaching, teachers shape their own identities. As a result, pre-service teachers struggle to

identify with their established colleagues. Kardos and Johnson (2007) concur by asserting that pre-service (or new) teachers spend much of their time in isolation and therefore struggle to establish their identity in the school, unless the schools take responsibility for those who are unable to participate in the unspoken conversations.

Modernists' views of teacher identity are correlated to ideals associated with the progressive era and with that of the core and the self. Modernists portray their teaching identity through stories that enable them to sell, or make bids on, being seen in a certain way (Holland et al., 2001). They deliberately weave a perception of how they believe others should see them.

In the postmodernist era, teacher education has included a need for reflection (Goodnough & Mulcahy, 2011). Teachers are often referred to as the "good" teacher or as the "bad" teacher (Middleton, 1992, p. 22), and as Acker (1995) suggests, "like good mothers, good teachers find their work is never done" (p. 24). Being a good teacher requires using reflective practices to really assess where their strengths and weaknesses lie. Being able to understand our own professional identities is important because this influencing factor drives teachers' sense of self and of purpose as well as enables them to be motivated, committed and satisfied in their jobs (Kline & Soejatminah, 2016). According to Goodnough and Mulcahy (2011), teacher identity needs to be seen as being "informed, formed, and reformed" (p. 203), and they furthermore argue that the complex lives of teachers outside of the classroom lead to acquiring personal experience in cultural, social and environmental issues and thus help inform the instructional process.

In developing these attributes, teachers often have to confront who they are in order to relate to others. In her self-study, Schulte (2016) identified that "being white, middle class and female" (p. 18) were comfortable identities for her to wear. By creating common ground with teachers and students, teachers in rural schools can offer something more than teachers in urban

settings. As Goodnough and Mulcahy (2011) suggest, in rural schools it takes a teacher less time to get to know their students and the families they are from. Due to smaller class sizes there is a lower student-to-teacher ratio, which more successfully individualizes education. Success, or becoming the "good" teacher, requires you to identify with the community.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Heuristic Methodology

Clark Moustakas developed heuristic methodology to be distinct from that of phenomenological research, with which Moustakas is also associated. In his book *Loneliness* published in 1961, the word heuristic is taken from the Greek word *heuriskein* which means to "discover or to find" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 9) out about one's self while looking to others to confirm or deny. Merriam (2009) suggests that "heuristic case studies focus on understandings and insights gleaned from the case study investigation and lead to new meaning and rethinking about the phenomenon (cited in Jones, Torres & Arminio, 2014, p. 87).

Being unique to human experience (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 10-11), the tacit knowledge that is connected by the researcher and the participants helps move forward social discussions that are emotional and personal in nature yet tied to scientific inquiry (Anderson, 2006). While I acknowledge that the approach of this inquiry is heuristic in nature, I have borrowed from narrative inquiry as well as from phenomenological approaches. Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) suggest that "the blurring of epistemological boundaries to produce a 'borderlands of narrative inquiry'" (p. 87) is an acceptable approach to research as "in the practice of research…philosophical exactness is often a luxury" (p. 58) and as the researcher attempts to undercover or further understand the "multiple and overlapping philosophical contributions in understanding individuals' storied lives" (Jones et al., 2014, p. 87).

This style of inquiry includes the researcher in uncovering social phenomena rather than excluding them from the process. Including the researcher's experiences as well as those of participants helps discover the meanings and essence of an experience. As such, "heuristics is concerned with meanings, not measurements; with essence, not appearance; with quality and not

quantity; with experience, not behavior" (Douglass & Moustakas, 1984, p. 42). The fundamental pursuit of the researcher should be to determine the nature of the fundamental meanings connecting human experience along with ensuring trustworthiness.

Heuristic inquiry differs from other methodologies because the researcher is present and their voice is included as an integral part of uncovering the human experiences. As the researcher compares the differing truths they undergo significant personal reflection. This reflection requires self-direction, self-motivation and an openness to minimize and maximize the significance of human experience in order to remain within the purposes of the research questions, as it would simply be impossible to qualify a person's entire life experiences. As such, the researcher must create a story that showcases the uniqueness of their own human experiences as well as those of the other voices in the study (Moustakas, 1990).

According to Moustakas, there are seven key components of heuristic inquiry which include identifying with the focus of the inquiry, self dialogue, tacit knowing, intuition, indwelling, focusing and an internal frame of reference. In reviewing each component, the researcher is able to reflect upon their hunches, thoughts and deeper reflections to connect with the greater meaning of the research (Braud & Anderson, 1998).

To begin a heuristic inquiry, the researcher must start with a question designed to fit the seven components of heuristic inquiry in a scientific way. For me, this process was somewhat challenging since I knew I wanted to study the experiences of other female teachers in rural communities, but it was unclear to me how to narrow the question(s) enough to be able to conduct a study to avoid focusing on either the lives of rural females (in their entirety) or studying every compositional facet of rural communities, the relationships that exist within them as well as the systems of power and privilege that are both hidden and accepted ways of practice.

As I began revisiting my past and my experiences as a new immigrant eight years ago, I began to notice my transition from what I was used to back home (regarding cultural ways of doing things such as cooking, language use and family meals) to how I was doing things now. I began to question whether I had consciously tried to assimilate into the new culture in which I was living or whether some parts of my identity change had been subconscious. I know that in some areas of my life, such as my teaching style, my cultural experiences set me apart from my colleagues. Often times, I felt like I was the only fish swimming upstream in our rural school setting. The methods of teaching that my colleagues used were traditional while I was used to having to create my own resources and trying "new things." Of course, many of the staff were veteran teachers, and like most things in education, there was a consensus that the new fads were just that: fads which had already been seen and tried.

However, I began questioning myself as an educator when a group of sophomore students approached me and asked if it was possible for us to just read a section in the textbook and then answer the questions at the back of the section. I asked them why they wanted to do this, and their response shocked me and has stayed with me to this day. They said, "we just want to read it and then copy the answer down so we are done." I asked them what they would learn from this experience and they were unable to answer me. It was then that I realized that it was not necessarily the teachers or the textbooks the students used that created low expectations, but rather it was the historical and cultural norm. The students simply were not used to critically thinking, challenging information that was being presented and being able to argue for and against points. They came to my class hoping they would not have to think.

This experience made me watch how my own children were challenged in school. I began looking at what was expected of them and what opportunities they were given to be self-

driven, questioning learners. I began to look at how education, teachers and schools played a role within the wider rural community. This step became a process which Moustakas called self-dialogue (1990).

Self-Dialogue

Dialogue is fundamental to expression and being able to express oneself allows the research to collaborate and inspire dialogue within and between others (Moustakas, 2001). The gathering of information via informal conversations, journals, field notes and semi-structured interviews allows the researcher and participants to share their personal experiences, thoughts and ideas (those both spoken and unknowingly accepted). This process grants the speaker the opportunity to find new meaning in what was taken for granted; however, to do this successfully, the researcher must be honest with themselves and constantly question and check themselves to ensure that there is thorough explication (Moustakas, 1990).

Thinking and questioning of the self requires digging into human issues, problems and contested notions. I have found this to be troublesome as a researcher, as many hours have been spent deconstructing my own experiences to uncover deeper questions and meanings, some of which are haunting, negative and require a personal struggle with issues (words, actions and ways of life) that have been accepted by many (for years) yet simply do not sit well with me, the researcher. In fact, throughout this questioning process, I have found myself dealing more with contested notions and thus walking more and more frequently in the borderlands of what rural North Dakota has to offer me.

As I traveled through my stream of consciousness, I wrote my thoughts in my journal and experiences. These journal entries included feelings, emotions and often frustrations, because in order to clarify a contested notion I would often have to process it in writing.

The journal entries below were written at the beginning of my reflective journey and therefore appear to be trivial or to discuss inconsequential events, despite the fact that the process itself led to acculturation of my experiences as a rural female teacher. Note that the names have been changed to letters and pseudonyms to ensure anonymity:

March 14, 2015 - [School / Community 1]

Today at lunchtime the conversation again rallied around negotiations. N asked the Ks what they thought of what was proposed (both currently are working towards their master's degrees). K2 said that she didn't think everything in a master's program was worth giving credit for on the pay scale but she is doing it because she eventually wants to work in Higher Ed. K1 was quiet, as normal, on the subject. I interjected with my views about continuous improvements in "Life long learning" and if the administrators really wanted to promote that view then why would the pay scale stop at the MS level. We talked about the length of the school day and I put my feelings forward. N doesn't feel that the school day needs to be any longer but he does feel that there are board members pushing for it, so that staff members are more available for students before and after school. K2 said no students stay after school anyway, so what is the point. The admin had taken N aside and said that it wasn't their idea to push the school day out, but I know differently. I know that they were asked if a longer contract day was wanted and 2 said yes and 2 said no, but the 2 who said "yes" made sure to pull N aside and tell him that it was coming from the boss and not them.

In an early conversation with the 11.40 lunch crew, we had been talking about culture and immigrants. There was very much the feeling that people moving into the area (like Fargo) should comply with the culture that is already there. Why should

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Somalians be allowed to wear their own clothes in a hospital setting when the rest of us have to wear uniforms (us referring to white males and females who are already employed there). There was a bitter taste in the 4 who were eating about the "newness" of the Somalian culture that was infiltrating the area. T indicated that they should be made to speak English, and his wife A commented that it should be for safety's sake above all else (like reading stop signs and other road signs). Then the topic broadened to talk about immigrants in general and about the push given by Jed Bush. J stated that he (Jed) wanted to give these people rights, make them pay taxes but not allow them any benefits until they had sufficiently contributed to the system. T asked whether paying taxes would do that.

The conversation turned to T and A's experience in Alaska and working with a Spanish paint crew and how T had to handle a group of Spanish-speaking Mexicans. He had made the comment in frustration to one of his crew members that he would have to learn Spanish in order to tell them what to do. Another older guy on the crew piped up and said that they don't even speak Spanish, they speak Mexican, and he spoke true Spanish. T appeared to be frustrated at the difficulties he had interacting with non-English-speaking workers. I held my tongue. I was mad – how could they take that approach? How can they feel like that? Are all small towns like this? Do people have such insular views?

My story of immigrating and how the expense of it would discourage many people from becoming' legal'. It seemed OK that I immigrated, although I know T has a hard time with me because I am a woman and I am an outsider, or he makes me feel like one anyway. I don't know the kids here in this town or their family stories. He treats me like I

am stupid by making references such as "I can't give you this tape measurer, I am not sure you know how to run it." He said he was pretty sure that I hadn't swam here and I had done everything the right way. I was so insulted. I had to walk away. I know I talk differently than they do and I know that I have to be careful with my more liberal views. I just need to do my job and leave who I used to be at the door.

I told my "Public Health" story about having to go for shots in Fargo and there being many non-English-speaking immigrants present as well as drug addicts, criminals (orange jump suits, chained by the arms and legs, accompanied by armed guards). I told them how threatened I felt. I hadn't anticipated "public health" as being any different to that back home (doctors and hospitals available to everyone). J asked why I had to go there and I said that I needed to update my shots before I could get my temporary status. I told them about my husband coming with because I was nervous driving in big cities and being a bad driver. They started talking about shots and how silly it is that some people don't vaccinate their children anymore. People are forgetting polio and other diseases that created a pandemic. The sub (I don't know her name) told the story that was in the paper yesterday about how people have even stopped vaccinating their pets. [Teacher] compared the prison he used to work in to schools and questioned why we made prisoners get vaccinations but not school kids. J said that it is stupid and schools need to step up more to prevent this. A commented on how she would rather vaccinate her 4 kids to prevent something rather than run the risk of allowing them to get something like measles and infect others. T commented on how he, as a new employee in the school district, didn't have to provide proof of shots or vaccinations but he did as a prison employee. Questions came back to the Somalians in Fargo - were they made to get their

shots or vaccinations? Why did I have to get them (J asked of me) but they are not forced to? N, who had been quiet for much of the conversation until this point, stated that it depends on their social status - whether they are an immigrant or whether they are a refugee.

The conversation quickly turned back to what is acceptable behavior when one moves to another culture. T, who was most vocal on the situation, said that they [the immigrants] shouldn't be allowed to form communities and they should have to continue to do things the way they were being done. A looked at him, almost in agreement, but she was not willing to voice her thoughts. J didn't either. I gave the example of how I had become more tolerant of "difference" since moving countries and I consider the changes I have had to make to be minimal compared to what someone who doesn't speak English has to do - the transitions. I gave the example of how in England, fish and chips is no longer the traditional dish, but curry is now. Everyone gave a disgusted "ugh" sound. I said it is actually delicious!

A started talking about the Vietnamese boy her parents fostered in Wahpeton when she was 5. He was 10 years older than her but came over with a few others to learn the American way, go to college here and get money. She didn't relate anything personally to him which I found odd. She didn't mention his character, what he was like, only his financial successes and failures (as well as his educational standing). She did say how her parents had lost touch with him and had tried to find him over the years - he would check in every once in a while, but her dad had very much wanted to see him before he passed away. Isn't that funny – the things we remember about people we don't see very often; how we imagine them and parts of their lives? Do we embellish who we

want them to be in our minds? Will I still be able to talk to the people I have left behind? With some folks, when I see them, we pick up right where we left off, and with others I have noticed more of a strain. Have I changed that much or is it spending time with people in the same place that creates friendships and relationships?

The self-dialogue was extremely important for me, and through conducting a self-study prior to embarking on my dissertation, I began to examine my own voice in relation to power and privilege along with other facets on the diversity wheel (Johnson 2006). Moustakas (1990) refers to the knowledge I gathered as *tacit knowing*, which is an extremely important, personal and private process that provides the researcher with a sense of knowing.

Tacit Knowing

Polanyi (1969) describes this experience that I have encountered as a process that draws attention to the unconscious elements of experiences. My experiences offer me the most effective dimension of this research process, because not all knowledge is rooted in explicit knowledge and can also include a sense of knowing that is not easily described or explained; it is a sense of urgency of satisfaction or of wanting more. In my case, I have an uneasy feeling that staying in place, in this rural place, is not the end of my life's journey. This will not be my final resting place, but I cannot explain why or describe how I know this. As I reflect back on my family values that were instilled in me as I grew up, it makes me uncomfortable that giving children stability and staying in one place are important. I listen to my parents who pity the children who are moved around every few years due to their parents' careers. I listen to my inner voice, knowing that if we do move it will be because of me. My husband has no desire to move away from his family, even though he considers himself to be a community outsider (even though it is the town and community in which he grew up). When taking trips back to my home in East

Yorkshire, I often feel more settled and I understand and revalue the parts of myself that I have given up and the parts that I have kept. This internal dialogue causes me to trudge through painful borderlands of broken relationships, missed landscapes and facets of my life that I have to accept because it is the way of life in my new home and place. Polyanyi (1969) suggests that when we try to make sense of our experiences we often rely on hunches and insights. However, once that knowledge has been confirmed, it is no longer tacit.

In this sense, tacit knowledge is used in this study to learn from what is not said or shared implicitly (see the chapter on the voices and the voiceless), rather an understanding is created by defining the common borderlands that the participants share with me through the visible and invisible clues. Using intuition then becomes key

> One draws on clues; one senses a pattern or underlying condition that enables one to imagine and then characterize the reality, state of mind, or condition. In intuition, we perceive something, observe it, and look and look again from clue to clue until we surmise the truth. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 23)

Intuitive skills enable the researcher to form relationships and make inferences to supplement that which is already known (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985). The underlying patterns often come from those "aha" moments achieved by re-trawling through the data and uncovering findings that were not seen or seemed obvious in the initial observation or conversation.

Being able to reflect on my own experiences as a rural female teacher living in rural North Dakota led me to examine relationships, patterns and influences in my life. I learned how to access pertinent knowledge that illuminated the issues of the research inquiry and decided to see whether other rural females shared the same experiences. I wanted to see whether they walked the same borderlands as I. As Polanyi (1969) suggested:

When exercising a skill we literally dwell in the innumerable muscular acts, which

contribute to its purpose, a purpose, which constitutes their joint meaning. Therefore,

since all understanding is tacit knowing, all understanding is achieved in indwelling (p.

160).

To further understand the nature of human experience, the researcher must consider the

whole to understand the qualities, nuances and facets that may uncover new meanings and

relationships. During this phase of the research process, the researcher consciously and

deliberately seeks profound understandings, deeper clarifications and perspectives of their own

questioning processes—something that may offset the norm (the researchers norms) (Bentz &

Shapiro, 1997). This fermenting process occurs over time but is "immeasurably rich in things we

know but cannot tell" (Polanyi, 1969, p. 151), making the knowledge that is understood a highly

personal part of the social phenomenon.

Moustakas (1990, p. 24) defined this stage as "the heuristic process of turning inward to

seek a deeper, more extended comprehension of nature or meaning of a quality or theme of

human experiences." Indwelling allowed me to consciously and purposefully search out differing

truths. As I regarded both my own voice and story and those of my 18 participants, I discovered

common elements in our stories. These commonalities were shared experiences that are

significant in a female's life such as becoming a mom, a wife or losing a parent. Yet each

experience was unique and required patience and understanding as their voice unfolded the story,

including what they wanted me to hear, the elements that they tried to hide through what they did

not say or what was implied rather than stated.

As I unpacked this story, I began to understand that creating meaningful synthesis is not

the end of the study but rather creates a stream of consciousness that provides the researcher

insight and understanding. In this stage of focusing, Moustakas (1990) suggests that the researcher should spend time recognizing elements that were not originally in the stream of consciousness that plays back and forth in their mind.

During this focusing process, I became aware that I perhaps was not as much of an outsider as I had originally thought as I shared more common experiences with the participants than I realized. Indeed, we had often walked in the same or similar borderlands or found ourselves to be border crossers regarding similar issues. This is something that I had not expected as I began my journey and is what Moustakas referred to as the internal frame of reference.

> To know and understand the nature, meanings, and essences of any human experience, one depends on the internal frame of reference of the person who has had, is having, or will have the experience" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 26).

This means is that if the researcher does not honor the experiences of others, including their thoughts, feelings and perceptions, then the meanings of their voice will become distorted (Combs, Richards & Richards, 1976).

It was through discipline, reflection and re-reflection that I was able to navigate the phases of heuristic inquiry through my own voice as well as through those of my participants.

The underlying currents (associated with longshore drift) of who I was becoming started to distress me. I started to question and challenge the locally accepted ways of living and power relationships that are accepted as a given in rural North Dakota. As such, I immersed myself in a self-dialogue that required extensive self-exploration through conducting a self-study, journaling and through a reflective photo-voice project (which began my questions about identity and having to think about who I was, how I could present myself in a limited time frame, what songs

would best represent how I saw myself at this moment and place in time, and which phases of my life needed illuminating, in order for my professor to achieve a sense of how I see myself). The journey was not brief, nor do I believe it has been concluded in this study. This study has provided me with a voice, with time for reflection and with the written word.

As I immersed myself in the second phase of this heuristic study I began to fully connect with the research question (Moustakas 1990) and to engage with it in "spontaneous self-dialogue and self-searching, pursuing intuitive clues and hunches, and drawing from the mystery and sources of energy and knowledge within the tacit dimension" (p. 28), and I therefore began to live the question. Through each conversation and gathering of friends and colleagues, I listened and sometimes shared. I weathered my indifferences, and I had to process relationships in search for my own truth before I went to examine the truths of others. I found myself viewing my local rural community as a barren landscape that was stifling in so many ways. I felt choked by the routines and procedures that were accepted daily by community members. The way I viewed the small world in which I was living had shifted.

Moustakas (1990, p. 29) describes this phase and suggests that the "period of incubation allows the inner works of the tacit dimension and intuition to continue to clarify and extend understanding on levels outside the immediate awareness." I found myself in this phase at times when I had writers block and had to step away from my journaling process and away from the topic. During one of my trips back home, I remember driving alone and listening to the radio. The radio program was talking about the lack of community in England and in English communities. It was on this short journey that I traveled many mental miles.

I found myself reclaiming parts of my identity that were important to me. I found myself not idealizing the home I had grown up in but starting to see it as I understood it to be as an

adult, a mom and a professional. These periods were not isolated incidents, but instead the phases between immersion and incubation became almost cyclical; I would have a surge of motivation and write and journal for three days, and then I would not be able to process events for some time afterward.

I was told when I started my doctoral dissertation that life happens. Indeed, life has happened to me during this study: I have given birth to three children; I have gained 80lbs and then lost 100; a close family member had a debilitating stroke and my step-mom was diagnosed with cancer. In addition, my middle daughter had a fight with a dinosaur and fell and broke her elbow, which required a surgery including pins and wires as well as multiple trips to a hospital located 3 hours away. One of my twin boys was hospitalized with a high-grade fever for a week with no explanation. I have transitioned through many phases of my job where I have been both ineffective and effective. Through all of this though, I have found myself thinking and reflecting on my relationships with my participants, wondering if other families experience such trauma in their lives. I began to understand why some of the relationships exist in the community in which I live.

While listening to my inner voice (the voice of I), I began to really focus on the third research question: How do my own experiences fit with these voices (of other rural female teachers who transcend borders)? As I began to reflect on this question, I found that my ideas not only became "intimately and autobiographically related to the question" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 43), but I also began to really reflect on the "voice of I" (my own voice and the voices of the other participants). It was during this time of incubation that the "inner workings of the tacit dimension and intuition continue to clarify and extend understanding on levels outside the immediate awareness" (p. 29). During this time I found myself becoming increasingly discontent

with the constructed environment around me. I started to look for flaws in the school systems, in the community relationships and with the "way of life." As I retreated from life as I knew it, I found myself recrafting my priorities and my identities as I spent more time with my children and immersed myself once again in my work. Polanyi (1964) states that such a retreat allows for discovery of oneself to become inevitable, as we learn about ourselves by doing rather than by intentionally searching.

After conducting my semi-structured interviews, I found myself with a plethora of stories or voices to examine, and I came to develop a deeper understanding of each participant as I transcribed their stories. I began to feel comfort in my solitude with the knowledge that other women had struggles, ones often similar to mine, throughout their lives. I began to feel affinity with not only the participants but also with other rural females living within my community.

This new insight on my study brought me to the fourth stage of this heuristic inquiry. In this stage, Moustaskas (1990) asserts that the researcher becomes more receptive to the tacit dimension of knowledge that is understood and learned. This phase requires a certain level of reflection, but there may still be underlying currents that shift our identities along the shoreline. Modifications to what exists in our stream of consciousness will occur within these shifts.

As I listened and re-listened to the participants' stories, I began to find more commonalities between our experiences (not perhaps at the same time or on the same issues so much as shifts that occur as we go through different stages of our career and life). It was during this phase that I began my four phases of data coding (which is examined more in the Methods section).

As I became "open and receptive to tacit knowledge and intuition" (Moustakas 1990 p. 29), I began to make sense of the phenomenon of "border crossings." Moustakas (1990) states

that during illumination, the door opens for new awareness to be created, old understandings modified and a synthesis of the fragmented pieces of prior knowledge. I began to see the experiences that these women had encountered with others, how they traversed difficult situations. I began listening to the stories that were not related in the interview yet were present in other situations in the school, such as issues concerning homework as well as how school and home can overlap to create emotional stress for the female teacher.

After coding the data in different ways, I began the explication phase (the fifth phase of heuristics). Moustaskas (1990) suggests that during this phase the researcher engages in developing and examining deeply rooted themes derived from the voices being studied. In order to do this, the researcher must focus on the indwelling, self-exploration and self-disclosure which are unique to each inquiry and experience. During this phase, the researcher begins to examine and piece together a complete picture of the phenomenon which includes alternative viewpoints, new ideas and new patterns.

For me this phase was both a challenge and an adventure. So much had been shared that it was difficult for me to use words to create relationships and themes between the stories. As a geographer and visual learner, I found that at this stage it was easier for me to visualize the relationships and themes by drawing them on a map (the contents of which are discussed in the Analysis section).

During the creative synthesis stage, the complete depiction of human experience is woven together, like a patchwork quilt. This stage represents the final integration of the voices heard and of how the researcher understands the phenomenon examined. Moustakas (1990) implies that this should not be an overview of the study but instead should be presented in the form of a poem, painting, story or another creative form.

This section includes the stories that I was able to write: the Voice and the Voiceless as well as the Good Teacher and the Stories of Old. While the stories in these sections allow me to tie together the voices of the participants of the study, I recognize that they are mere illuminations of lives rather than the whole lived experience, my own included.

It is my hope that the quilt that was woven from the stories represents the ever-shifting and changing identities of myself and the participants of this study. Like a coastline that is subject to the process of longshore drift, change is inevitable, but luckily we have the stream of consciousness to take us back to where we were, to who we were and sometimes even to how we wanted to be seen.

Methods

Studying the notions of identity and the self in rural female teachers through heuristic inquiry required examining Bahktin's notion of who the self is, especially in relation to others. Kathleen Casey (1993) identifies that social context plays a role in understanding social identity and the self, "It is within concrete social contexts that each of these women simultaneously develops her sense of self, her understanding of others, and her response to existing social relationships" (p. 158-159). Here Casey identifies the need for participants to be able to identify their relationships with others in rural communities.

Munro (1998b) attempts to understand how these relationships of self are negotiated in a place which has defined cultural norms and expectations. In Henry's (1995) study, one female teacher identified herself as being "in the margins" (p. 280) and as being othered due to her class, race and gender. Recognizing these multiple intersections of self helps the researcher develop a consciousness that acknowledges power and identity relationships as often resulting in subordination or, as Munro claims, "complex and contradictory forms of resistance" (p. 124).

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Identifying the narrative strategies women often use to make themselves appear to be "verbal subterfuge…drifters, and…docile bodies" (Munro 1998 p. 124) enables a women to be pigeon-holed and defined in terms of belonging to a specific container. Munro explains further:

> In continually becoming, in naming and renaming, in moving back and forth into the margins, women actively subvert and decentralize dominant relationships. Resistance becomes a never-ending dance in these spaces of contradiction…resistance is not an 'act' but a movement, a continual displacement of others' attempts to name our realities. This resistance was born out of survival, an attempt to stay real and claim the realities of our lives as women, as teachers, and as women who choose to be a teacher (p. 125")

In order to understand the identities of rural female teachers, one must understand that these identities are context dependent socially created and found at the intersection of self and mom, wife, professional and community member (to name but a few). In examining my own identity at these intersects, I was able to identify common border-crossing experiences that illustrate how rural female teachers negotiate between and cross over borders as identities are changed through the process of Kegan's evolving self or, to use the metaphor stated earlier, of longshore drift.

Participants

When selecting participants, I chose an interview protocol that was semi-structured which allowed participants a starting point to share their voice as well as allowed reflection on journal articles, observations and field notes of my own experiences. These interviews, combined with my own collection of data, enabled me to create comprehensive, historical and theoretical situations to understand the voices as they unfolded (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

The questions reflected specific experiences derived during the search for my own story and voice. I hoped they were narrow enough to allow me to examine the phenomenon outlined in my research questions yet wide enough for the participants to feel that I was interested in them as a whole, in their life experiences, in their journeys taken and in any borderlands into which they had crossed.

Some of the participants I would call friends. We had already built significant professional and personal relationships and they shared their thoughts freely, but some of the participants obliged me with their time and were more guarded in sharing. As I appealed to participants to take part in my study, I was careful to cast a wide net which included people who were tied to education in rural places yet were not necessarily rural female teachers. The intent was to determine whether rural female teachers see themselves the same way as they are seen by rural male teachers, administration, family members, schoolboard members and extension agents. As such, I wanted to acquire both the internal perspectives (from myself and other rural female teachers) as well as external perspectives in order to determine whether everyone shares commonalities regarding how they feel about their journey as rural female teachers.

Of the 18 interviews, 12 were conducted with rural female teachers, 2 with male teachers and 1 with a male administrator. Members of the community were also interviewed, including 1 female university extension agent, 1 stay-at-home mom who was president of the local school board and 1 former administrator and now-retired grandparent. It was my hope that each participant, especially the rural females, would form a square on my metaphorical quilt.

Other data were derived from over 200 pages of my journal entries over the past 4 years. Prompted by one of my graduate classes, I started to listen to those around me—not only to what they said but how they said it. I looked and listened for things that were implied rather than

stated, focusing on how bodily language influenced the content of a person's dialogue. I looked for how teachers position themselves both within the school building and as part of the community. Throughout this process, I also started taking field notes from conversations at the lunch table or while watching teachers participate in community functions.

This process made me more aware of my own voice. Issues which had been undercurrents, unconscious nags in my life began to surface regarding who I was and how I fit into the rural community and school in which I worked. My initial project as a doctoral candidate (the photo voice project referred to earlier) caused me to begin to question how I wanted to be seen as a person to my colleagues as well as my cohort. As I became more engaged with the topics of identity, rural place and the roles of female teachers, I had the opportunity to study *The Second Shift* by Arlie Hoschild and Anne Machung (1989). This book stoked a fire inside me; I felt angry. The *Second Shift* study was conducted in the 1980s, and I felt that in rural North Dakota, societal expectations had not moved forward, since then.

During a self-study, I had the opportunity to reflect on my own duties as a wife, a mother, a teacher and a community member. It was during this time that I found myself traveling through my stream of consciousness back and forth from East Yorkshire and contemplating what the expectations were of females and what my life would be like had I had chosen to raise a family there. It was at this time I realized that as a researcher I could be "fully engaged with the research topic and also utilize one's own experiences in the process" (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010, p. 1570).

Below is an outline of the participants in terms of the "container" in which they fit; gender identity, longevity in the community and age:

Table 1

Participant Profiles

Initials	Gender	Approx. age	Family status	Longevity in community
AC	F	30-35	Divorced 1 child	Life
AP	F	25-30	Married 1 child	5 years
HD	F	30-35	Married 3 children	10 years
HF	F	25-30	Single No children	1 year
JB	F	50-55	Married 2 children	30 years
JK	F	60-65	Separated? 3 children	4 years
LS	M	60-65	Married 2 children (1 deceased)	15 years, left area, returned 4 years
KV	F	35-40	Married 4 children	10 years
KH	F	40-45	Married 4 children (1 deceased)	Life
JH	F	60-65	Married 2 children	45 years
JC	M	55-60	Married 4 children	Life
ML	F	40-45	Married 2 children	Life
MU	F	45-50	Married 2 children	25 years
MC	M	60-65	Married 4 children (1 deceased)	Life
SS	F	25-30	Single No children	Life
TW	F	50-55	Married 4 children	25 years
PS	M	50-55	Divorced and re-Married No children	Life

Some of this journaling included memories from my childhood to yesterday. As such, these memories are included as facets important to unpacking which borderlands I have already traversed as I seek to understand, often through hindsight, the reasoning for the structures and emotions found in this place. Chang et al. (2013, p. 77) argue that this is a necessity, as "archival materials can play an important role as the basis for the triangulation of (the) personal memory data" and thus enhance the rigor of the study. Ellis (2004) reiterates this by noting that placing an emphasis on memory, emotions and dialogue in a physical space creates a focus for the study.

As Moustakas (1990, p. 37) states, "heuristic research is an extremely demanding process" that requires constant questioning. The questioning of the data, my journal notes and field notes often consumed me for days while I attempted to find patterns and anomalies during every free moment; I was truly in the immersion phase of the inquiry. As Tolman and Szalacha (2004, p. 104) suggest, it is important to record or journal "[my] own thoughts, emotions and embodied feelings, and reactions as part of the data analysis." It is through this process that I was unable to understand and weave together the words and stories of rural female teachers in order to gain a deeper understanding of which intersects create border crossings for rural female teachers.

Throughout the research process and while interviewing participants, I had to check to ensure that I did not overstep my boundaries or give them too little or too much information that made them feel uncomfortable. I did not want to influence their stories and experiences. Too often, I could sense that if it was not stated, then there must be a "right" answer I was looking for in these questions, which told me that the participants were not entirely comfortable. To mitigate this sense of uncomfortableness I expressed interest both in terms of body language and asking more questions so it became more of a conversation than an interview.

As I continued to journal after the interviews, I found that my researchers' perspective influenced the questions I used to follow up during the interviews. While some see this as subjectivity, the value that these stories and narratives offer creates a fascinating study of human experience which are open to interpretation. Such interpretation will depend on the readers' own social identity. Some readers may identify with some participants more than others. While this limits the ability of the study to be generalized, it conversely creates a rich depth of understanding of who rural female teachers are and to what extent they are border crossers.

The Questions

In order to understand the participants, I created a bank of interview questions to assist the conversation during the semi-structured interview. These questions were used as a starting point. Not all of the questions were used in every interview.

About You

1. How would you describe your self as a teacher?

2. What do you think makes a good teacher?

3. How long have you been a teacher?

4. From your experience, can you tell me any of the perceptions or stereotypes you have found people to hold about women teachers?

5. How well do you fit these perceptions or stereotypes?

6. How do you think being in a rural school has shaped your experience?

Outside of school

7. What other roles do you have as well as your job?

8. How has living in a rural community influenced you?

9. Do you define yourself as rural?

10. How do you think schools and rural communities influence or impact one another?

11. Why do you think new or more inexperienced teachers leave rural areas?

12. What is your perception of the opportunities for teachers in rural areas?

13. Is it important that rural communities continue to thrive?

Sampling

Morse (2007) identified three principles which effective sampling should take into consideration. The first is that "excellent research skills are essential for obtaining good data" (p. 106 Jones, Torres & Arminio, 2014). The second looks at the relationship between the participant and the data. Here, Monroe suggests that in order for the data to be excellent:

> "Excellent" participants should be selected. That is, excellent participants "must therefore
> be experts in the experience or the phenomena under investigation….In other words, the
> qualitative researcher must select participants to observe or interview who know the
> information (or have had or are having the experience) in which you are interested.
> (Morse, 2007, p. 231, cited in Jones et al., p. 107)

The third principal is that "sampling techniques must be targeted and efficient" (Morse, 2007, p. 233, cited in Jones et al., 2014, p. 107). Taking Morse's principal to heart, I employed strategies intended to "seek[ing] out groups, settings, and individuals where (and for whom) the processes being studied are most likely to occur" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 245).

The study's participants included a wealth and breadth of experience, including some who were newer to the profession as well as some who were considered a veteran teacher. I attempted to select participants who were new to the area as well as participants who had been established here for a long time or had grown up in the area. As such, I sent an email invitation to

the rural female teachers in the school district for which I work and to the school district in the community in which I live. These emails were sent to female teachers only.

The responses were slow to arrive and, apart from one interview, I had to follow up to with the participants by asking whether or not they had received my email invitation. As the participants agreed to set an interview time and date with me, a location was decided. Even though the chosen interview times were after the school day, I noticed that some participants were somewhat resistant to giving up their "time" at school that would otherwise be used for preparation.

Given Patton's (2002) assertion that "[t]here are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry" (p. 244) and that "Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what's at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources" (p. 244), I decided to invite 30 female teachers. However, the number of participants who agreed to meet with me ended up being 12.

The criteria behind this sampling strategy was based on the gender as well as profession of the teacher. These are what Jones et al. (2014) define as purposeful and criterion sampling methods. However, as I listened to the stories of the participants, I decided it was important to reflect on other voices that are closely related to education in order to gain the perspectives of others who see rural female teachers at work and to see whether these people who were not rural female teachers were able to identify the border crossings encountered by these teachers. As a result, I purposefully invited four male participants, an extension agent and a school board representative.

Questioning Strategy

I was careful to choose a semi-structured interview protocol that allowed participants a starting point to share their voice. As Jones et al (2014) state:

In semi structured interviews, researchers devise a loose interview protocol and several open ended questions utilizing a few clarifying questions, such as asking about feelings, what happened next, or the topic's significance (p. 135)

Feeling that I was unable to directly ask the participants about notions which to them are contested, I framed questions such as "what do you think makes a good teacher" and "what role does the community play in the school" in the hope that they would share their experiences. By targeting female teachers of multiple ages and longevities in the community, it was my hope that I would not specifically target participants who had been a border crosser but that I would instead leave the study open to those who wanted to participate.

The interviews lasted from 30 to 90 minutes and primarily took place in the classroom of the teacher I was interviewing. Regarding the participants who were associated with education but were not teachers, I met one in the school library and the other three in various local restaurants. As the interviews began, I used a digital recorder to enable me to transcribe the stories that were shared. The interviews took place during the months of April and May 2016 towards the end of the school year, and I spent the summer vacation period transcribing.

Throughout the process of the interviews and my continual interaction with the participants, I kept journaling my responses to situations, thoughts or conversations. This journal was stored in "the cloud" which enabled me to frequently note my thoughts.

Coding and Data Analysis

In order to ask questions, I conducted three rounds of coding. These rounds did not occur back to back but rather I would conduct one round and feel unsatisfied with my understanding of the whole phenomenon.

As I collected all the "pieces" of data (Goodson & Sikes, 2001), my first round of analysis involved the process of "pulling the data apart and putting them back together in meaningful ways" (Cresswell, 2013, p. 199, cited in Jones et al., 2014, p. 98), but in order to do this, I felt it was better if I revisited the beginning of my journey and reexamined who I was.

Landscape Coding: The Wheels.

As I reviewed the diversity wheel, I began categorizing myself; I found that I was easily put into containers (Corbett 2016) such as based on my gender, age, and marital status and so I continued with this landscape coding by deconstructing the participants' identities to elements of the diversity wheel. Saladana (2013) notes that "Coding landscaping integrates textual and visual methods to see both the forest and the trees. It is based on the visual technique of 'tags' in which the most frequent word or phrase from a text appears larger than others" (p. 199).

This first round of coding led me to look at the participants through the lens of the diversity wheel (Johnson 2009). This helped me identify my own voice but also helped me see how the participants negotiate the issues of identity and self (Brown, Tappan, Gilligan, Miller & Argyris, 1989). I began to see the participants as individuals whose stories were eager to be told, but I also started looking at what was not shared during the interviews. For some of the participants, I was able to fill in what they had left out by drawing from the stories they had shared with me as a colleague or from snippets of their lives they had shared while at school.

It was at this point that I started to recognize the commonalities between the lives of rural females. While I have refrained from labeling my participants, I was able to fill out most of the 'boxes" on the diversity wheel for each participant because of knowing whether the participants were male or female, their approximate age and their educational status. I did however have more problems identifying the religions of the participants, as some of them had made a point of not being vocal about this.

In the wheels section in the analysis I identity my relationships with and perceptions of the participants. Their stories and voices are unpacked in later phases of the analysis.

Thematic Coding

The next step was to examine the interviews and journal document for themes to help identify contested notions between places and relationships. This focused coding explored what the participants identified as major domains or themes between the community, themselves and their roles and responsibilities. However, this process of attempting to create themes proved to be rather cumbersome. At this point, I became aware that relationships as well as potential acts and opportunities for border crossings were not always substantive but instead involved more tentative, reflective and subtle frustrations that occurred with one piece of ourselves at a time rather than deeming a whole person to be either a permanent insider or outsider. In this sense, the stories and indeed the border crossings constructed in this inquiry are "representation[s] of human experience" (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 10-11) which provide "a series of multi-framed glimpses into some of the key experiences" (p. 3) of the participants.

While attempting to create a "thematic narrative" (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 170) that reflected the participants' stories (Creswell, 2007) that related to the self, border crossing, relationships and identities, I returned to the landscape coding method. Using the themes (and

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contested notions) the participants identified as they told their stories, I decided to create another visual—this time a map that reflects the geographic landscape of my own community with places that are deemed contested notions to both myself and to the participants in this study.

As mentioned before, I am a visual and kinesthetic learner. In order for me to make sense of the data and the emerging themes and address the first two of my research questions:

1. What border crossings do rural school teachers daily lives entail?

2. What do these border crossing experiences reveal about rural female teachers' lives as they author themselves in private and public spaces?

I found it helpful to be able to visualize the actual location of the places and then show the flows of power between them—both as I see the, and as how the participants of the study either confirmed or denied them. This became a powerful visual for me to be able to perform further analysis and questioning about how the relationships within a community, family and profession intersect. It is here that I began to reflect upon the historical intersections of rural female teachers and how they differ (or lack difference) today.

The institutions included on the map (home, church, extended family, and school) show the places that are most frequently mentioned as I reflected on my own story and reexamined my own insider/outsider constructs. The arrows depict flows of power between places. These arrows and lines also constituted visual border crossings for me. The more I reflected upon the institutions' roles in my life, the more contested notions I found myself examining.

It was through this process that I recognized that I transgressed borderlands either as a whole person or in part as my identity shifted from being a single woman from East Yorkshire to an American citizen, a rural female teacher, a mom, a wife and an in-law.

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Emotional Coding

The third round of coding took me deeper still into the complex phenomenon of border crossings. It was during this explication phase that I was able to look for minor themes or anomalies that did not initially capture my attention. It was here that I heard new ideas, alternative viewpoints and things that I initially had not been seeking. It was in this phase that I saw beyond what I had envisioned when I set out to do this study.

During this round of coding I listened for the "voice of I" (Brown & Gilligan, 1992, p. 27). I was careful to identify border crossings and feelings and emotions that demonstrated how the person responded to situations. Saladana (2013) identifies these as the recalled experiences and emotions that reflect on both the intrapersonal and interpersonal experiences. Saladana (2013) notes that "one can't separate emotion from action; they are part of the same flow of events, one leading into the other" (p. 105).

While listening to the actions and emotions of what was shared, I also listened for the untold stories (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Brown et al., 1989), the stories that were implied or suggested but never stated during the interviews. These stories stem from my relationships with the participants and from what I have learned about them over the years. These stories show not necessarily how the teachers want to be seen but rather how I see them when they are not choosing what to share with in a semi formal interview, when there is no microphone in front of them and when they are at ease—or perhaps when they are facing adversity or when their strength of character is being challenged. Munro (1998b) describes these types of stories as non-linear and suggests:

> We need to attend to the silences as well as what is said, that we need to attend to how the story is told as well as what is told or not told and attend to the tensions and

contradictions rather than succumb to the temptations to gloss over these in our desire for "the" story (p. 13).

After reexamining the stories, I began to listen to the statements regarding the self that were offered by these rural female teachers and by me. Throughout the conversations, terms such as "I think…me…..my….I did" were woven in and out during discussion of how the teachers had attempted to author themselves. We try to affirm our struggles and our passions, seeking confirmation that we are not alone in the borderlands, yet each female wanted to recount her own unique story "about their experiences from their own stance" (Hermans et al., 1992, p. 29). Bakhtin (1986) claims that this layering provides "meaning upon meaning, voice upon voice, strengthening through merging (but not identification), the combination of many voices (a corridor of voices) that augments understanding" (p. 121).

However, many of these shared experiences included expressed forms of resistance, which showed that times were indeed turbulent for these females who were expected to be "perfect." The images of a school teacher (white, clean females dressed in skirts) from the days of the one-room school houses portrayed images of control and of love, and because these women were not allowed to work once married, their work was their life.

Take Anna and Jules K for example, whose stories appear in the diversity wheel section and the subsequent section, who experience turbulent private existence. Both of these women portrayed themselves as being in control, as being creative, loving and nurturing. They described themselves as the all-encompassing teacher—a "good teacher." However, when listening to their conversations about their private lives and of their failed relationships, there were signs of rupture in the identities they were asserting, which they wanted me to believe. Butler (1996) contends that we are able to construct "sites of disruption, error, confusion and trouble" (p. 437),

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and it is within these sites that the possibility of trouble can increase regarding socially constructed gender roles or expectations. Identities can challenge the "compartments" in society in which we are meant to fit. Therefore, while the rural female teachers were authoring their stories by sharing a "good teacher" self, they also shared that their private self was constantly in a state of flux—perhaps to conform to societal expectations at one time but not at others. It is at these times that they cross the borders and perhaps find a better fit outside.

Like Bakhtin's (1984) notion of polyphonic voices, listening to multiple voices offers the researcher an opportunity to immerse themselves in a "plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousness" (p. 6). This suggests that there is not one single narrative available that describes a uniformity of how rural female teachers act as border crossers but instead that the meanings of the multiple voices, acts and opportunities for border crossings are a construct of the society, an interpretation of the reader and a negotiation between the self and the identity for the females in this inquiry (Brown et al,1989).

Ethical Considerations

Informed written consent was obtained from each of the participants included in the study. These consent forms were collected and stored with other graduate school material. In order to protect the identity of the participants' I assigned a pseudonym based on familiar names but retained the first and last initial of their names. Although understanding place is central to this inquiry, due to the nature of everyone knowing everyone in small communities, I disguised the names of the communities in which the research occurred.

As the researcher in this inquiry, I was cognizant of the ethical issues in collecting semi-structured interviews as well as of what data were shared during class periods from which this inquiry emerged. Although I attempted to be a reflexive researcher, I acknowledge that this

research in inherently biased (Creswell, 2007), as my own interpretations and journal notes are included as reflections, reactions and sources of frustration regarding what have become acts and opportunities for myself and the other participants to become border crossers. In doing this and gaining an understanding of my journey, Jersild (1955) suggests that "to gain knowledge of self, one must have the courage to seek it and the humanity to accept what one may find" (p. 83). Therefore, as I asked myself difficult questions in my quest for tacit knowledge, I found myself entering the "sphere of selfhood" (Jersild, 1955, p. 134) where I was often faced with uncomfortable topics that questioned who I was and where I had come from in my new social structure of rural North Dakota.

Likewise, when listening to my participants I found I had to create a balance between inclusion and affirming that their experiences were not unusual and that they were safe to share their acts as border crossers with me. However, it was often difficult for them to share the complete knowledge of their experiences, and as such I found myself looking at the spaces between their words. These spaces were subsequently filled, often in a messy fashion, with field notes and journaling reflections.

CHAPTER 4: THE DIVERSITY WHEELS

As I attempted to gather an understanding of who my participants were, I reflected on my expectations of this study. I had expected that this study would confirm that I was an outsider and that I was always an outsider. I expected that my experiences would position me as a persistent border crosser, as I felt more diverse than my female rural counterparts because of having lived in another country for most of my life, being divided by a common language, having different teaching techniques than most of my colleagues and fostering different social expectations and more liberal views than many people in the community in which I lived. To fully understand who I am as a rural woman, I turned to the diversity wheel, which is pictured below in Figure 4 (from *Workforce America* by Loden & Rosener, 1991, cited in Johnson 2006, p. 15).
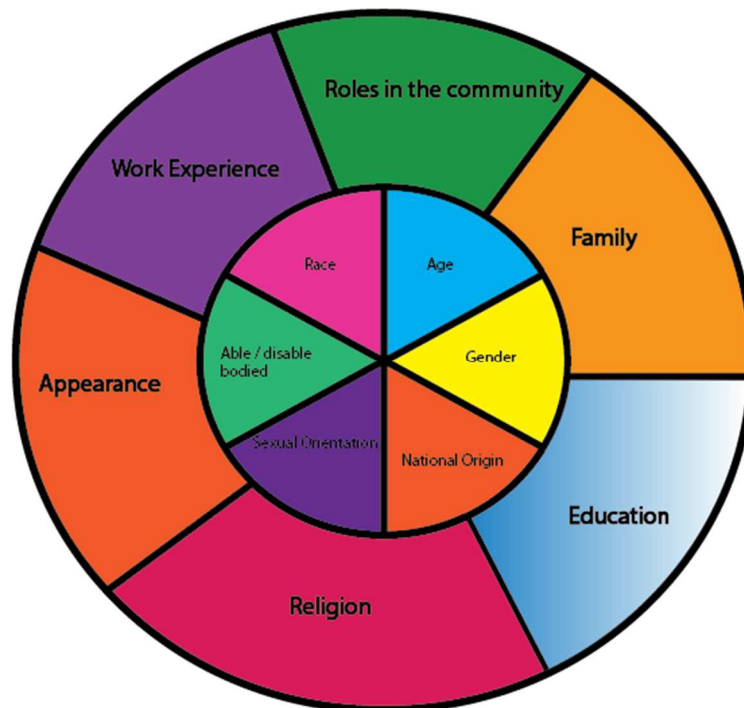
Figure 1. Diversity Wheel.

Figure 2. My Diversity Wheel.

The Participants' Diversity Wheels

As I analyzed the participants through the lens of the diversity wheel, I looked at who they were and found that all the participants identified as Christians (apart from one who did not identify her religious views), all are Caucasian and all are middle class. Most of the teachers that I interviewed were considered to have tenure in the sense that even if they were not brought up and raised in the community in which they were working, they had been in the community for

many decades and/or were from neighboring communities where their families were known. However, I knew I had to go deeper than the immediately obvious surface findings and challenge the assumptions offered by their histories offered. I knew I had to examine the "who" and "what" of border crossings. However, while doing this I acknowledged that there is more to a person than a fixed and static identity. Experiences overlap and simultaneously exist.

Indeed, I found that there are many different ways to transcend a borderland and many different ways and instances when borders may be crossed both within the profession as a female teacher but also when examining the intersects of the identities of rural females. At this point, I am intentionally specifying rural females rather than rural female teachers as I listened to the stories of the male participants and how they describe their family life. The three of them discussed their wives' role in their careers while living in rural North Dakota.

Participant Profiles

As shown below, some of the participant profiles include associated dialogue. These voices appear to have contributed more in helping to illuminate the borderlands and transitional crossings. They also assisted with the illumination phase by presenting new understandings of social relationships and intersects that have taken time for me to process.

During this dialogue, it is my intention to use the participants' voices so that they can reveal who they are and how they want to be seen. During the next two analysis phases, these voices are used to create common themes to create an understanding of how, when and why rural female teachers transcend borders.

Roles in the community
No specific roles identified other than school supporter

Work Experiencee
Works in the same school she was a student in. Started out as a title teacher and now teaches upper elementary.

Family
Divorced. One son. Very close to her extended family and lives very close to her parents and their farm.

Race
White

Age
30's

Able / disable bodied
Able bodied

Gender
Female

Appearance
Casual appearance Wears Chuck Tailors with cargo pants and sweaters. Shoulder length brown hair often wet in the mornings

Sexual Orientation
Heterosexual

National Origin
American

Education
Batchelor's of education Working on Masters in Educational Leadership

Religion
Unknown

Figure 3. Anna Cross.

Anna grew up in the town where she now teaches and is even teaching with some of the teachers who taught her. Having been to college, she got married and had a son. After getting a divorce, Anna finds herself being a single parent and college student as she works on furthering her education while teaching. She has strong ties to the land since her family farms, and she enjoys helping out during farming season. In her own words, Anna tells me why she wanted to get into teaching:

Family was huge for me. We are a farming family, so you can't really pick up your anchor and move it somewhere else, helping my dad was important. I was never going to be a teacher. I was going to be a nurse and study pediatrics and study peds. That's what I was going to do. My sister had special needs and there was a lot of conflict upon what the best plan was for her was and I remember going into Mr. Horgan's office and talking to him about what frustrated me and what needed to be different and what she needed to be successful and I just remember him telling me "you know what Ashley, do something about it then - if you think that passionately about it, go do something about it." Well, how was I going to do that in pediatrics? So I chose education. I was going to do special ed, but I felt like it was too narrow, so I did elementary ed so I could broaden myself and I thought "you know what, he said to do something and I am going to do something" and that's why I came here. I feel that in my position, I am very much an advocate for my students who get pulled and have to do reading somewhere else or math somewhere else - why? We have what we need - let's problem solve, let's approach it and when the students see us doing that, they mimic it. If they see us not putting our best efforts in, they mimic it, so that is it. On top of family, I saw problems when I was a student and I wanted to change that.

When asked how she wanted to be seen as a teacher:

I see myself as a teacher - my students call me organized chaos. Actually, our website is called Cross's chaos. We are very exploratory, we want to dive in and we want to find out more about what is important to them and how it relates to our standards and dig deeper. I like to take what is driving them and connect it to what they need to be learning,

erm, to answer big world problems so they know how to learn. If they know how to learn, they can approach almost any situation so that is kind of my take in the classroom.

I asked Anna whether she considered herself to be rural:

I define myself as rural when I go to places.....I like my space in that sense but I am working really hard to have an open mind to see how people are progressing because I feel like in a rural setting, sometimes I feel like we are behind the times. You know we tend to be more veteran in our thinking in a rural setting. I keep trying to advance myself and trying to find new ways to bring them to the classroom. I have had a couple of veteran teachers who have stood back - where you use your 6th sense, where you know they are thinking "this isn't a good idea at all," but when they see the success and how passionate and how interested the students are in it, then they want to try little pieces too, so ...

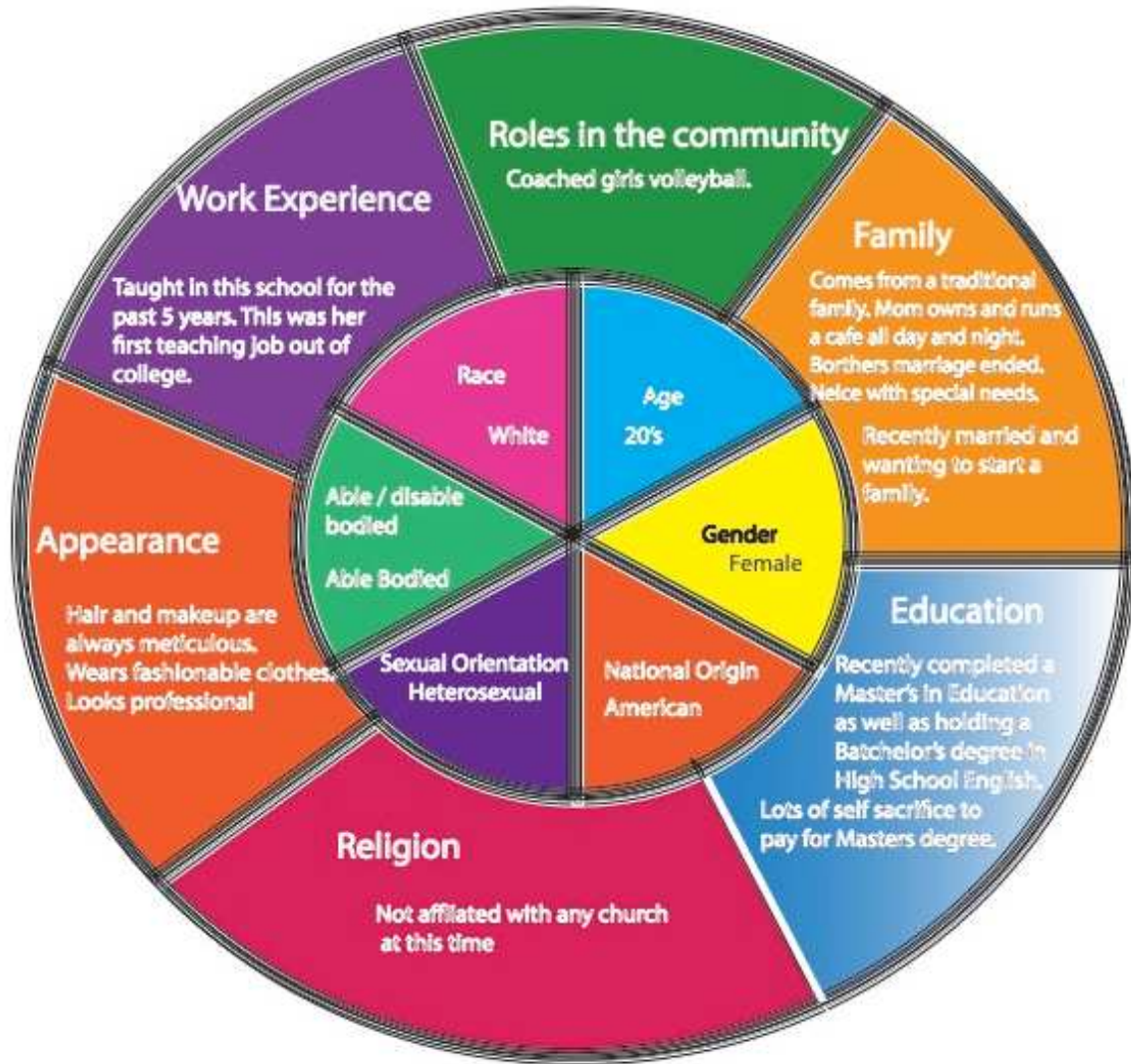*Figure 4*. Angela Paulson.

Angela is a recently married teacher who teaches in the high school in one of the neighboring towns. She took her first job out of college in this school and is generally well respected by the students and the staff. She and her husband take on the burden of extra-curricular activities of the school because they are the "young ones." Her diversity wheel is shown in Figure 7.

I admire Angela, not only because she always looks professional—and trendy—but because she adds value to school-wide discussions. She is not frivolous in her comments or -opinions, nor is she moody or flighty.

Two summers ago, she and her husband came to my house for a BBQ for some of the younger colleagues. It was not until this moment that she realized that I have a 45-mile commute to work each morning, and given the icy winters and inclement weather for which North Dakota is known, she realized that my day starts with hurdles that she has not had to consider in her couple-minute commute to work across the parking lot.

Just recently, Angela has had a baby. The baby is a "good" baby in that she sleeps for most of the night. Angela and I have bonded over motherhood, pumping breast milk at work and still trying to be "good at what we do. Since she has had her baby, I feel like she relates to me and my experiences even more.

From our interview:

Me: What do you think makes a good teacher?

I think that a good teacher is knowledgeable about their content but can get it across using various teaching strategies that makes each kid connect with the content. I mean you could have a genius as a teacher but they cannot connect with the kids, because they don't have a relationship with the students, so it is very important to establish a relationship but also make sure that students know boundaries and respect you as an individual and I think it is important to put the students first and the content second. Because I always want my students to feel like they can talk to me if they are having a bad day or if they didn't have a chance to get an assignment done. I want them to know I am not necessarily going to say "well it's a day late...get it done;" if there is a good

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reason, I want them to be able to communicate what that reason is, why they are having a bad day, so I think it is important to build that relationship then get the content across to them.

Me: What do you think sets you apart from your peers?

I am different because I am willing to try, I see when things aren't working...I don't just keep doing things over and over hoping for a different result. I will change things up and try to interest the students more, but I am not saying that the others don't do that. I am probably more understanding.
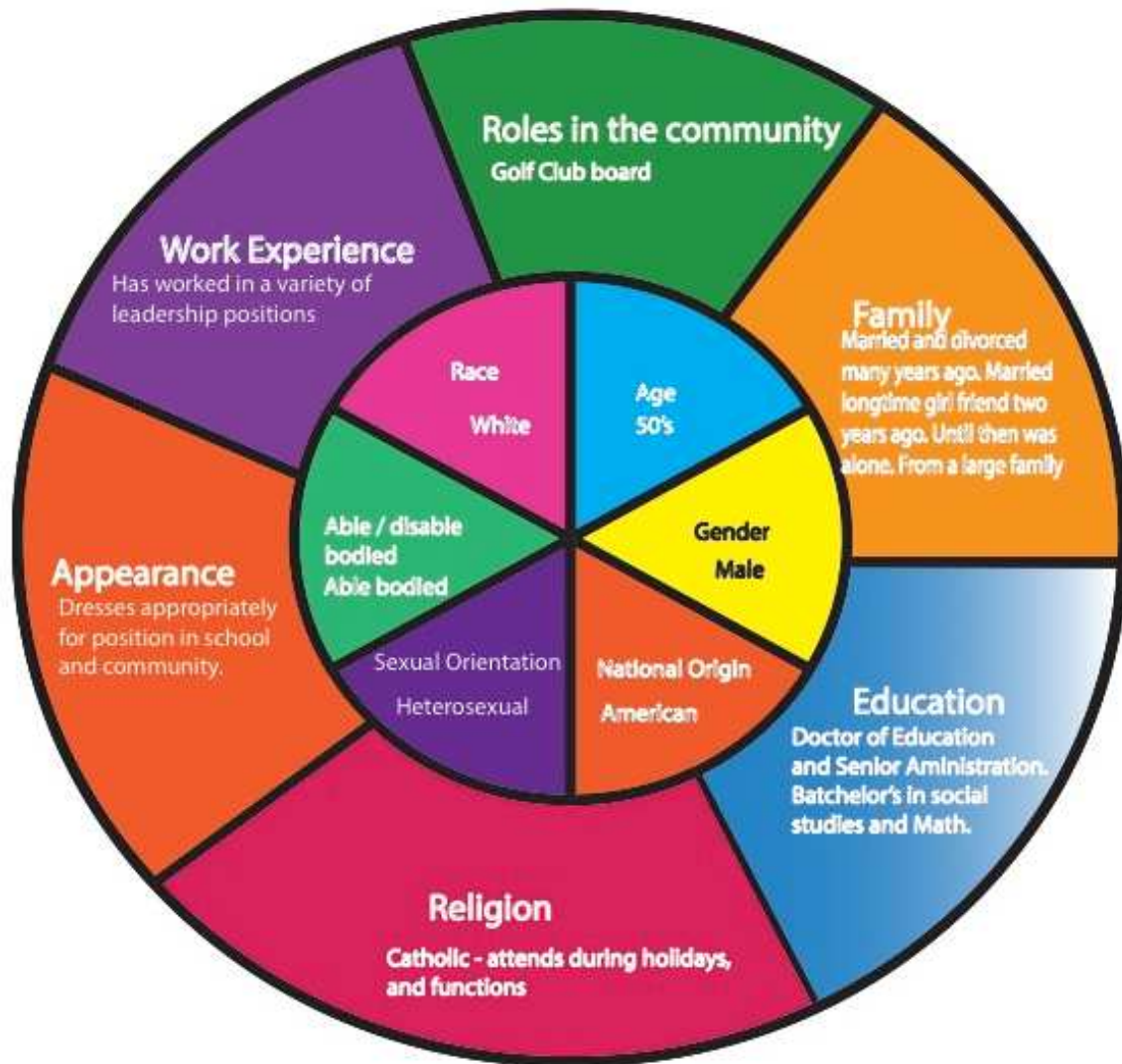
Figure 5. Peter Steam.

Figure 6. Hannah D.

Hannah is one of the rural female teachers I truly look up to, but not so much because she is an excellent teacher since she is in fact not a teacher by "trade" at all. Hannah came to teaching due to a need to keep a program running that she believes all students need, especially in lower economic social areas. Knowing that this program was going to be cut, she accepted a position knowing that she would have to go back to school to complete 90 credits to obtain

essentially another bachelor's degree while having a 30-mile drive one way, each day, during one of the semesters.

As a colleague, Hannah changed the school climate. She was always smiling and welcoming. She made an effort to great each person she met with their name and eye contact. She laughed easily. On top of that, she brought trivia and games into the teachers' lounge which changed the tone of the conversations occurring there.

As a person, Hannah identifies herself as being a mom, a wife, a Catholic (her faith is highly important to her) and a daughter. She celebrates the life of her mom each year, who passed away a few years ago. I often wondered whether this is a reason I was drawn to her since we have this in common, or was it because she laughed and smiled and brought out the best in me? Hannah is one of the few people I know who "acts out" her faith, meaning that she lives the values in which she believes rather than "just going to church on Sunday," which I find to be an admirable character trait even though she and I do not share the same faith or beliefs.

She and her husband contributed to the community they live in by helping to teach Catholic Sunday school, watching people's children who have no other option short of giving up work. Hannah also baked things to take to the elderly and to new families in town.

I have deliberately used the past tense to relate her narrative, because during the course of this inquiry Hannah felt the need to give up her teaching position at the school after two years. The decision was made partly due to the school policies which impacted her family life but also because attending night class interfered with her being a mom. She and her husband had to make significant monetary sacrifices to decide that she would stay home again with her children, but she felt that it was in her family's best interest. Not long after making this decision, the husband accepted a promotion to work in a neighboring town and so the family will be moving.

Me: What made you go into teaching?

Well, I just knew the facts teacher over in [school / community 1] was retiring, and then, they couldn't find a replacement, and then, just in the whole area, there's been so many teachers that have retired from the FACS program, and they can't fill 'em fast enough, and I just think it's one of those areas that is so good for students to learn about and do, 'cause it's life skills, so even if they don't go on to more schooling, it's stuff that will pertain to everybody's life, and my husband had worked with a gentleman that was 25 and excited he could brown hamburger, and I thought, oh, my goodness, students need to learn about these things before they're 25, so that's the reason why I went back, and honestly, it's the only subject I would probably want to teach.

Hannah: I didn't want to just be a teacher. I wanted to teach a specific class, 'cause I think it's very important for students.

Figure 7. Holly F.

As a young single female, I tried to engage Holly both professionally and personally but she felt frustrated by small town living. As a young female without a partner, moving from a large urban area to a small town in ND was a difficult transition. When I asked Holly why she moved here, she said that she was excited to "try" small-town living and that she had always heard how quaint it was. Her experiences were in fact much different. Taking a second job as a bar tender lead to wild rumors spreading about inappropriate behavior.

OK, well, erm, I guess I feel I am very passionate about what I do and because of that, I continue to find ways to help better students and help find, I don't know...It just helps me in my career and being able to help students, erm. I am compassionate. That is a definite plus for a school counselor. Erm. I am empathetic. But, erm, in the classroom when I am doing guidance lessons, I am energetic, I have a good report with students, erm, even in discipline, you know it doesn't take much. I can say "OK, come on, let's get back together in the classroom. Erm. I guess as an employee and a co-worker, I feel like I have a pretty good rapport with everyone and that I am easy to work with and communicate with and yeah, I guess that's it.

What do you think makes you different from your colleagues?

Well, because I am the school counselor, I feel like I do have to be more compassionate and empathetic towards students, than a teacher might be. It's not that they aren't, it's the fact that they are in the discipline role. I am not discipline at all, you know, being there for students for the social and emotional needs, their academic needs and their career development. I feel I can get to know students on a personal level than a teacher might and erm, because of that I feel like I connect with students a lot easier sometimes than some teachers might, or I have the opportunity to, it's not that I do, it is the fact I have the opportunity to, more than most teachers would.
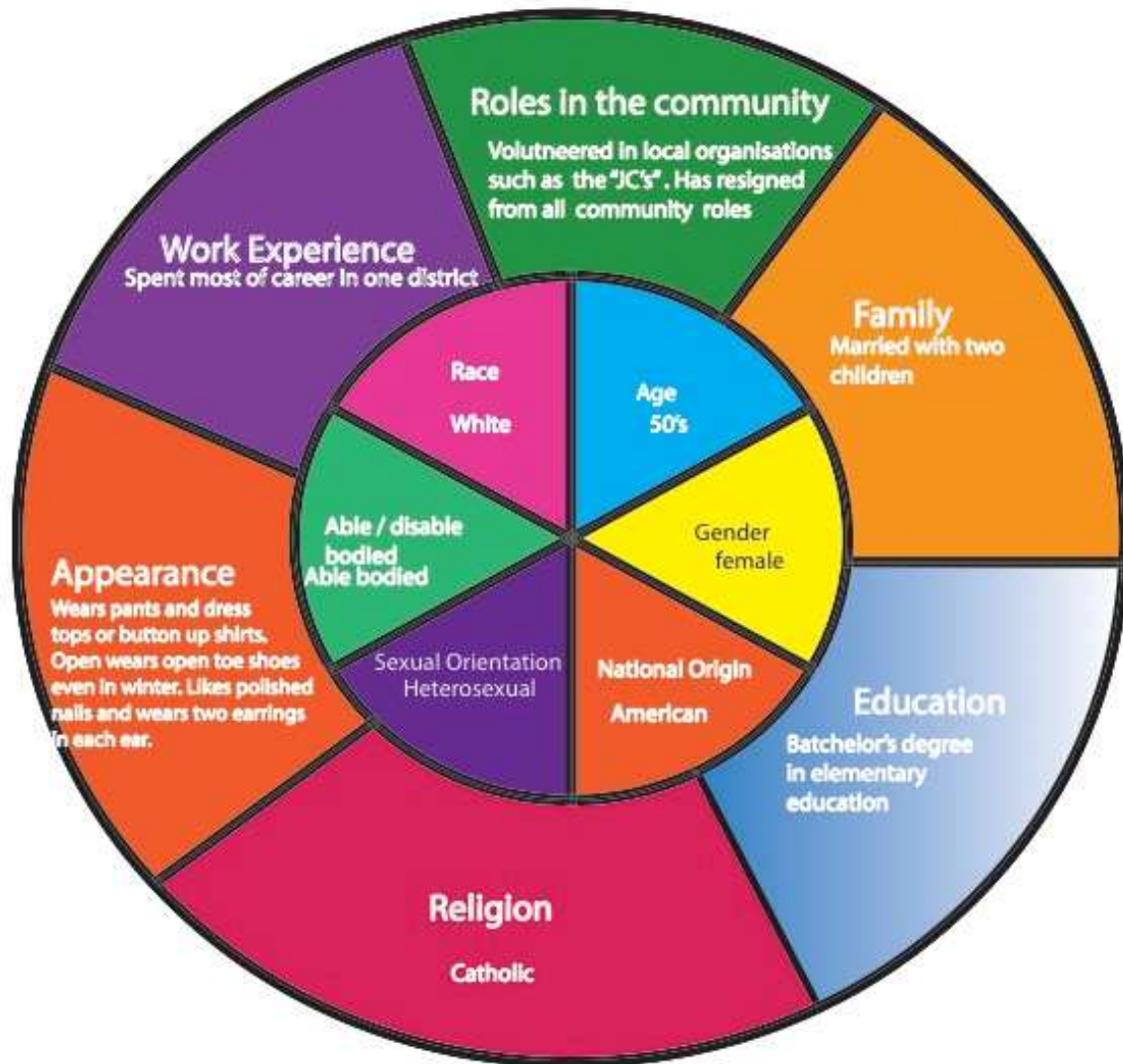
Figure 8. Janet B.
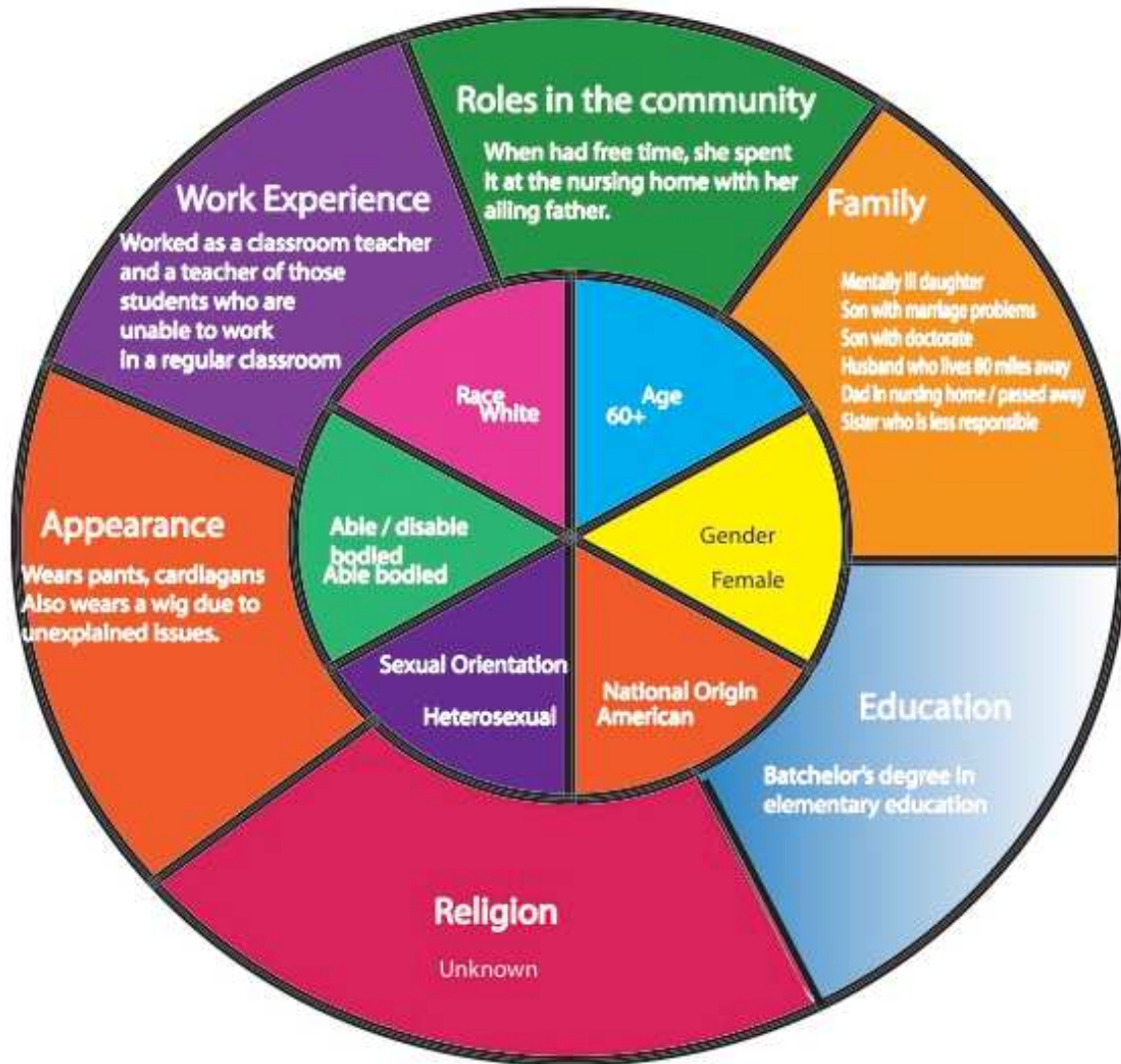
Figure 9. Jules K.

Jules came to the school district later in life. The move was not for her own professional benefit, but rather it was to take care of her ailing father who resided in the local nursing home. Jules is softly spoken which I feel hides some of the trauma in her life. Her husband resides in a larger metropolitan area (one-and-a-half hours away), and her daughter is a resident in a mental health facility as she suffers from a number of conditions including schizophrenia. Her eldest son

is going through a messy divorce, and her youngest son often has run-ins with the police. Here are Jules' thoughts on who she is:

> I am a spouse, a mother, a grandmother and a teacher and I would put my family before teaching but the teaching is very important to me and I put my family before the teaching because they don't have another family so that's why I prioritize that way.
>
> After losing my dad, I found that there wasn't a lot of me left. I just had a career and the responsibility that I felt, and I wanted as a daughter. And then secondary as a spouse and grandma and sometimes life is intense, and that's just how life turns out and I am - I was lost in there for a while."
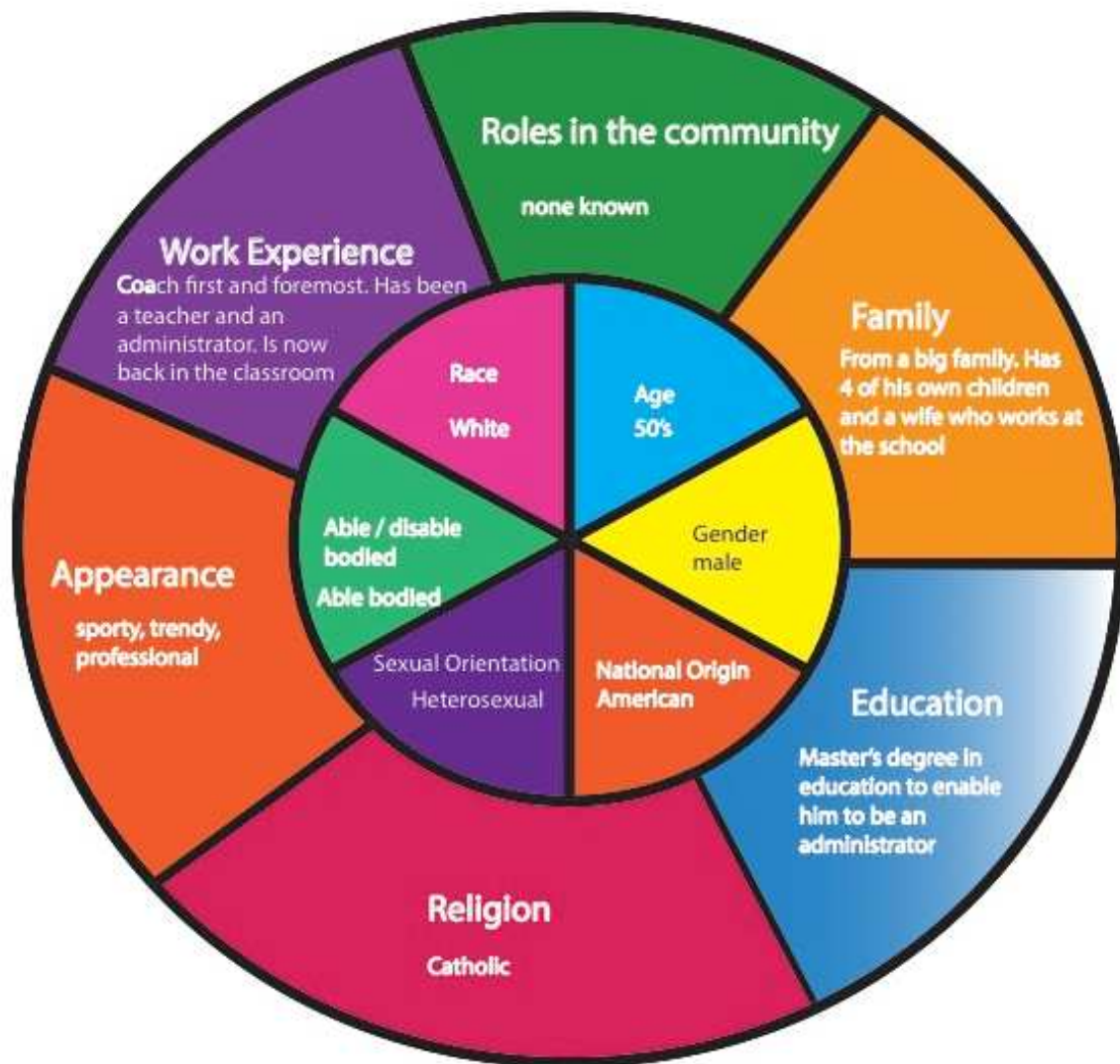
Figure 10. James C.
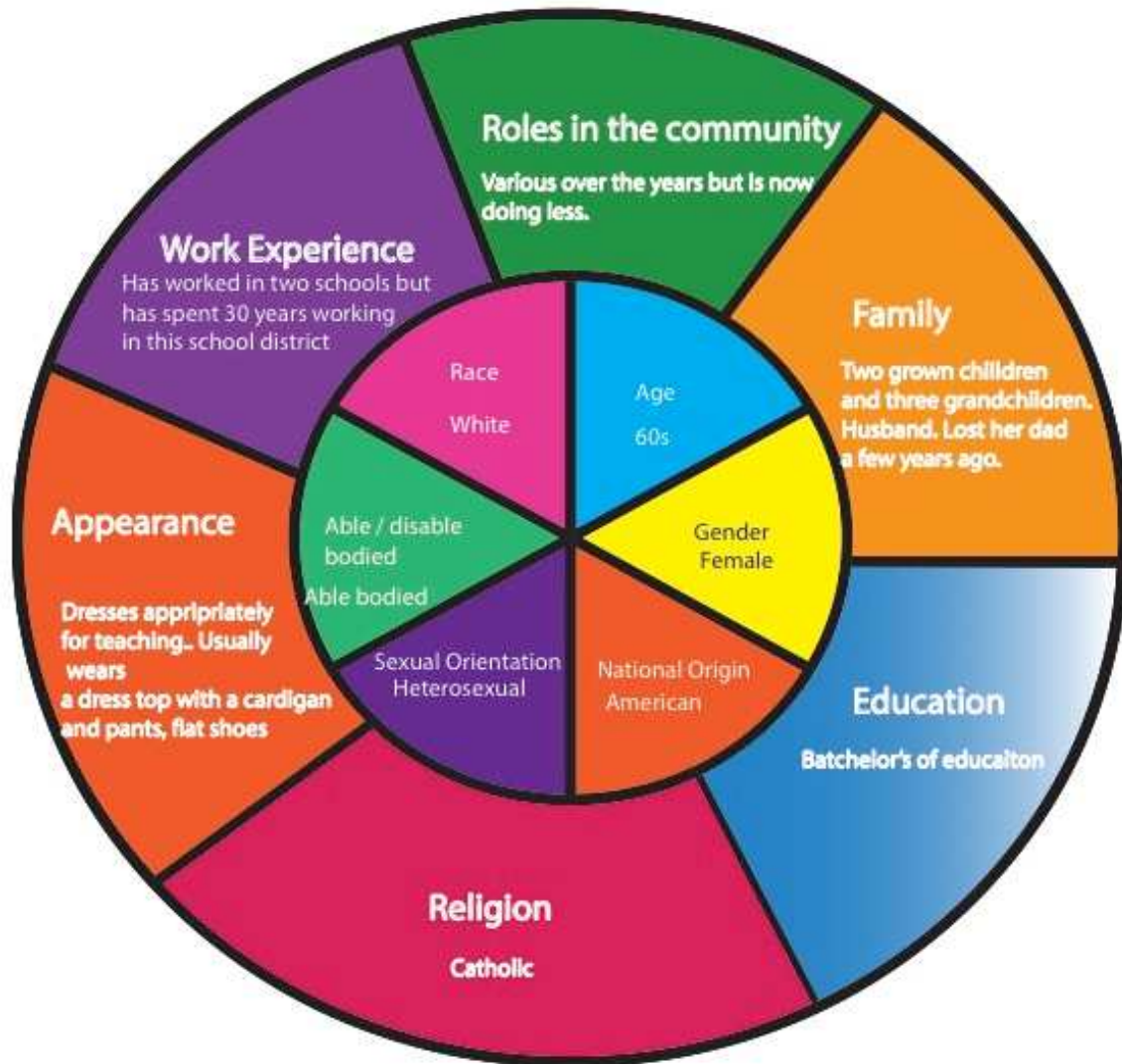
Figure 11. Jenny H.

Jenny is almost 65 and has taught in the same rural school for the last 30+ years. She began as an elementary teacher and then moved up (both physically in the building and in grade level) to junior high where she now teaches math and science. She only "comes down" for lunch and a bit of company, otherwise she works in her classroom. Jenny is old school in her approach to teaching but maintains a healthy relationship with her colleagues. Part of her desire to stay at work (as she could have technically retired already) stems from the fact that she is unsure of what retirement would hold for her. She is used to getting up every morning and having some

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place to go. She is afraid to spend so much time at home and have to get reacquainted with her husband, who has held various odd jobs throughout her career. Jenny has two grown children and two grandchildren. During the two years of this study, Jenny lost her father.

Jenny has become a close friend of mine even though there are at least 30 years of age between us. She has supported me through the birth of three of my children by bringing over meals or taking me out for supper. My office is in close proximity to her classroom, so we have had almost daily conversations over the last 4 years.

However, while I would say that we were close, I have only recently been a support to her rather than the other way around. Recently, Jenny was experiencing some pains and opened up to me about how little she sleeps. She shared with me various crises her daughter was going through as well as the gender identity issues her granddaughter was experiencing.

Jenny is a firmly grounded person who on the whole keeps herself to herself. She will express her opinions in the staff lounge but is careful regarding whom she says things to and in front of.

Why did you become a teacher?

I love to work with kids. I really wanted to work with kids the whole time. But it wasn't my first choice. I went into medical and at the end of the day, I needed all Bs and I had one C.

What does being a teacher mean to you now?

It means not all about the work and not all about the learning goals. It's about the rounded person. We have so many kids who don't have a lot of expectations at home anymore, so if you raise expectations here a little bit, in a lot of different areas you are hoping for a more rounded person vs just someone who knows my subject when they

walk out of the door. And I think that's important but I think we are losing sight of that in the last two years, just because we did a lot of character building. Now that isn't even an issue anymore, it's all about the scores and the common core and what we are doing. That has totally taken over the wellbeing of the student but I think it will come back, it just needs some time.

Figure 12. Karis H.

Figure 13. KV.

Figure 14. Larry.

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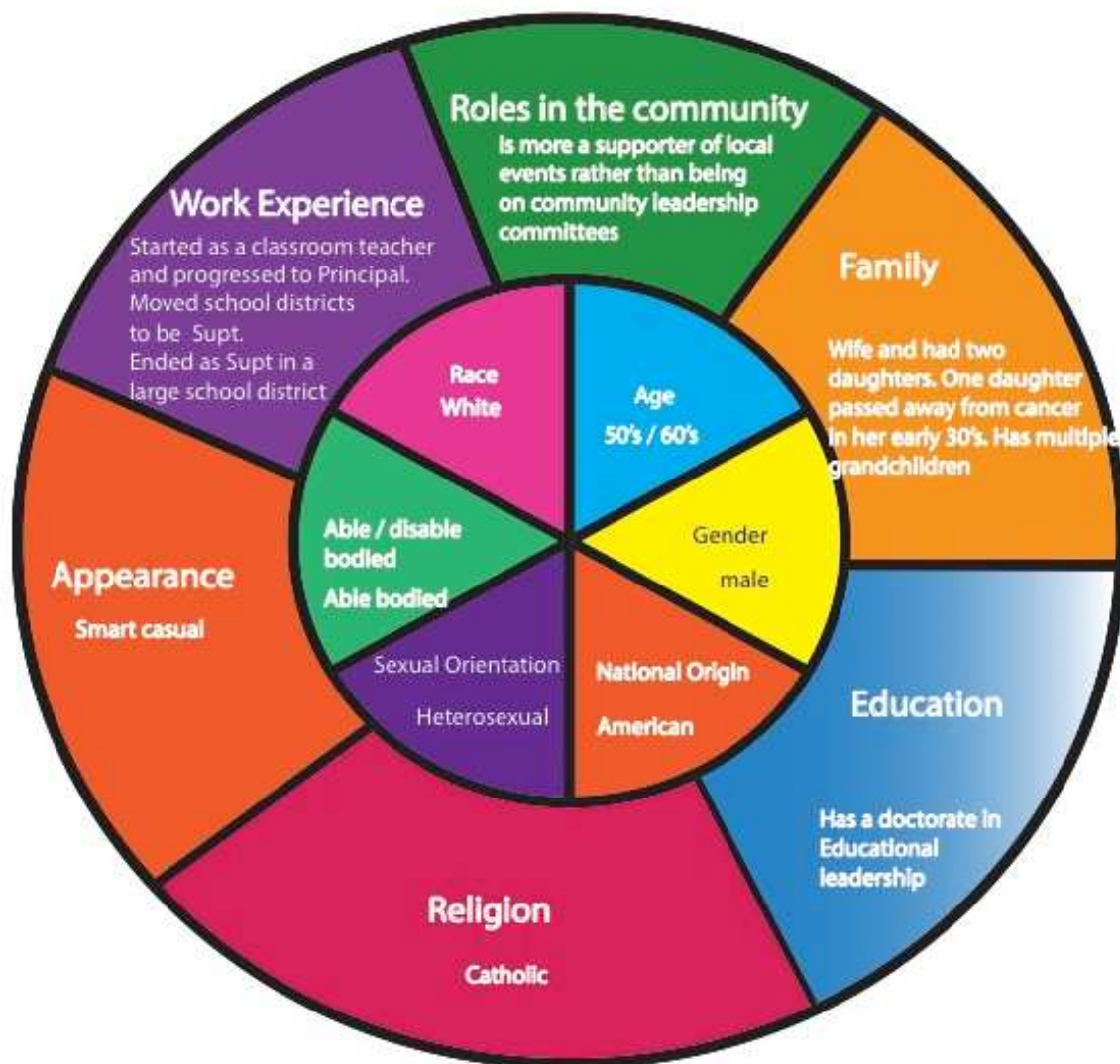
Figure 15. Meris L.

Meris is in her early 40s and was a junior high teacher in a neighboring city. She also taught math and science to the students. Meris is active with her church and enjoys spending time with her family (engaging in outdoor pursuits.) During the school day, Meris believes that one of her strong personal attributes is the ability to compartmentalize. She compartmentalizes her life as a teacher and then moves to the next compartment when she gets home and has to

cook supper and help with homework for her two children aged between 8 and 12. During the course of this study, Meris's dad lost his battle with cancer (while also being less than 10 years since her mom died from cancer). The family subsequently moved into Meris's dad's house, at which point Meris felt the need to have a break from teaching.

Me: Describe yourself as a teacher.

No nonsense, erm, I feel like I try to keep, find things that are interesting to the kids so that they can relate to things we are talking about and figure out why we need to study it. I feel that I am very approachable and fair, I don't feel like I play favorites. I feel like I take my job very seriously and I expect the students to take their job very seriously and if I expect them to do something, I expect the same of myself in return. If I expect them to have an assignment ready the next day then I expect that I should have feedback ready the next day. Erm...What else? I don't know.

Me: How do you think your students would describe you as a teacher?

I hope that they feel that I am fair. I think that they would say that I like to make a lot of bad jokes and I hope that they feel that I make learning fun. I feel like I have a good rapport and we respect each other and that they feel that....I feel that my students can be themselves with me and that erm, I hope that's how they feel.

Me: What do you think sets you apart from your teaching peers?

That I respect the kids, and I can see beyond the classroom - that they have things going on in their personal lives that might be affecting what is going on in the classroom. I hope that they consider me to be fair, whereas I think other teachers think....well not necessarily fair, but that I expect - that it isn't a joke, that what I do, I take very seriously and I feel like sometimes I feel like they blow other teachers off and I don't have that

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issue, like when I have had teachers say "well, they just blew me off, they never did it" and I don't feel like I have that, I feel like they understand. I don't know exactly what it is, and they do what they need to do and we can have fun.

Me: What do you think makes a good or a great teacher?

I think discipline because I think that, or, you don't have to be this iron fisted person, but if kids know the rules and the expectations they know what is expected of them and they can have a good time, but then they also know, it is time to stop playing around and now we can get down to business. They know what is expected of them, there are clear guidelines. I think it is kind of like parenting, you know if your kid - if you give them an inch, they are going to take a mile and if they know what their limitations are....I think kids like rules and they like expectations and they like to know where they stand. I think that is where I am different than a lot of other teachers. When they walk into my room, they know what they have to do and what needs to be accomplished and that is why we have good success with each other, because we know what is expected of each other.

Figure 16. Michaela U.
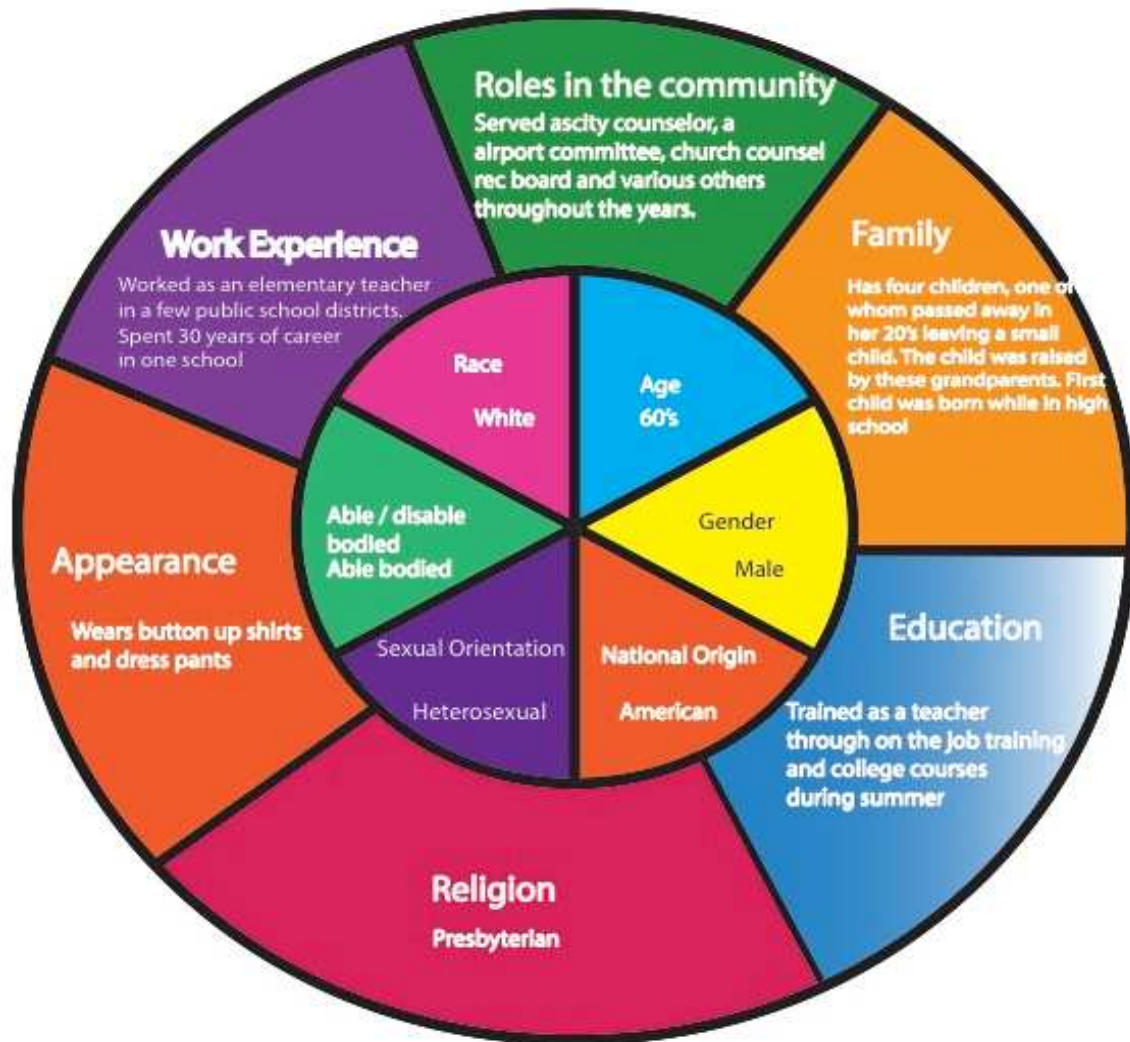
Figure 17. M.C.

Figure 18. Susie S.

Susie S was born and raised in the local community. After attending a university within close proximity to her home, she returned to live with her parents. During this time she worked for a neighboring school district.
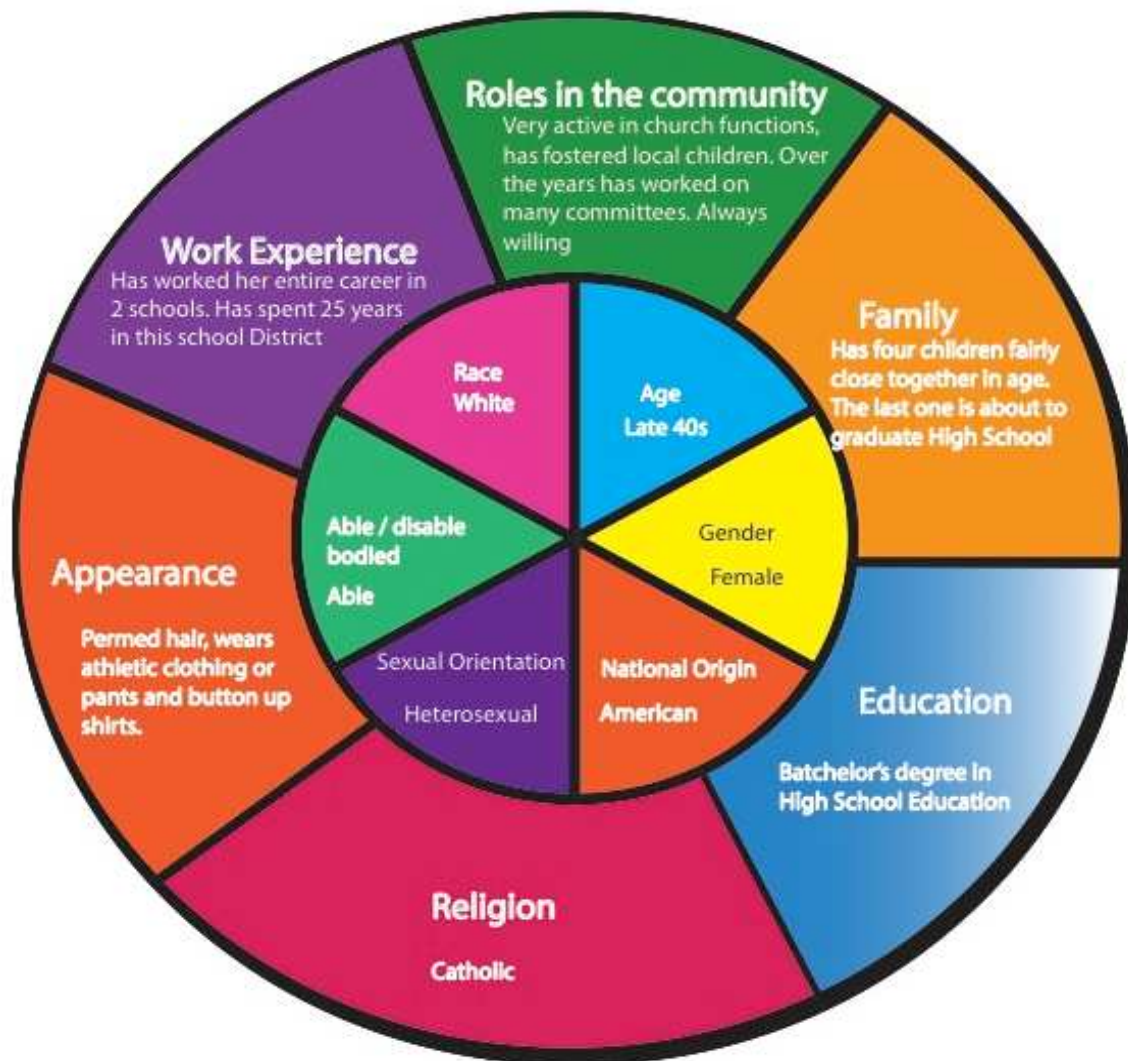
Figure 19. Theresa Wilson.

Theresa Wilson is a 50-year-old high school math teacher who also teaches weightlifting/fitness. Theresa is welcoming to all new staff and students, and she goes out of her way to help them find what they are looking for and makes sure they have someone to talk to at lunch time. Few things phase Theresa, although she often recounts times of pressure when her four children were younger (all but one is now either currently attending or has graduated from college). Theresa is an active member of the Catholic Church and prays before she eats in the

lunch room. She is one of the few people I see living their beliefs. Her husband farms their land which is on the outer edges of the city limits. Through my conversations with Theresa, I have built an affinity and respect for her parenting style and her kindness towards others.

Heuristic Inquiry of the Self: The Diversity Wheels viewed through a Reflective and Comparative Lens

Gender

In the United Kingdom, I had not really noticed a difference between how I was treated as a woman versus how men were treated; however, on the farm in North Dakota I notice that women, mothers and other female family members have gender-specific roles. It is not uncommon for me to get home from work and find a phone message from another woman involved in the church with which I am loosely associated asking me to bake three dozen cupcakes for a funeral the next day.

In my husband's family, traditional gender roles are still the way of life. It is typical for the women to cook the meal and clean up while the men sit and talk. I distinctly remember one occasion at my in-laws' farmhouse: There were five different families over for supper. I sat on the sofa nursing my newborn baby. My husband's aunt had prepared a roast and my mother-in-law was helping to serve the meal. The men came in and sat down at the table, leaving no room for the women. The two women served the seated men and then themselves ate standing while still bringing things for the men throughout the meal (e.g., salt, pepper, glasses of milk etc.). I watched with amazement as this meal unfolded and wondered where I had arrived. At home in the UK, the women did most of the cooking but everyone sat down to eat together and everyone helped clean up. I realize that a lot of this is based on personal experience and that each family has their own traditions and customs, but the cultural difference between my old and new homes

was noticeable. While I wrestled with this opportunity to become a border crosser as I dealt with a family's traditions that were new to me, I found myself dealing with cultural attrition of my identity. I had left the UK as a single female, and in the USA I had become a wife and a mother. As I transitioned through these natural progressions of life (marriage and motherhood) as well as learned the new culture before me, I found myself questioning which pieces of myself I wanted to "keep" and which pieces I was satisfied with letting go of as I adopted new culturally constructed ideas and ways of doing things.

I have had similar experiences while trying to deal with machinery implementation dealerships, local government farm offices or surveyors. I find that, despite being the point of contact, all correspondence is addressed to my husband; similarly, during phone calls I have been asked if the caller could speak to my husband to clarify and get the final "go ahead." Likewise, over lunch one day, a female teacher colleague said:

Journal Entry Sept 11, 2017

> "A woman organized and ran the pioneer show... a woman...I'm mean... I'm not like that... but she didn't have her husband help her or anything... she doesn't even have farming in her blood... how is she meant to do a good job? She has no idea."

In this place and community, it seems that traditional gender roles are still important to the community members, to where female teachers are perceived to be, as Munro described, "docile bodies" or "the mother teacher" or the "dutiful daughter." Through the experiences related above, my self-examination has led me to note several differences within gender expectations and raise questions regarding power and privilege. These differences have caused me to identify myself as a border crosser in public spaces in two ways, firstly because I want to vocally challenge the cultural expectations placed on women in this community and secondly

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because I do not challenge them. This causes an internal conflict within me about whether or not I should stand up for what I believe in and try to change the culture I live in to be more progressive and in tune with wider and more current values.

Memory and Reflection: Career

I think it is important to address who I am as a teacher in the same way I have addressed each of the teachers who describe themselves as a "good teacher." I have already related my values and my internal and external strife as an outsider in a rural North Dakota community. However, I feel it is also important to reflect on how I have grown as a teacher and how a few changes in the diversity wheel have changed not only the way I think but also the way I treat others and the way I behave as a professional.

As a student, I found my studies challenging, and despite my best efforts, I was an average student. Reasoning was challenging for me, as was getting my thoughts down on paper. Math was my kryptonite. My parents often retell the stories of how I would sit at the kitchen table with my math homework and gradually become more and more frustrated until, eventually, the math would either end up out the window or on the floor. Why numbers and letters were mixed together was beyond me.

It was at this point in my life that I met the first teacher with whom I had a real connection, and this teacher would have a profound impact on my professional life. Mr. Roper was able to teach me math in a way that I could understand. He talked to me in terms of apple pies rather than numbers, and he had me use manipulates to feel my way around problems and help me visualize the numbers and letters in a way that made sense to me. In essence, Mr. Roper spoke to me in a language that I could understand.

This connection and use of language and personal relationship with students is something that I have come to appreciate over time, but it did not come easily to me as a new teacher. I appreciate the fact that I would never have been accepted into university if Mr. Roper had not coached me and if he had not spent the time working on building a relationship with me.

When I first started teaching, I thought it was important to establish a firm relationship with students and allow little room for maneuvering or expression out of fear that classroom management issues would arise. I enjoyed planning hands-on lessons for the students, but I know now, looking back, that I did not invest enough time in relationships with students.

As I considered this natural growth from student to professional, I considered how I may or may not have crossed borders. I find myself believing that because I struggled as a student I believe that I am a better teacher in terms of the presentation of content and the creation of engaging activities. This would be considered to be a positive border crossing, but on the flip side it has also differentiated me from my colleagues as my lessons and expectations are more project based, which is a fairly new concept to many of my counterparts. This would then result in a border crossing into a less positive place.

Language

Firstly, as I am from the UK, my accent is different than other people in the community where I now live. I have always been self-conscious of this, and when I first moved here, many people found it difficult to understand me even though we spoke a common language. Now, seven years later it seems that my accent has become slightly more Americanized as I lose more of my intonations and gain more familiarity with current North Dakota-specific cultural expressions.

Drawing from this experience, my thoughts turn to those who perhaps do not share a common language (like I do with my North Dakota community) and I reflect on the writings of Freire in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, where he asserts that the world cannot be silent, regardless of race, gender or linguistic background. Dialogue and communication are necessary to construct reality and, in the social construction of reality, often one voice is silenced by a dominant view or by those who believe they have more of a right to speak. In this case of rural North Dakota, I have begun to question whose voices are heard, and my silent observations conclude that men, and particularly men with historical roots in the area, are the ones who are heard in my community.
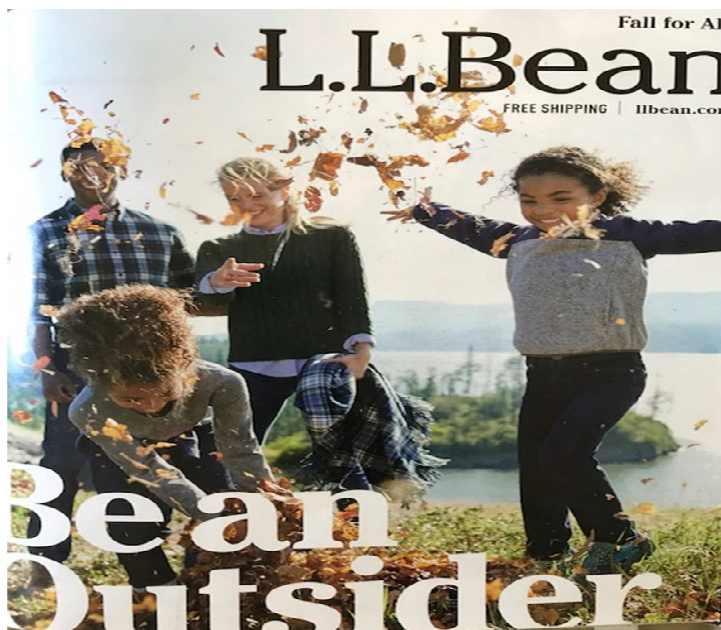
Figure 20. L.L. Bean magazine cover from Spring 2018 showing a play on words about being an "outsider."

As an English immigrant, I have found myself in the borderlands of the non-"natives" where I am superficially greeted in the community and to some extent in my professional life.

I acknowledge that there are many differences between my experiences as an immigrant by choice compared to those who are refugees here in North Dakota, and I am fortunate to be

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able to speak and communicate with those around me. It is not my intention to brush over these experiences, but for the sake of this particular study I find myself focusing on the "othering" and excluding effect of these comments by teachers, who appear to hold social standing in rural communities. Many of the experiences highlighted in the above field note entry have not been experienced directly by the female teachers in the school (or by the male teachers for that matter), but there is a lack of open-mindedness that sinks an optimistic heart. Because these immigrants (the Somalians) look different and speak differently and have different customs, these teachers have "othered" them.

Race

The work of Ingrid Pollard and her 1988 "Pastoral Interludes" focuses on the intersect of gender and race being excluded from rural Britain, particularly in the Lake District which is renowned for the likes of Wordsworth.

Pollard (1988) image depicts a dry stone wall and a black female being held back from the English countryside. Not only is the stone wall acting as a physical barrier for Ingrid Pollard but it represents a cultural borderland, where Pollard feels excluded. The countryside in Britain did not welcome her as a black female and as such excluded her from the social and political makeup of the rolling hills.

Race is one of the predominant border crossings that first conceptualized in her theory of the borderlands in 1988. Here the dry stonewall represents both a physical and metaphorical border preventing people—specifically women—of ethnic minorities to achieve an accepted presence in the rural landscapes of either the United Kingdom or of North Dakota. By acknowledging this, we become aware of the gaps between places on The Map. However, for Giroux (1992) these spaces are still sites of "negotiation, translation and dialog" (p. 10).

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Memory and Reflection: Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation very much operates as a privilege in society. As Johnson (2006) articulates, there is a great difference between what homosexuals and heterosexuals can expect from rural communities. One of the major privileges given to heterosexuals is that they can marry and/or choose to live with another person without fear that they will be excluded socially (or even, in some cases, be the subject of violence).

Many of the beliefs that drive the exclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer people in rural communities come from their strongly religious orientation. In some cases, communities have not moved forward with time, while at the same time in many places in the world (including the UK), homosexuality seems to be have become more acceptable in society.

Two reflections I would like to relate regarding sexual orientation involve a student's experience and a teacher's right to exercise her right to the freedom of speech.

Not long after I had accepted a job in my local town, two older female teachers approached me because I was "worldly," as they had a conundrum with which they wanted my help. A student who was openly gay (and there was only one in the town at this time) was scheduled to go on a school trip with other students. All students had to share rooms (four students to a room), but some of the other boys on the trip had raised concerns about sharing a room with someone who is gay (and I think perhaps the concerns were more their parents' than their own). This student had many friends and, although he was not an athlete, the students seemed to accept him for who he was.

The two teachers asked me what they should do. Their options were, on the one hand, to ask the gay student to pay for a room himself (or find the funds from elsewhere in the trip budget) so that the other students would not feel uncomfortable, as after all, the teachers would

not allow a male/female room combination. On the other hand, they asked if they should try to find some male students who were willing to share a room with him, but they worried that this might create problems for these students (name-calling and the like). I have to say, I was dumfounded. I did not know what to say to the teachers as I had never before experienced this situation nor had I ever considered sexual orientation to be a problem. To be honest, I had expected the students to get on with life, and I assumed the gay student would not act on his sexuality on a school trip (which is the same expectation of all students).

Part of my concern with this situation was not necessarily due to the solution that was implemented, but rather it was due to how homosexuality was perceived by community members including the young and the middle aged in particular. There was a deeply ingrained lack of acceptance in the social relationship with these boys, their parents and the wider community. On the surface, many people seemed to accept this student and his sexuality, but when confronted with it they treated him differently; they "othered" him by using their privilege as heterosexuals and as the social norm. Based on this example, it can be assumed that any rural female teacher who is homosexual will find themselves to be a border crosser, as they too could face being othered.

The second part of my woeful tale about a general lack of acceptance of difference in my rural community comes from a female teacher who holds her faith close to her heart. This teacher regularly uses social media to express her view of what social reality should be. She uses quotes or experiences to try and persuade others to believe what she believes and to follow the examples she sets in life.

One posting she made, probably about a year ago, referred to homosexuality as a disease. Similar to treatments for alcoholism that prescribe abstaining from alcohol, the post suggested

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that to cure homosexuality, homosexuals should abstain from expressing love and affection to members of the same sex. The post used the Bible to justify this claim, saying that God tells us that homosexuality is wrong and should be stopped.

There are significant and varying opportunities to cross borders in this situation. As an onlooker and a witness to this voice, I found my beliefs differing from this rural female teacher. I found her narrative offensive. I felt angry that someone who holds a position of power and care (Kahane, 2010; Noddings, 1992) can identify a section of society and attempt to make them feel like outsiders in a rural community. I questioned myself in context of her post: What if my child is homosexual? How would I feel, as a parent, knowing that this teacher believes he or she has a disease? I would find it exceedingly difficult knowing that my child was attending a place where the surface relations created a secure learning environment but the rooted societal norms vocally individualized his or her sexual orientation and found them to be so different that they were not acceptable in the community.

The female teacher who shared her beliefs could be a border crosser if her view is in the minority of the community's cultural beliefs and acceptances. By voicing her opinion, she is no longer a "docile body." Another opportunity to be a border crosser exists for the listener. If the listener positions themselves against the voice of the rural female as I did, then one's views become marginalized.

Physical Abilities

Being able-bodied is something that is often taken for granted for those who are privileged enough to be able to use the entirety of their bodies in normative ways. For those who are not physically able, challenges are created in terms of geography and mobility. From a geographical standpoint, small communities are ideally suited for those who need assistance, as

the sidewalks tend to be wide and uncongested, doorways accommodate wheelchair access and many buildings offer ground-floor access due to the relatively recently built structures compared to those of the UK. However, due to the greater distances needing to be travelled to reach services in rural communities, disabled people may have to pay more for transportation or have their own handicap-accessible vehicles.

In the UK, my paternal grandparents rented a dairy farm on the outskirts of a low socioeconomic fishing town that had been in decline since the affectionately termed "cod wars" which began in 1976. During these "wars," Britain lost the fishing rights to Icelandic waters, and Hull, which was the third-largest fishing port in Britain, began to experience unprecedented rates of unemployment and an increase in crime, violence and the displacement of many families.

My paternal grandfather worked hard on his dairy farm. He rose with the sun to milk the cows and relied on the help of my father and his uncle to deliver the milk by horse and carriage. My grandmother, while still "the keeper" of the house, was medically blind. She had lost her eyesight when she was three as a result of an unexplained illness. This difference led her to adapt to a different way of doing things, and I distinctly remember how she learned to make gravy, which we had every Monday night on french fries. The gravy was lumpy, but she never knew since she could not see. Both my brother and I became distinctly fond of lumpy brown gravy on french fries, and I still to this day associate brown gravy with my grandmother. Perhaps these fond memories are similar to the romanticized visions people claim to have of rural areas or of "being from there" even though they may have left the area many years earlier (Brann-Barrett, 2015 p. 760).

Many people would consider my grandmother's disability to be creating difference and an affliction to "normal life." My father often tells me stories of how he was sent to school

wearing dark green pants and would get the "cane" every week from the headmaster because his pants were the wrong color (they were meant to be gray). My father would explain that he only received one pair of pants and one pair of shoes and that his mother would not believe that the color was not gray, or if she did, she would not admit it because they could not afford to buy more pants for my father.

Employment as a non-able-bodied person may be more difficult in rural communities in the United States, where opportunities are more limited and jobs may require more physical demands; for example, nursing, construction and farming are the top three industries in the county where I live, and all require a high level of physical exertion and ability. In the school district where I work, there is one female non-able-bodied person employed as a teacher's aide and one temporary ancillary staff member who is called on as needed. Due to the lower numbers of non-able-bodied persons age 65 and under in rural communities, it is more likely that someone who fits in this category will find themselves othered in the community due to their apparent differences and may thus find themselves with the opportunity to become frequent border crossers.

However, the rural communities here in North Dakota do support families who have disabled children or family members. There is a real sense of care and helping one another despite differences. Examples I have witnessed include female teachers organizing to donate funds raised by students through various activities to help cover costs of medical treatment; families assisting with care to help the parents; and community members hosting benefits to raise money to cover hospital costs or in-home accommodations.

As a relatively new staff member at a school in rural North Dakota, I received the news that my four-month-old son needed a major surgery that may or may not have a potential impact

on his ability to walk or move. Without being asked, another female employee presented me with a full meal, fresh bread and dessert for my family. Other people sent cards with money in the mail. Again, the rural communities demonstrate the importance of caring for one another in order for the future to be viable. Here, schools are instrumental in bringing people together, but so are churches. The social power of churches makes them another important institution in rural communities as they offer social opportunities to all involved. At this point I found myself to be a border crosser into a positive borderland of togetherness and of caring. This was a new experience of support for me.

Much research has been done on the concepts of love and caring including that of Freire (1970), hooks (2010), Kahane (2010), Noddings (2005) and Zemblyas (2003). Loving and caring for each other, whether it be a family member, seems to be inherent to rural communities; perhaps it is due to the historical and ingrained nature to love and tend to the land that has stayed with the people who have remained in rural communities through the generations (Brann-Barrett, 2015).

Privilege

I believe that privilege and power go hand in hand to create the invisible boundaries of the insider/outsider paradigms. As a woman living on a hobby farm, I do not consider myself to be privileged like I did growing up in the UK. This is partly due to my age and level of maturity, but it is mostly attributed to the fact that I and many other farm women are viewed by different standards than our male counterparts.

MacIntosh (2000, cited in Johnson, 2006) suggests that the standards used to evaluate men are not consistent with those that are used to evaluate women. Women who are co-farmers and run a farm as their business may be viewed as successful farmers, but these same women are

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seen to be failures *as women* because they are perhaps not married or do not spend enough time with their children. Men, on the other hand, are seen as successful farmers *and* great fathers.

For most women in these rural communities, being a mother is seen as the number one privilege. Businesses and community events schedule times around important family events and are somewhat flexible for family members supporting local community events. This creates a caring community (a notion which is discussed in the next section) but it also creates another layer to the invisible barrier, as women who cannot have children or who choose not to have children are ideologically excluded from many events. There is a lack of "things to do" for single people or young couples without children. Therefore, they must travel beyond the perceived boundaries of the community to an urban area where they can participate anonymously and where they can become identity-less.

The ability to bear children is not just a rural North Dakota privilege, but rather it is a global one. Not being able to fulfill this desire due to bodily mechanics or other issues is experienced by many people regardless of place. However, in the rural North Dakota context where the school is the heart of the community, many people may be excluded or judged by a different set of standards should they not have children, just as they are set apart ideologically if they have *too many* children (beyond what any dual income family can support in terms of care, structure or events).

Different standards are also applied to mothers who work and to mothers who stay home. For those of us who work, I feel that there is a level of commitment expected, but if you go above and beyond that standard, you are judged to be "doing too much" and thus failing as a mother. If you stay home with your children, you are viewed as being privileged (not needing a dual income), but you are also viewed as different because you lack that social interaction with

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colleagues, or in other words you are not part of the social web where relationships are woven

and re-spun (Massey, 1994).

CHAPTER 5: THE MAP

But this talking of oneself, following one's own vagaries, giving the whole map, weight, colour, and circumference of the soul in its confusion, its variety, its imperfection - this art belonged to one man only: to Montaigne. As the centuries go by, there is always a crowd before that picture, gazing into its depths, seeing their own faces reflected in it, seeing more the longer they look, never being able to say quite what it is they *see (Montaigne, p. 58*, cited in Marchi, 1997, p. 7*).*

This map (Figure 25) was created derived from the second phase of coding. The places featured on this map are there because they are frequently talked about by myself and other participants, and they act as places where women find themselves experiencing contested notions and are frequently the places where border crossings occur.

The arrows denote whether the relational power creates a feeling of being an insider or outsider and as such can also be seen as the invisible lines where border crossings occur. Initially, this was based on my own reflections and self-examination, but the final map is the result of a cumulative "feeling" of the borderlands through which rural females transgress.

The map has been intentionally created as a barren landscape with blocks and edges to show the discomfort I was experiencing as I attempted to reconcile this information. I was frustrated and even angry as I began to see that not only were rural females excluded from institutions that wielded power (Shulte, 2016), but I started to feel as if the community expectations put little faith in rural females being able to handle the traditional responsibilities of rural males.
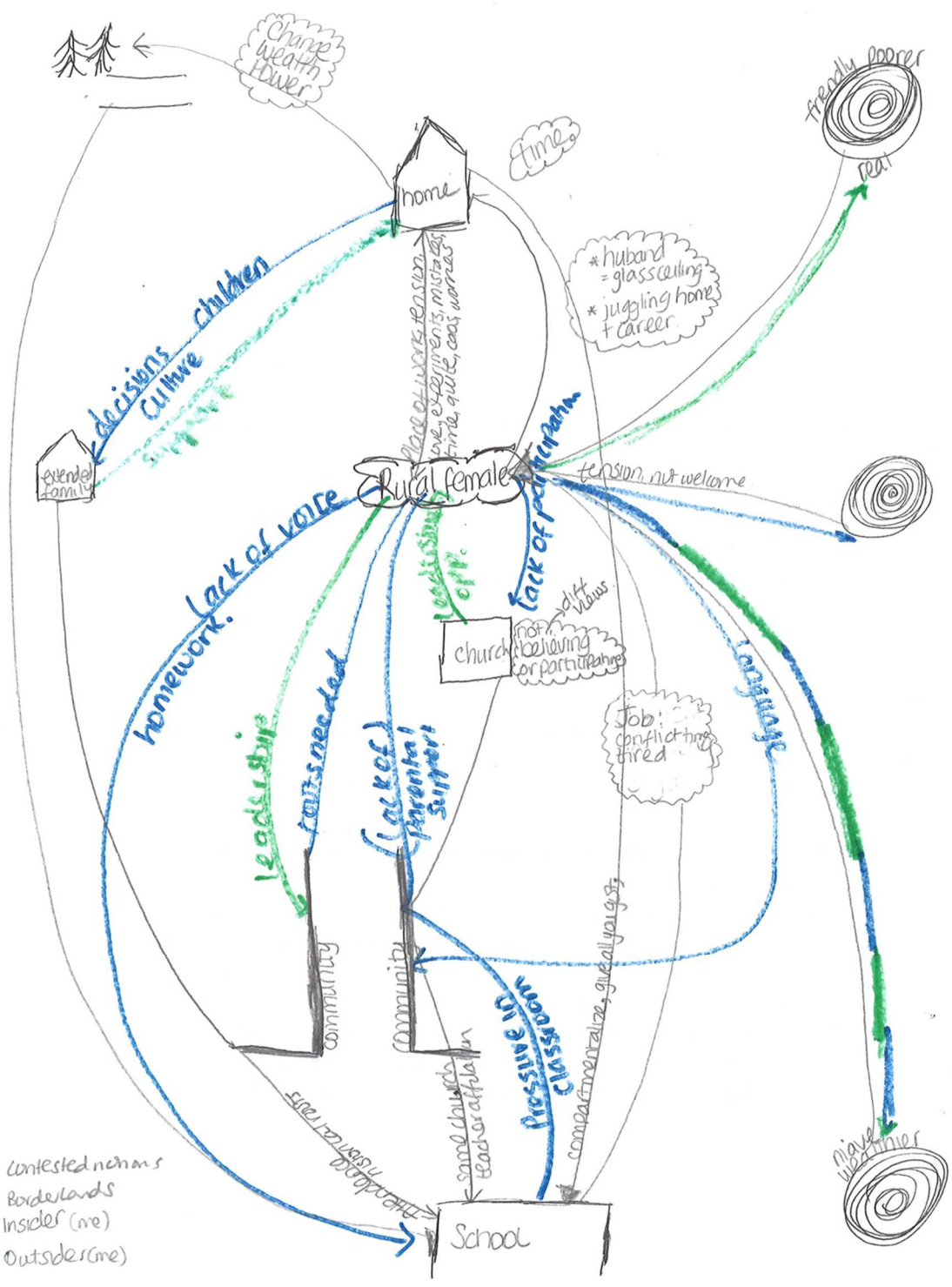
Figure 21. The Map.

Throughout the rest of this analysis, the dominant themes of the insider and outsider construct are used to examine how the "places" on the map appear to create border crossings for the participants. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) believe that the "human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined" (p. 6) and would use the insider/outsider construct as a container metaphor because of having both an inside and an outside. The map identifies a number of these containers, such as the home, extended family and the church and the school. The map indicates that while there are no physical boundaries defining the constraints the participants found between themselves and the institutions, the imposition of the bricks and mortar (or physical building) created such boundaries that are associated with certain ideals.

While the places did not change throughout the course of this study, my relationships with the participants did. As time progressed (since the beginning of the study), I gained more of an insight into the participants with whom I had a close working relationship. Time becomes an important facet that is implied in most of the stories, as almost all of the participants discuss stories from their past, their present and their future, and during these stories they indicate how they have crossed different borders at different times during their lives.

Who Fits in the Spaces and Places on The Map? Insider/Outsider Constructs?

Bodily Self

Lipka and Brinthaupt (1999) argue that most women in teaching are typically Caucasian and middle class (Schulte. 2016). As such, their experiences and identities are seen as somewhat homogenous; however, Holly contests this notion as she has found that her bodily appearance lies outside of the container. The first reason for this concerns how she thinks the students see her, as she is over 6 ft tall with long black hair and striking features: "At the beginning of the

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year they seemed very timid and were almost intimidated by me a little bit and scared to open up…"

In thinking of the body in terms of social construction, it is important to turn to West and Fenstermaker (1995), who believe that bodily identities such as gender and race are not socially constructed but instead are "emergent properties" (p. 13) which should be viewed regarding how our identities occur within interactions rather than as biological essences or role expectations. However, this is not always the case.

Field Notes from May 16, 2017.

> Today, in [school / community 1] I learned about how the teachers view urban areas. Today, on Facebook there was news of a shooting - a dad of 3 had been killed in Northwood. The conversation circled drug use in GF [Grand Forks] and Fargo and how many immigrants there were and how the mixing of cultures was leading to unstable and unsafe conditions. D. shared a story about how he felt when he went to Dallas and San Antonio. He shared that he had dropped his family off at a hotel and had gone to McDonalds (the kids and wife had all been snacking). First of all he tried to walk the 5 blocks to the McDonalds but quickly realized that this may not be safe as the streets looked unsafe. He was in the minority, being white. As he pulled up to McDonalds, he saw lots of homeless people. These homeless people kept asking him for a dollar or for some food and he kept saying no. Inside, he ordered his food. Then someone tapped him on the shoulder and asked if D. could buy him some food. D. said no, but the guy said well how did you pay for your food if you didn't have any money. D. was afraid he was going to be shot….he expressed how the homeless man who was black created fear for him.

JC also shared her fears about going to Atlanta this summer. She and her daughter are going. She said they are overpaying for a hotel in a good area because she wants to be safe. She expressed her fears experienced on vacation in Boston last year. They were riding a subway car and 6 young males got on and were eyeing her daughter. JC was afraid...she mentioned that her 18 year old son wanted to go off exploring but she didn't feel he had the "street smarts" of knowing when a situation was threatening.

In this sense, how we look and feel about our body and our self-image can create border crossings for rural females and others who may start to question difference and power (Mohanty, 2003). Here, not only is gender a possible border crossing for rural females, but race, class and able-bodiedness (Valentine, 2007) are also intersections that create tensions and contested notions.

Female Selves at the Intersect of Rural and…

As we transition the analysis from the self and the borderlands transgressed by rural females to looking at rural place and communities, I take a deeper look at what it means to be considered rural. In the following interview extracts, there appears to be a common theme: Those who have spent many decades living in rural ND tend to consider themselves as rural, but others had a more difficult time not only defining rural but also assessing whether their identities were perceived to be rural.

> **Meris**: I guess I never really thought of it till now, but yes, I suppose we are aren't we. I have lived here almost my entire life and if I haven't lived here I have lived in Minneapolis or Japan so I have gone from one extreme to the other (laughs) and I pick here any day.

Janet: Yep, I would, just because it is small and our communities are small. We might have to drive 90 miles for groceries. I grew up rural.

Both of these entries indicate that in order to be considered rural you have to have "grown up rural" or "lived here almost my entire life." However, newcomers to the area have a more difficult time answering this question.

Jules K: I think I define myself - as who I am, by where I live. I don't think I am going to be much different when I live in Grand Forks [which is considered to be a small city with a population over 10,000] (is that considered rural or urban?) I might be quicker to talk to people than others who have lived there a long time.

When I asked Holly the same question she was quick to answer "NO," followed by a laugh. She went on to explain:

Relationships are central to Jules K response. Jules K states that she "might be quicker to talk to people," implying that dialogue and conversation are much more readily available in rural communities. With Holly's prompt and curt reply, she indicated that what it means to be rural are not facets of her identity with which she feels comfortable. Over time, Holly shared with me how she found it difficult that everyone would know your business in rural communities (Goodnough & Mulcahy, 2011).

The "being quicker to talk to people" aspect confirms Corbett's proposal (2016, p. 142) People live in geography but also take an active part in creating the places and spaces in which they live. Places are breaks or stoppages in space. But what is space itself if it is not simply understood as a static container for historical analysis and social action.

Talking can be seen as a social action that, over time, conjures up idyllic images of nostalgia. When people think of "rural" they often imagine a slower pace of life where everyone

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is friendly. Harre (2004) describes the slower pace of life as how everyday life reveals "explicit and implicit patterns of reasoning that are realized in the ways that people act towards others" (Walker-Gibbs et al, 2015, p. 82).

The way people act towards each other in rural communities, i.e., being "friendly" towards each other but not necessarily being friends (instead being simply interested in other people's business), can create substantial border crossings for females living in rural areas, as it can feel threatening or invasive to those who are used to more anonymity. As such, these non-rural females living in rural places may feel that they are in a "rural ghetto" (Tickamyer & Henderson, 2003, p.113).

Below, Holly expresses how she thought rural life would be different as she describes the "culture shock" she experienced when she moved from an urban area to a rural area. She also talks about "the lack of opportunities" in what Tickamyer and Henderson (2003) termed the "rural ghetto." Here, she describes her first impressions and experiences of moving from a larger city to a small rural community:

Holly: It has definitely been, not like a culture shock, but a little bit like that. Erm, it has definitely opened my eyes to the lack of opportunities they have in smaller schools sometimes, but at the same time the opportunities they might have are some that others do not. Bigger schools don't know everyone, whereas they do here. Everyone knows everyone. It's almost like a family. It's very close knit. But at the same time this doesn't have to be a great thing either.

It has definitely been interesting. I don't know how else to describe it (laughs). I mean I had a lot of Facebook friends all of a sudden (laughs) before I even moved up here. So that was kind of interesting. (Laughs). I just thought that was crazy funny. You

know people were so welcoming and you know, it was like, you know we will help you find housing and I found housing no problem.

People who started adding me from [school / community 1], so I accepted them, and I had accepted them and I posted on FB one day and all of a sudden...I had all of these comments and messages from people from [school / community 1] saying "call this person" "Or call that person" and everyone just got me into Cindy's place and she....and I just called her and she was "I have been waiting for your call" and I was like "this is weird" (laughs). They were just really open and I do feel I have been welcomed in the community, however, becoming a coach and being a counselor and I know a lot of things about families that maybe families don't want me to know because their students have told me, they have become a little more standoffish - which you know, I am OK with and I understand that completely and I don't fault them for that."

Here, Holly identifies how she felt welcomed, but her undertones such as "this is weird" suggest that she felt her personal space was invaded through people "adding me" on social media sites whom she did not know and through having the lady who rents apartments tell her she has been "expecting her call" when she had never met the person she was calling.

Rural Communities

As the participants shared their stories, they were all grounded in place. This extract is taken from MC:

MC: Well, there is no doubt that places like [school 2], [school / community 1] or [home school / community] don't offer the same thing as a Grand Forks, Fargo or Minneapolis or Chicago, so I believe this: You are not going to bring someone who is born and raised in a larger city such as MSP, they are not moving to the District to be a teacher, or to

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[home school / community], they are going to try to stay where they are accustomed to. I believe that the teacher they are going to find in rural communities is someone who has been born and bred in a rural community and so they are willing to go and get educated and come back to that community or something of that nature.

James C: I think everything has its own personality, its own culture and I think these two communities that we're talking about, [school / community 3] and [school / community 1], very much are their own distinct personalities. One is, like I mentioned earlier, is a service community. The other one's a desk community. Why? I don't know. [school / community 1] built on ... there's no question the major, economic impact in [school / community 1] is farmers, the elevator, Simplot, everything associated with that. [school / community 3], there's not an elevator in [school / community 3]. There's not an ag business in [school / community 3], per se. Everything in [school / community 3] is related to import/export, related to customs immigration, related to brokerages, MCI, it's different that way. We tend to reteach it and that's where I think it handicaps the kids, particularly here in [school / community 1], to get out of that ag side of things and get into ... to expand their opportunities.

Now, the [school / community 3] side of things, it cheats them. They don't get a chance to really see anything related to ag. The cultures do affect the ... I will say this. They all come from a Midwest, their morals and their values are pretty similar. Ones I have in class, their understanding of law and how to implement, what's right and wrong, very similar.

Both of these participants' perspectives view rural communities as individual places having their "own culture" and "distinct personalities", their own identities and as places to which people become "accustomed" to the way of doing things. These personalities are

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historically founded, or as Hay (1998) terms, possess a "rootedness" which creates a particular social cohesion that focuses on a common understanding of the purpose of the community, which was traditionally agriculture (Fitchen, 1991). In acknowledging the common purpose, a community is built. In this example, James C refers to two of the local towns as having differing purposes, with one that is agricultural and one that is built on imports and exports. He notices how these differing purposes are reflected in the schools and their expectations and class offerings as he states "they don't really get the chance to do anything related to ag."

Using Flora and Flora's (2003) argument that in order for a rural place to become a community, personal interactions, configurations of power and symbolic relationships must form (Hay, 1998), Karis H discusses this situation:

Karis H: It has been not a problem, but a challenge for communities, for rural communities, all the time and different ones have different ways of dealing with young people. Park River had a 30 and under group where they tried to do, once a twice a year....I can't remember what they called themselves now...they had functions, just for 30 somethings, singles, couples...didn't matter....and had different things supporting it and they had community support, business support....in fact the last one I attended...wasn't very well attended and it had been a while since they had met, and for whatever reason...it wasn't the topic, it wasn't the time of the year....they just hadn't....or some of the ones who had been planners, had maybe been a young singles, or a young married couple, had now had kids...where that changes the dynamics of who's looking out about that, or concerned about that. The Extension Agent out of Park River Office - the city office was also trying to get a young professionals group up and going and Brian, here,

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also tried to do that a little bit too....I am not sure if that was a similar thing too - but there are a lot of road blocks, such as time, or the different interests...

Someone just said something to me the other day Lizzie, about how it takes 3 generations for a new idea to take root and actually not be a new idea any more and for it to be accepted in a community and especially in a rural community. If you think about 3 generations, it is actually a lot of years! So when we start looking at the age of our leaders who are in place right now, and when you lack that younger voice, a lot of those things that they want to come back to a rural community, or those quality of life issues we talk about that don't make you any money, and some of those older ones look back and think "nah, we don't need that....it was fine for us...ah it was good enough for us" - it just isn't any more and I think that there are a lot of issues going on...and we are losing....and the scary thing right now....when you look at ND, rural communities are really on the back burner.....All of the money is getting funneled to the bigger cities such as Grand Forks, Fargo, Bismarck, Minot...the voice is slowly starting to dwindle for the smaller communities. So how are you going to get those pieces to continue to maintain our infrastructure that is...like our pools...I mean we just don't have community centers now - they are nonexistent...and when it comes to fitness centers and those kind of things.

Karis brings a multitude of issues to the fore for discussion in this extract, proving that living in rural areas can have its challenges. As Kenny et al (2016) note, "rurality emerges . . . as a contested notion" (p. 184) because of its multifaceted nature of being. Karis H talks about wealth in her statement *"we talk about that don't make you any money, and some of those older ones look back and think "nah, we don't need that....it was fine for us...ah it was good enough for us" - it just isn't any more and I think that there are a lot of issues going on,"* but in addition

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to addressing how communities spend resources, it also poses the issues concerning who holds the proverbial purse strings; who is in control of the spending?

Rural values and power struggles have led to changes in rural community identities over time, as Lefebvre (2009) implied. Holland (2003) suggests that these identities are subject to change over both time and place. Karis's statement "*It has been not a problem, but a challenge for communities, for rural communities, all the time and different ones have different ways of dealing with young people*" suggests that like Ingrid Pollard in her Pastoral Interludes painting, there is an invisible parameter surrounding what is considered a rural community which excludes young people (both male and female) who are from other rural or urban places. As such, questions arise regarding whether rural communities, like those shown on The Map are in fact their own isolated containers or whether they alienate (Hay, 1998) others.

Micheala U talks about the rural challenge of proximity (Flora & Flora, 2003) to other services, towns and goods as she remembers when she lived in a larger metropolitan area.

Micheala U: That was a hard transition...I missed the conveniences...I missed being able to run to Walmart at night if my kids got sick. You know if I needed diapers or formula, or dress clothes, I don't have to do it all in one shot, I could do it when I needed to. I do like everybody knowing everybody, but it can be tough, everybody knows your business and that can be hard and in a bigger community, you can hide.

Being unable to hide in plain sight is a common area that rural females have felt to be a border crossing. Not only the discomfort of non-family knowing your personal business but also the "how you do" as a teacher has become an area where rural female teachers have found themselves crossing into the borderlands, often at parallel times (if there are professional and

personal issues occurring simultaneously), but the borderland here can also be created going the other way. Holly identifies that:

> becoming a coach and being a counselor and I know a lot of things about families that maybe families don't want me to know because their students have told me, they have become a little more stand offish - which you know, I am OK with and I understand that completely and I don't fault them for that.

But this lack of anonymity clearly results in an aura of discomfort in public spaces where the teacher and parents meet. In this sense, the way of knowing (Belenky, 1986, 1987) is constructed through the process of "self-reclamation" as the knowledge bearers try to "deal with life, internal and external, in all its complexity" (p. 137). As such, Holly who is the newcomer to the town feels like an outsider in her role as coach and counselor, because she does not have strong ties with the community and families in the communities.

As a coach, Holly and other female teachers have constructed a sense of caring about the students, but this level of care does not extend beyond the student to their family.

School

As Holly talked about her role as a school counselor it appears that she felt like an insider by identifying herself as female. She talks about how counselors deal with the social and emotional sides of students as well as their academic needs. Holly felt that she connected with many students:

> I really think that being a female counselor, and just being in the classroom with students, I know people see me as, you know, because I am female, I think a lot of people assume I am going to be more empathetic, and more compassionate. For example, if a male student came in and were to cry, I don't think he would be as afraid to cry in front of a female

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than a male. I feel as a female, in the classroom, again I am more, you know, more animated, and more willing to come down to a student's level, than maybe a male counterpart would.

In listening to Holly's voice here, I note the "voice of I" as she states "I am going to be more empathetic…I feel as a female….I am more animated…I connect with students." With these statements, Holly can be seen to be constructing herself as a teacher-mother, affirming Butler's (1987) notion that women are "not only culturally constructed, but in some sense we construct ourselves" (p. 23). In her role of counselor and when dealing with the students, Holly feels comfortable (once they have gotten to know her) and feels like an "insider" within her job.

Here Holly's assertions of compassion, connection and nurturing coincide with Munro's traditional understanding of why teaching is a "woman's true profession" (Munro, 1998b, p. 3), which asserts that women are more naturally able to care for students and nurture them in the classroom. The contrast from Holly compared to Munro's theory is that Holly spends most of her day with high school students, whereas Munro's theory is more geared towards the elementary school.

In addition to addressing the emotional and caretaking qualities presented here by the mother-teacher and the "ideology of domesticity" (Vaughn-Roberson, 1985, p. 25), Holly also speaks about intellectualizing her role as she "brings it down to their level." By adapting to what is required of her, Holly is challenging the "dutiful daughter" concept, who is unable to think for herself, or as Foucault (1977, 1995, p. 13) suggests, a "docile body."

In listening to the voice of "I" of Susie S, I heard a different self-constructed image:

Susie S: I would describe it like I'm on an island. Because like you said, nobody else has my specialization. That's where the special interrupter would come in and give that

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support. So and- but I feel like the regular teachers communicate back and forth and know what has previously been done but special ed is an ever changing... What teachers have done in the past is not necessarily true coming out of- you know fresh out of an education. A lot of the things that were done in the past no longer exist now and it is changing and it's hard to get the veteran teachers to see that this is ever changing and we need to roll with it and change and be willing to accept that change.

As far as support, yeah I just feel like I'm on an island. I'm the only one of my kind here but it, you know, you just- if I have questions, I feel like Jules K is a good support for regular ed.

When asked about some of the challenges Susie experienced in her first year of teaching:

"You know it's not all a bed of roses, but when you look on the flip side of that, I think that this year, I had it pretty easy compared to some other schools. If you go to a bigger school there'd be, you know, more difficult students and different situations thrown at you. So considering the things that have been thrown at me, I think I've done pretty well. I think I've been pretty resilient. Sometimes I don't feel like that but you know, when you look back on it I think, you know when I look back on it I think I'll be able to say that that happened for a reason and I was put through that difficult situation for a reason. You don't always like when your IP meetings go bad or you know. But it happens for" a reason and it's like a learning thing. I guess you have to- Does that make sense?"

Susie comments several times about her feeling of isolation when she states "I just feel like I am on an island" and "considering the things that have been thrown at me," both in terms of her content area as a specialist but also personally as she feels that she has not built close relationships with her colleagues. She considers herself to be an outsider from the veteran teachers as she distinguishes herself as being "fresh out of education" when she talks about "it's

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hard to get the veteran teachers to see that this is ever changing and we need to roll with it and change and be willing to accept that change." By stating this, Susie implies that the longer the female teachers have been in education, the more difficult they find change. Here Susie has identified herself as a border crosser both by being "out of education," progressive or willing to change but also in her content specializing being regarded as "an island."

Being a teacher in a rural district can appear to have a collegial feel to it, but Jules K identifies that the undercurrents of what happens within the school often reflect different relationships of power between female teachers.

> **Jules K**: I appreciated the openness a great deal. It took me quite a while to understand the undercurrents (laughs), quite a while in fact. You know I saw the openness also, not necessarily inclusion.

Even though Jules K is a veteran teacher, she was a newcomer to the district and as such also experienced the "island living", like in the movie *About a Boy:*

> All men are islands. And what's more, this is the time to be one. This is an island age. A hundred years ago, for example, you had to depend on other people. No one had TV or CDs or DVDs or home espresso makers. As a matter of fact they didn't have anything cool. Whereas now you can make yourself a little island paradise. With the right supplies, and more importantly the right attitude, you can become sun-drenched, tropical, a magnet for young Swedish tourists.

While Jules K was not expecting any "Swedish tourists" per say, she was expecting students to participate in learning. Her statement above indicated that on the surface, each island or classroom was collegial to one another, but really the undercurrents of these relationships were more volatile than they appeared.

The island living paradigm also extends from the classroom to the community. Living in rural places often creates overlapping relationships between those who are rural female teachers who are also mothers who need daycare services or groceries from the local grocery store, where they will be seen as both mom and teacher by the students or parents of students. They may also be seen as community members as they serve on community leadership boards or are part of a team organizing an event. In this sense, the rural female teacher cannot live on their island or be known as "just a teacher," but instead they are seen as having multidimensional roles within the community to where onlookers are often unable to separate the rural female teacher from the identity of the mom or the church leader due to overlapping roles.

In understanding these relationships, rural female teachers can be said to have, as Bakhtin (1961) states, "polyphonic voices" meaning that there are layers to the perceived identity. Micheala U demonstrates how the polyphonic voice of the rural female teacher can create border crossings.

Micheala U: I have been involved when the boys were in daycare; I was on the daycare board. I have been on the church council. I go to all the activities that are sponsored. When the kids were younger we would go to all the kids activities and you know there aren't so many activities for my kids anymore. You know you get out and about and support the local stores and movie theatre. I am not on any boards, or groups or anything like that…[but] I think the demands are there. People like to demand. I think...I don't know if people understand what goes on in a teaching day. I think that is probably the big issue there. Some respect teachers and some don't. That is everywhere. You notice it more in your rural communities, because we are smaller. You know who doesn't respect us and you know that out in the public and unfortunately, I can say for myself, then in

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return, don't always respect their businesses and if they have treated my business badly....and there have been some business owners who have liked to say a few vocal things about the school, the curriculum, about the teachers, about the Common Core and they are business owners and I don't go to their businesses….: It is very hard to not comment. And like I said my way is not to support business. And if someone is looking for daycare - I don't recommend their daycare, if someone is looking for places to eat, I don't recommend those businesses or places to eat. Is it right? I think it is. Maybe not. I don't know. I just think you have to support us because we are here to teach your child and if you are in the teaching profession it is because you have a passion for it, especially for us older teachers, you know it will be interesting to see if the younger generation follows that pattern.

Michaela identifies several acts of border crossings which are defined by relationships. Firstly, she notes that "there are demands" from the community on her time, on her expertise, on her leadership qualities with which she feels an implied internal struggle as she states "I don't know if people understand what goes into teaching." Here, the sense of time is important as Michaela refers to how much effort and dedication being a "good teacher" takes, meaning that there is less to give the wider community, even though the wider community would like her to serve them in more ways than teaching. The second opportunity she identifies to transcend the border is in terms of respect. As businesses wield power and in some cases privilege within rural communities, the owners often feel that their voice is more weighted or has more value than other people's. If these voices are used to speak out against the school as an institution, the teacher (as an island) Micheala may find herself a border crosser in two senses, the first being that she is unable to continue her role as a 'dutiful daughter' or a 'docile body' as she states "it is

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very hard not to comment." The other border crossing opportunity lies in the expected support from the community, in response to which Micheala would use her "power" as a rural female teacher to make recommendations. Should this relationship be damaged then she "won't recommend" their business.

The unspoken relationships between institutions and people who are seen to wield power or make an identity bid (Holland 2003) to be seen as a central figure within the community then become a contested notion and result in a difficult balance between professionals and the other roles the "mother-teacher" has to fulfill in her role in rural communities. These acts of border crossings are not always as black and white as Micheala suggests, as in her final thoughts in this section she identifies the zig-zag motion in her mind as she makes decisions and choices as she states "Is it right? I think it is. Maybe not…. I don't know."

Fitting and Not Fitting on the Map

As I started listening to how the participants saw themselves in terms of place, the issues of fitting in or not fitting in began to arise, particularly for Jules K and Holly F. I also found examples in my own journaling where I consider myself to be an outsider. Often times, the participants would not state that they were a good fit or not, but rather they talked about the differences from what they were used to. An example follows from my own journal in May 2015:

> I went to drop off a present for B who is getting married. The teachers seemed pleased to see me and my daughter, but I was kind of surprised that not one person had gotten me a gift (is that selfish?) or a card. And then I got hit up for a retirement gift for the principal ($20 contribution for the puppy he was getting)...I couldn't believe it. Only two people really held her – RC and the sub (whose name I can never remember). Steph also

announced she was pregnant to me (well RC told me in front of Steph). I get the feeling

that there is still some distrust with them...I am definitely not an insider there.

And…

A lot has happened this year. I feel like relationships across the district have broken

down. R in particular is upsetting to me. Janet has had her on a pedestal for years -

thinking she is a great teacher, but really to me, Janet is a great teacher, because of her

attitude. She is willing to work to figure things out that she doesn't know whereas R's

mind is closed. She is bitter and ungrateful. I wish I could support her in ways that she

wants, but she comes in and creates her zones of insider-ness, comfortableness and then

closes her door in the classroom.

I feel I am unwanted and unliked. I am not sure what my skills or talents are anymore. I

feel like I am rotting away here. My brain is not being nourished. Things come and things

go before I have even finished them. I am afraid they are going to stick me with data next

year.

And in September 2015:

I do wonder about our systems. She [a new administrator] and her husband do not fit into

the systems that are already in place. She is making enemies fast! Why doesn't she fit in?

Is it her lack of direction, her lack of pace...not giving the teachers the facts they need to

know (like not having a tornado drill sheet in each room, or having the schedules done on

time.) Is it the fact that they have moved here from China and ND teaching system is so

different from what they have known? Or is it that ND teaching systems or our school is

just too ingrained into a way of doing things that her and her hubby are being rejected?

OR are they simply not capable to fulfill the jobs they have been hired to do?

Journal Entry March 5th 2015

It seems people here [one of the schools in the district I work in] always take the morning to warm up. They come in around 8.10-8.15 and head to their rooms. Then they congregate in the lounge, sipping coffee and putting the world to rights. For some reason, I have never felt welcome in their "morning meeting." Is it the case of people having their own seat? Or is it that they don't trust me because I am not here everyday? Anyway, today they were talking about negotiations. I didn't hear much, other than when I went in to put my lunch in the fridge. No one engaged me in the conversation so I didn't stay to listen.

Here, I am examining myself and both the positionality I feel within the particular school as well as the positionality of another female who is new to the district. As Butler (1987) suggests, construction of "I" or the "self" is achieved through repetition, and this repetition, no matter how hard we try, never creates a perfect self.

In this context, there are multiple intersects of the self-identity I am trying to achieve: – firstly of the mother by bringing my new daughter to meet the teachers and secondly as a teacher by improving student instruction as an intellectual, a colleague and a friend in caring. However, not all of my identities were being accepted. As Jackson (2004, p. 677) explains, "when we act certain ways as women in particular contexts, other expressions [such as race, class, religion, or culture] are always silent, erased, hidden-to ourselves and others."

In the second journal entry, a question arose regarding the borderlands the new administrator was crossing. Her story, like mine, shows that the district (the students, teachers and other stakeholders) have a "culturally preferred way of being" (White, 1995, p. 16). There

was a system in place that was already embedded in practice. This affirms Lee's (1997) suggestion that social institutions have pre-arranged ways of communicating and doing.

Throughout this study, I found the same people popping up in different areas in the community. It seemed that female teachers in rural communities not only hold a central role in the community as a teacher, but they also take on, or are asked to take on other relationships and roles as well. The social construct of gender roles can be seen here.

If we consider Munro's (1998) concept that teaching is a "woman's true profession" (p. 3), we must assume that females are by and large nurturing individuals. Such stereotypes were discussed as part of this discourse.

JB: Women teachers seem to be elementary, it seems to me. Erm, there is also the stereotype that if you can't study anything else in college, or you couldn't think of another occupation, you would resort to teacher, erm…"

Anna: I think it goes back to the caretaking role, as a mom, you are a caretaker. In many families, and I am not saying all, you kind of identify with being the person who gets the kids where they need to be and gives them all the care they need. You are the one who loses the sleep, you are the one who feeds the child. It is kind of all you. So when they are young in elementary school. I think it is identified that they need an elementary role, but I think they really need both roles as kids are missing fatherly roles too… Perceptions that I have seen that bother me are that if you can't do - you teach. I feel that if you can do, you do and you teach others. Because we want to create leaders alongside of us, who can teach other people in society and I think that often, I think teaching is thought of as a woman's job. Not necessarily a man's job. We are seen sometimes as not being in the correct role that we should be seen. I have also seen many males along the way who are

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in a teaching position and they are passionate to start with and they start to maybe not care as much and not have that passion that they started with, because they feel that as a teacher they are looked down upon because they are in a woman's role. I have seen a connection - a little bit like that.

Meris: The mothering part of it and traditionally, men were out in the field doing everything, so maybe it was a career to easily balance with family life and you know a lot of people quit being teachers when they had their kids, so I am not sure I can really say to balance it...but I do think that that might attract people to the job because you know you will have the same schedule as your kids and I don't know maybe - it might just be that there is more women that lean towards that role…of mothering and taking care of and teaching, whereas men traditionally weren't even helping with homework, or even the parenting aspect of things...maybe that's where it came from.

Jules K: I think they [community members] hold teachers to a higher standard than they do themselves. In almost everything (laughs) as far as responsibility, communicating, it is more a one-way street rather than a two-way street. They don't communicate. We are supposed to be closer to perfect.

There is a noticeable amount of emotion involved in words such as "take care," "passion" and "mothering" in teaching, as the participants make reference to domestic roles overlapping with their professional roles. The professional roles that are described seem to require an impossibility: an expectation of perfection. During the conversations, it seems some of the female teachers 'fell' into teaching almost by accident, because they did not have other ambitions or knew that they wanted to work in a small rural community, and as such their professional choices were limited.

The Spaces between the Dancers: The Mom, the Female Teacher and the Family

My journal reflection from November 2017 and the interview with TW highlight the potential for a border crossing between the roles of the rural female teacher and mother as well as between the institutions of the family and the school located on the map. Here the rural female voice speaks to the difficulty of being a teacher in a rural community as well as being a mom. The overlap of the two roles comes into conflict when the teacher needs to wear the hat of mom within the institution of the school and comes into conflict in the relationship between the family member of the mom with a colleague.

> **TW**: I could be spending a lot more time on the teaching end of it, but when you have all the other stuff too. I do the absolute best I can when I'm here, and I use every minute that I can to be prepared and do the best job when I'm here. I do some things outside of school, but I try not to do a huge amount. It's like, that's my family time, that's my take care of everything else, and your church and your everything. Everybody else wants a piece of you too. Not just this. Could I be a better teacher if I took a lot more of that time away and worked on this? Yes I could, but-

Journal Entry: November 2017

> Today I was at lunch with the elementary teachers. Eliza was questioning the homework policy here and sharing her family experiences. As a single mom she has 4 children, but she is having an issue with her 3rd grade son. She commented that he comes home with 4 sheets of math homework every day and not just practice problems, she said that he had to solve real world problems. She said it takes him so long to do and she was just so tired of having to fight with him about it. It was making him not want to go to school, he was tired when he got home from school and on top of having to do math, he would also have

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other projects to get turned in within the week. Eliza stated how it gave her a headache when she thinks about it.

The other teachers at the table asked questions like whether he was getting enough help in the classroom or whether he needed services, but Eliza indicated that before he moved to this school (after his parents' divorce and transfer from another rural region in ND) he was doing so great.

Eliza went on to explain how much homework he came home with last night. She was angry last night and still angry and upset today. She was afraid that her son might start to hate school and felt she needed to do something to change this problem for her son. BUT, she said that "she wasn't the type of person to go running around cussing my face off. But I just mean like, it's the way that I feel…"

Eliza identifies the struggles entailed by having a dual role within the same institution. As a teacher and a mom, she wants to be an advocate for her son, but at the same time she has to respect the boundaries of her colleagues. The binary Eliza found herself in is common. If Eliza decided to talk to the teacher, she would be seen as a border crosser who was making an intentional and deliberate attempt to cross over. This crossing would cause discomfort for both the teacher and the parent in the space where they were meant to have similar identity bids as rural female teachers.

Other, more discrete yet still direct acts of border crossing occurred for me when the places of school and home overlapped with relationships between me as a rural female teacher and a colleague who was also a friend outside of the school. The polyphonic voice from Meris caused substantial discomfort for me and has resulted in a frayed and damaged relationship.

Here, it is important to note that place, time and our evolving experiences change our relationships.

Journal Entry from August 2017

I have had the twins and summer is coming to a close. It has been one of the best experiences of my life having 6 months off with the kids. It has been tough too, there is no doubt about it. I like my sleep and with 5 kids, that never seems to happen anymore. Before I went to England this summer with the whole family, I decided to reapply for my old job. I know myself and when winter comes, it will be so isolating for me to be here, all alone with the kids. I wonder whether I would even get dressed most days. I think I would lose my mind. I am a social person, I know that – not that I go out very often, but I enjoy conversing with others, with my colleagues and I like the challenge of work. I am just hesitant about having to get 5 kids out the door by 7am each day and two days a week, having a 90 mile round trip commute. On the plus side, my boss allowed me to work 4 days a week so I will have more time to take care of the kids when they get sick or we need to schedule appointments. But am I being selfish going back to work? Meris stopped over today and I had to hide the fact I was going back to work from her. She told me that I needed to stay home with my kids and take care of them. She quit her job last year to stay home – I am not quite sure for what as both of her kids are in school. Her dad died last year, or was it the year before and he was very close to my husband's family – best friends, but he had left her what must be quite the inheritance. She doesn't need to work now. I need to work for my sanity but also for my retirement, and paying for diapers for my kids, for their shoes – if we want to go on trips. I often wondered why she didn't take a sabbatical when her dad was dying. He was dying for like a year and she

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let his girlfriend take care of him (move in with him, and then as soon as he was dead she kicked her out….). I never quite did figure that out…

September 3, 2017

My father-in-law has had a stroke. We don't know what is going to happen…he will make it, I know that, but I don't know what kind of shape he will be in – how much he will be able to move. Everyone is being so optimistic, but I know. I can see things are going to be different. Right now I am just sick. I am sick for him but for me too. My in-laws were going to watch the kids part time while I work and now I have no one. There are no openings in town at the daycares and I can't find anyone to come into my home. There is just nothingness here. I am fraught. I can only manage to eat a yogurt a day and I am still nursing but the stress is just too much for me. On top of that, there is the farm. It's harvest time and [my husband] will have to deal with getting the crop in. He will be gone. I will be alone – having to juggle work and getting the 5 kids supper, homework, piano practice done, spelling, reading, baths and put to bed. I am only one woman….

September 5, 2017

Meris called me today. She told me I should just quit my job. I know it's not fair on the kids to have the two middle ones go to people they don't know. I feel like a terrible mom but I am trying to hang on to everything. I am trying scramble to pull everything together. Why doesn't Meris support me? She made choices I didn't think were in her family's best interest, but she felt the need to work when things were stressful in her life. She is judging me, I know she is.

In these journal extracts I find myself to be a border crosser more than once. There is the relationship with Meris that is both supportive but also creates tension and judgment between

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one another as we each offer suggestions of our respective views of appropriate behavior during times of stress, such as "I told her to take a sabbatical when her dad was dying" and "She told me I should just quit my job." But in offering these suggestions which were intended (on my part anyway) as being supportive, they in fact created a distance between us – a lack of understanding of how we, as teachers, cling to routine and to a need to "get up everyday" and "get dressed." During the working day, we need to be in our container labeled "teacher" and be able to forget the other relationships and distractions, the things that weigh us down and stress us out. By both of us offering suggestions that would change how we use our time and influence not only our economic status but our social status as well, we are attempting or bidding to influence our friendship and the other's identity by changing their professional status from teacher to stay-home mom. While the notion of school emerged as school being an extension of the home, being in a different place or institution from the family or from the home now yields a different meaning for rural female teachers, an identity which now yields a likeness to other professions in that even though they are still "caring" and "nurturing," they also have a "place" to go to do their work rather than it being in addition to the demands of the daily housework. This dual role is explored more in the next section examining the family and gender.

There is the issue of place that also creates the opportunity for a border crossing for both Meris and I. Both of us used the school as a place to create an identity bid to be seen as a teacher during stressful and difficult times in our lives. However, the home meant different things to us. For me, the home would have been a place of isolation and where I would transcend a border into loneliness ,but for Meris the home became a sight of conflict and power struggle between who provided care for her dying father. The conflict ended with Meris directly crossing a border

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by using her power from being daughter (rather than girlfriend) and privilege of being the new owner of the home to ask the dad's girlfriend to leave.

Lastly, the issue of the extended family is raised. I identify that my extended family intended on helping me "watch the kids," and as such I was relying on my in-laws to help raise my children. This is more common in rural areas (Schulte, 2016), but it also creates power tensions between my in-laws and myself. This is discussed more depth in-depth in the section regarding the family and gender. As Sales (1999) notes:

> Relational factors would cover the power relations within society and within the family…in the large majority of cases will have greater family responsibilities than men in addition to their school work, but also that the figure of a woman in a position of authority, particularly of authority over men, is threatening to existing power structures in the family and in the wider society (p. 416).

The responsibility of having to juggle finding people to care for my children, bathe them and complete all of the homework primarily fell on me as the mom. I had the greater responsibility to care for the children and ensure that they were cared for.

The Home and Extended Family

"The family [is] an endangered institution" (MacTavish & Salamon, 2003, cited in Brown and Swanson 2003, p. 73)

What do Rural Families Look Like Today?

Traditionally, the home has been the place women would occupy (Schatz-Oppenheimer & Halpert-Zamir 2010), where they would perform their duties of food preparation and other household chores (Faragher, 1981). The home is also the place where, as Schatz-Oppenheimer and Halpert-Zamir (2010) articulate, "emotions, caring, fostering relations of trust" (p. 366)

occur. It is the place on The Map that you most frequently find the rural female teacher as she attempts to maintain her responsibilities for the home, the family and work (Moreau, Osgood & Halsall, 2007). On top of these responsibilities, I have also noticed that many children in our community are part of what has been coined "the rural brain drain" and move away (Huffington Post, 2011). However, the ones who stay in rural communities are responsible for taking care of their parents when they become elderly. This caretaking role for many females has been lost in the UK, as people in communities become more anonymous and as the idea of community itself becomes lost.

In talking to Janet in casual conversation over coffee sometime after the interviews, she reflected on one of the questions I had asked her. Below is my journal reflection from our conversation which showed the traditional gender roles her parents had.

Journal Extract January 2016

Janet came to me yesterday and wanted to relay a conversation she had had with Holly. She was saying how Jackie's boyfriend was a narcissist. This is a term I have heard being thrown around the elementary staff lunch table over the last few weeks so I asked Janet what it meant. She clarified that it meant that certain men put their problems before other people's problems, that their agenda is more important that anyone else's. Jackie's boyfriend has been like that to her according to Holly, who is a passive observer. The boyfriend comes from a wealthy farming family and they have recently moved in together. Jackie moved from Fargo to be with him, assuming they would get married. However, Jackie is finding she has to play wife, cook, laundry maid as well as teacher and coach. Janet described him, as well as one of our administrators, as narcissists.

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She said she had never thought about gender in this way. She had never looked at the role of men and women in our society. She then went into her memories and talked about how, when grain prices plummeted, while she was growing up, her mom had to go out of the home and find paid employment. She had 7 or so kids at home. Each morning her dad would get up, eat breakfast and leave his dishes on the table. After a few months of coming back into the house to find his dishes still on the table, he decided he better take them to the sink and so he started putting them in the sink. A few more months went by and he started washing his own dishes and putting them away.

Janet also recalls how when her brothers went away, she and her mom would pack their bags for them. She now questioned why. She said she didn't do that for her husband.

I asked her how she felt she had prepared her son for life. She said that he was getting better but that her daughter was certainly more willing and able to live life on her own. I told her how I am struggling with my son, age 4. My son manages to con his sister into tidying his room for him and put his laundry away. We questioned how the cycle is repeated and what influences it, without much resolve.

The passing of time clearly plays a role in gender expectations. A generation or more ago, the role of women was to serve the men and the family, to ensure they had everything they needed. Jenny and Theresa W (who are age 50 or older) however believe that women are still responsible for the bulk of the housework.

Theresa W: I don't think my husband would ever do a load of laundry unless there was absolutely nothing for him to put on.

Jenny H: His words to me if I ask him, "Would you make something for supper tomorrow night?" He says, "Why, where you gonna be?" You know, so there's a lot.

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There is, and the kids, I mean I have to get them, I have to know where they're going and

when they're going 'cause he's not going to think about that.

For younger couples such as AP and her husband, the obviousness of the gender division had

diminished somewhat. While listening to what AP was saying, I noticed she felt that her and her

spouse shared the division of labor in the home.

AP: already, is really good at cleaning the bathroom...if I say I don't want to clean the

toilet, he will go in and scrub the toilet. He does pretty much anything that I ask of

him....he will cook supper, do dishes. Every role we have it is just like split. If he asked

me to go and mow the lawn I would.

I don't expect to go home every night and cook supper and he cooks supper only when I

don't want to. Like last night, we pretty much do it 50:50...but he goes out and grill....I

don't know....Like if I am gone for the weekend, he will clean and I didn't ask him to,

so....and maybe there is a little bit of it, but for the most part it is pretty good. So when we

have kids hopefully that won't change....maybe I will have to change more diapers but

that will be about it.

The unspoken implications of AP in saying "he does pretty much anything I ask of him"

and "he cooks supper when I don't want to" demonstrate that AP takes on the burden of the

indoor chores while her husband takes on the outdoor chores. AP notes that this division is not

set in stone, as she would be willing to "go and mow the lawn." The household arrangements in

AP's house seem more flexible than perhaps in the previous generations of Theresa and Jenny

and certainly more flexible than the households prior to that. However, there is clearly still a

cultural expectation that women maintain the home as well as juggle a job outside the home

along with other roles and commitments within the community.

This notion has changed over time (regarding both running the home as well as paid employment outside of the home), as now being a working mom is more of an expectation in rural communities. Few people can afford to have a member of the household not working. Below, Anna talks about how she feels juggling the responsibilities as a mom and teacher are for her, as a younger single parent.

> **Anna C**: Juggling being a mom and a teacher is very difficult for me. I have one child right now, who if I could give everything to, I would then when I come to school, there are all of these bodies in the classroom that need me too, and sometimes some of them see me as a mom themselves and need that from me as a teacher, so walking away from my classroom when I know that there are people who need something is very difficult for me, but at the same time, I want what is best for my child - so I find getting that balance is very difficult for me."

On top of being mom and teacher, Anna is enrolled in graduate school to try and further herself. I asked her what else she does:

> "I do school work! (laughs). From my standpoint as a teacher, basically, any of my other time is dedicated towards graduate school and trying to balance my mom role. I feel that all of my energy during the school months are consumed by my job and that my son comes almost second to that. I know he doesn't feel that way, but it is really trying to balance my life. I put most of my focus into my family as opposed to necessarily lots of friendships. I have a couple of close friends and it might be 3 months before we actually go and do something. The expectations in a rural setting in our positions are just so involved that I feel it takes it all.

Anna often asks herself whether she is doing the right thing by herself and by her son by living and working in the community in which she grew up. When talking to her, there is a perceived false sense of guilt that perhaps she should be somewhere else or that she should not want to pursue her master's degree as it takes more time away from her role as mom. As Acker (1992) explains, Anna is attempting to maintain a dual intersection of her identity—that of professional and mom.

Jules K. relates to those experiences Anna describes, although for Jules (who is close to retirement) there is more nostalgia in her answers. She appears to have been withered away by tiny fragments of life being hurled toward her and changing her identity countless times. Her roles as mother, daughter and grandma have had an enormous impact on her identity, partly due to the labels that society ascribes to the various states of her family. For Jules, it seems that work is her constant.

Journal Entry September 18th, 2015

I saw Jules K. walking down the hallway with her lopsided walk on Friday after the students had gone. She looked tired. I know we have two new curriculum sets (Journey's reading and Benchmark writing). They [the text or series] are very involved and Journey's requires some tech skills which Jules is not very confident about. I peeked around the door to see how she was doing. I asked about her weekend plans. Jules is always the kindest and sweetest lady. She is so polite all the time, even when she is trying to make an ugly point.

Anyway, when asked about what her plans were for the weekend, I really learned about what else she does…. Every night she leaves school around 6.30pm. Goes "home" (her dad's house that she is keeping up), has a quick bite of supper and then goes and visits

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her dad at the nursing home until 10pm. She said her dad had had a fall this summer. It was his fault, she was quick to add (not wanting to blame the nursing home). They (the family) had had 4 surgeries this summer, she went on to tell me. Her dad had to have one of his bones pinned in his leg, a couple of days later she was scheduled for knee surgery and within two days of that, her daughter had to have emergency surgery as her appendix was gangrene. Then she said one of her extended family members had to have surgery and she was expected to drive them to and fro from the hospital visits. She said she felt like she hadn't had any summer at all.

I sympathized with her but then asked about her daughter, which I didn't realize she had. She said that she had had to give her up for adoption at age 14. She was a paranoid schizophrenic with bipolar tendencies and Jules just wasn't able to take care of her any more. She said that when she and her husband lived in Duluth, she would drive the almost 700 mile round trip to visit her daughter in the hospital in Valley City. It got to be too much for her, all the traveling, so she cut it back to every two weeks and now she goes every month. Jules sighed. She told me she didn't look forward to going but once she was there, she was OK. She suddenly turned and looked at me and said "I bet you think I am a bad mom don't you." I smiled sympathetically and told her that I couldn't even imagine what she had been through and the choices that she and her husband had had to go through. She seemed relieved. She told me that her daughter had hit over 60 people in her life (she is now 24). The daughter has a hard time understanding why mom can only come and visit every month now and not as often as before.

I asked if she had had any other children. She smiled, sadly, and said that yes she did. She had two boys. One lived in Duluth and had a blue collar job (mechanic...maybe) and one

was just finishing up his doctorate in MSP [Minneapolis]. This son had three daughters, who weren't quite so little anymore. She smiled. She said they are 6, 4 and 2. I asked if she got to see them very much. No, she said she didn't, but she would like to.

Jules' attempt to have a good life had been threatened. Although she gives off a sense of selflessness that borders on self-erasure (Munro, 1998b) and self-effacement (Walkerdine, 1990), Jules finds immersing herself into her teaching to be a routine coping mechanism, a way of retaining control of a private life that may have taken turns down a few unexpected paths. The "container" of professional, as a rural teacher, has allowed Jules K to stay afloat in a way which is similar to my own experiences (during times of private trouble) in the previous section. In this way, the home becomes a place of empathy, emotion, and love for many (McDowell, 1999), and the school, which is a public space, is where emotions are masked or disguised (Schatz-Oppenheimer and Halpert-Zamir, 2010).

Meris also identifies with this duality of home and school in her life.

"…when I am at school, I need to get ABC done because I know when I leave that building, I am not going to have time to do it at home. It has taught me how to be a good time manager and same with, when I am at home, I can't bring my home life to work. I don't have time to take things home with me because I know I am not going to get to it because I have my own kids' needs and stuff to do, so I feel like I am very compartmentalized and I am very rigid in that but I think that is what is helping me survive. This is my day-to-day life. I have these little compartments and when I am in different places, I work on different things and I can't overlap it and if I do, it all falls apart."

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Jules K echoes Meris' thoughts in stating that she has so many roles to juggle that her only survival technique is to compartmentalize.

"For me, it was really compartmentalizing. When I am at school, I am at school. The family gets switched off, until I get to the time when I am not at school and then I get to be "family person" then - that is a skill, if you can call it a skill, it is a survival technique that I have learnt as I have gotten older."

The responses here surprised me as the voice of I came to the fore. The women did not talk about "we" as a family, but they were specific about their emotions within the family and ways of coping with the roles they were expected to juggle. These roles (between family and professional identity) were not a laundry list of "to-dos" which were historically gendered roles, as per the study *The Second Shift* by Arlie Hoschild and Anne Machung (1989), but instead it was about "needing," "survival", "skill," "time," "managing," being "rigid" and having "schedules."

In developing this theme, I had to take some time revisiting Moustaka's (1990) "incubation" phase of the research process. My thoughts had initially envisioned a highly gendered rural landscape where men and women had prescribed 'jobs' within the home, which still is a truth in my own home, but I revisited my journal entries and listened to my own voice. In revisiting my journal entries from August and September, I listened to the "voice of I."

Journal Entry: September 3, 2017

My father in law has had a stroke. We don't know what is going to happen…he will make it, I know that, but I don't know what kind of shape he will be in – how much he will be able to move. Everyone is being so optimistic, but I know. I can see things are going to be different. Right now I am just sick. I am sick for him but for me too. My in

laws were going to watch the kids part time while I work and now I have no one. There are no openings in town at the daycares and I can't find anyone to come into my home. There is just nothingness here. I am fraught. I can only manage to eat a yogurt a day and I am still nursing but the stress is just too much for me. On top of that, there is the farm. Its harvest time and [my husband] [my husband] will have to deal with getting the crop in. He will be gone. I will be alone – having to juggle work and getting the 5 kids supper, homework, piano practice done, spelling, reading, baths and put to bed. I am only one woman….

Journal Entry: September 5, 2017

Meris called me today. She told me I should just quit my job. I know it's not fair on the kids to have the two middle ones go to people they don't know. I feel like a terrible mom but I am trying to hang on to everything. I am trying to scramble to pull everything together. Why doesn't Meris support me? She made choices I didn't think were in her families best interest, but she felt the need to work when things were stressful in her life. She is judging me, I know she is.

The "voice of I" is powerful here, as there is an accumulation of experience, of all of my identities simultaneously intersecting or colliding: of mom ("I have to juggle work and getting the 5 kids supper, homework…"), teacher ("I have to work") and wife ("It's harvest time and [my husband] will have to deal with getting the crop in. He will be gone. I will be alone…"). At this time in my life when I have been depending on relationships with my extended family, my husband and my colleagues are distant. I feel isolated, like I am living on an island.

My relationships between my family, my husband's family and friends also become a site of contest as I progressed through my doctoral studies. Juggling the load of mom, professional

and scholar was at times challenging but manageable. However, I received comments from friends and family members such as "would this be it now," questioning whether I will pursue any other educational qualifications. This was said to me in a way that implied that I was neglecting my "other" duties which should take precedence or that I had taken my interest too far from what was expected or needed. On one particular occasion, I remember a family member laughing at me suggesting that I may have grand dreams, but what good would it ever do me if I was not going to earn more money from it. The point here is that I would never be able to earn more money from it because geographically I was bound to this place and this community while the nearest university is one-and-a-half hours away. I felt humiliated, like my need for more is worthless since there is nothing here. There is no reason to try and be better or different.

There are many times that my voice references the intangible "ways of knowing" (Belenky, 1986, 1997) when I repeatedly state "I know" and "I don't know." What I am knowing and not knowing is my emotional identity. In public, my identity is one of silence, of conformity but in the home, my I express frustration, anger and ask deep questions of my emotional self. Belenky calls this my "received knowledge" and accepted ways of being in rural communities: "I know it's not fair on the kids…" and "I feel like a terrible mom", "I am fraught…" These emotions and feelings I experience are felt because I am transitioning into a borderland as a "bad mom" or intending to perform an act that constitutes unfairness to my children. These positions mean that there is a socially constructed image of a "good mom" as well as "fair" ways of parenting or of having children be looked after by others.

As a mother to five children, I find the rural communities where I live and work to be highly supportive of families, and there are many activities to be involved in for preschool-aged

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children upwards (but not for women who are moms and aspire to move beyond the role of rural female teacher).

Wearing my mom identity now, I found myself to be a border crosser when I became pregnant for a fourth time. This in itself was not the act that forced me to become a border crosser, but it was the fact I was carrying twins which would give me a total of five children. This number of children exceeds the limit of what is deemed to be acceptable number of children per family, or this is what I felt as many community members felt the need to comment on "how busy I will be" or ask "have we found out what causes this?" In rural communities, three children per family appears to be the norm today, and even four children are still acceptable, but questions surrounding the family's ability to cope (particularly the mother's ability) is a source of conversation in such cases. Families who choose (or not, as the case may be) to have more than four children are put into the "different" category. These labels are also attached to families in the UK; however, there it seems that the average number of children is two, and anything larger than that is considered to be a "big family." In both countries, through the cultural acceptance or lack thereof I was forced to cross a borderland.

For female teachers, their life of motherhood must be compartmentalized, managed and ordered. In talking to other female teachers and keeping a field journal, I reflect back on how female teachers say they "manage" their days. The teachers with whom I have had conversations feel the pressure to be a "good mom" by, for instance, making sure homework is done and baking for fundraisers are baked (usually either late at night or early in the morning). These women comment on how they do not know how they do all the things they do, but they just have to get on with it.

When considering parental status, both the roles of gender and marital status combine to create the traditional values felt in rural areas. Many wives who are also teachers express frustrations to each other (usually to close friends) about the lack of support they receive from their husbands in raising the children or about having to be here, there and everywhere for the children without the same standards being applied to their husbands. These experiences are similar to those of the couples in Arlie Hochschild and Anne Machung's (1989) book *The Second Shift*.

For me, I find that playing the role of mom to five children under the age of six years old creates overlaps in my professional and personal identities. The following notes were taken from my journal.

Journal Entry – March 2, 2015

For me, the length of the day is a cause for concern. I had hoped to pick C. up from the bus at home some days and I could do that if I was in [school / community 1]. I could be home by 4.10 to get her. But now, I can't. Also, having little kids - I need to be able to have appointments at the end of the school day (haircuts, doctors etc.) and now I am going to have to take more leave to schedule this. There isn't much wiggle room in the day to skip out early on occasion.

In this entry, I find myself juggling motherhood and my professional self in ways that overlap. I find that there is a need to steal time from different pockets to enable all of my selves to function. However, I often find myself having to pick roles for myself and constantly assess whether I can.

Journal Entry: May 17, 2015 - Home

Well, I am now on maternity leave. I have a 2-week-old baby at home - who is totally adorable. I have felt a real conflict of who I am at this time. When [Daughter #2] was 11 days old I had a job interview to be principal of [school / community 1]. As I sat in Jeff's office, I nursed [Daughter #2]. It was the first time I had managed to bear a bra and it was so uncomfortable.

I had to take [Daughter #2] with me to the interview as she was being strictly breastfed. The superintendent didn't get that! I nursed her in the office before my interview and hoped to God that she would last the hour that the interview was being held. They asked me at the interview how I would juggle my family and work commitments? I said that [my husband] would step up and take his role. I know that he would do this but I will be giving up a lot of time. I sent him an email last week asking him to consider switching [daughter #1] from [home school / community] to [school / community 1] if I got the job so I could spend more time with her. Is that selfish of me? I know it would limit my running around and would let me spend time at work if she had practice or something.

This weekend has been up and down for me. It has rained all weekend but I have been constantly considering whether I can be a HS Principal and a mother. I have been considering whether it is possible. I have considered how I would be able to manage my family and my job. I know if I don't get it I will be made to feel worthless. I will feel rejected. I will feel like I am not good enough - I will feel like not trying hard….I will feel mad that [the superintendent] asked me to put in for the job (was it so that I didn't put in for [home school / community]?) How will I work with the new principal? I have already decided that I think I will turn down the [school 2] lead teacher position so I can

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concentrate on family / doctorate. The financial situation will just have to stay as is for the time being.

Having overlaps in identity is something with which Meris struggles, but even when she is at home she is not just mom, or cook or homework helper; she is all of these things and more. So you know when I am at home, it is helping my kids with their homework, cooking supper, doing the bills, keeping the house put together, taking care of the pets, doing all those home things, doing the grocery shopping, laundry you know all those kinds of things and you take for granted, as the kids have gotten older, the kids have been able to help with that and... but then we have our business, so that is different – I have to do the bookkeeping for. The farm I have to do the marketing for the trees, like now tonight, I mean tomorrow, I have to go out and finish sheering trees and do that...so that I just have to do.

However, juggling all of these identities within the same space has left borderlands within the home for Meris:

There is a huge burden and I think that is where resentment comes from in a marriage. Traditionally we are saying all these roles that women had, you know you almost can't blame the husband if they did not see their father taking an active role - they don't know if they didn't have anyone to encourage them- you know unfortunately you get these stereotypical roles and everybody falls into it and the burden I feel falls on the mom and maybe that is the nature of women, that we feel that we have to figure it all out and solve it all, whereas maybe a man, would look at something and says "you know what, who cares if this doesn't get done...this is the priority" but on my list, everything is number one priority. I don't feel like the laundry cannot take precedent to cooking supper to helping the kids with homework. I feel that they are all important.

Jules K also felt this burden:

> My generation definitely puts pressures on themselves, my generation always said that
> was a woman's role and men always thought it was a woman's role. I am seeing that is
> lessening a tiny bit...men are taking on more. I am fortunate because my dad did do a lot
> in my family so I knew it was possible, (laughs) but it doesn't always work out that way.
> It is becoming more traditional for a man to take on more responsibilities, but do we put
> pressure and responsibility on ourselves, yes. Because at the end of the day, if it isn't
> done, we do it.

> For me, my burden extends beyond the home to the culture and ritual that is the extended
> family. The axis of power within the extended family is somewhat a mystery to me. As the
> parent, I would have imagined the invisible boundaries to lie within the parents, but I have found
> there is sometimes a power struggle between the parents and extended family. Furthermore, the
> concept of family being inclusive, a place where you could be an insider, was also challenged for
> me. During a family illness, I felt I crossed into a new borderland as an outsider and in-law as the
> family members rallied and came together to make plans. My role, both as parent and in-law,
> became challenged and I no longer felt I was the dutiful daughter (in-law) or good sister (in-law),
> but instead I became a challenger and part of a power struggle. Work for me became a safe place,
> where I was an insider and my family transgressions became a place where I wandered in the
> borderlands.

Journal Extract September 2017

> On Thursday night when they came out for supper, they brought [Son #1]. [Sister in law]
> laid it on thick about how important it will be for Grandpa to have the kids to kick a ball
> with or do puzzles…that will be his way of doing therapy. She was trying to tell me how

important it was to them that the kids keep on going there and for grandma and grandpa to babysit them. [my husband] and I have however, made up our minds, that they are going to go to daycare, even though it is costing me an arm and a leg. I pay for the child care out of my wages and [my husband] pays for the rest of the bills out of his wages. There won't be much left, maybe not even enough for groceries by the time I have paid child care!

It is funny because grandma won't come out and ask me directly – she won't say directly to me that she wants to watch the kids…I was thinking about this the other day. Why won't she? Is it a power play that she doesn't want to seem to be asking me for anything – after all, I often feel the lowest on the family totem pole. I will never forgive myself for the day [father in law] had his stroke and [my husband] was at his parents with the kids. [mother in law] wouldn't leave to go with him, she didn't leave until about 2pm…he was alone for 6 hours in the emergency room in GF [city approximately 1.5 hours away]. Was it because she had the children and didn't want to ask me to come home from work? Was it because she didn't understand what was going on? I am not sure. So many things swirl around in my brain about that day.

When [mother in law] kind of asked me about having the children, she professed it by saying how strong [father in law]'s mind is and how his mind was stronger than the average person's. I think she was trying to get at the fact that his mental capabilities would impact his physical abilities and therefore, he will "beat this" (in the sense that he will work hard so he/they can watch the children).

The children have been somewhat of a battleground this weekend. [my husband] was gone to a friend's wedding in NY. Grandma and [Sister in law] told me (rather than

asked) that they would take [Daughter #2] to Fargo and keep her till Monday and then drive up to meet [my husband] at the airport. I said no. They repeated what they wanted to do, and I repeated "no". They waited for me to justify my answer. Why should I have to justify why I want to keep my children? Even though [my husband] is gone, it doesn't mean I can't "manage."

[Sister in law] also asked my plans this weekend and I told her "I'm not making plans this weekend, we are going minute by minute and will do what we feel." I told her that at some point I would go to Fargo so Gpa could see the kids. She kind of told me to go on Sunday, so Justine could ride back with me so she could stay down there on her day off. I said that if we went Sunday, it would be early so we could ride back at nap time. Turns out, we went Saturday afternoon to see him.

[Sister in law] called on Sunday morning to make sure we had got back OK (it was 10pm when we got back). She told me to take the kids to the tractor pedal pull at 2pm and that Justine would help. I reiterated to her that I wasn't making plans this weekend and if we wanted to go, we would. She made strong suggestions that it would be fun for Charlotte and [Son #1] etc., etc. We didn't go.

While we were down in Fargo, I told [father in law] that the kids were going to daycare for the rest of the year, although I prefaced it as "till we get over the next few humps" hoping that would save his feelings…but it didn't. I felt like the wicked witch of the west as his eyes filled with tears and said "well, I guess we have been fired then". I know they will try and lay it on thick to [my husband]. I have warned him.

Through all of this, I have felt incredibly stressed, and I think, judging by the fit of my clothes, I have lost weight. It has been so stressful but now I am starting to feel a little

better. I am starting to feel a little more in control of my family…I feel I have regained my children and it feels great. It has been hard and will still be hard, I know that. But I think I am done being "nice" and letting my extended family control decisions but more the "times and places" my family does things. I am the mom…they are my children. It is not that I am not appreciative for all the help and support my extended family gives me, I am. Life would be very difficult without them…but I feel it is their role to support my family, not to lead it.

It was during this family readjustment that I sought "self-reclamation" (Belenky, 1986, 1987). At this point, I had the opportunity to become a border crosser by challenging the wishes of my extended family. Belenky (1997) acknowledges this process as "moving] outside the given" (p. 135) while "let[ing] the inside out and the outside in" (p. 153). Utilizing Belenky's notion of constructed knowledge, I sought to become a whole female: a daughter, friend, mother, lover, thinker and caregiver.

Community Roles and Relationships: The Church

Throughout the 20 interviews different roles were taken in the community, including roles within the churches. Excerpts from the participants can be seen below:

Janet B: I spend a lot of my time doing, church activities, doing things that church, you know, social. We probably had more of a social life when we were younger.

MC (Male teacher): In [home school /community], I have had and still hold multiple roles: City council, school board member, church council. I am currently on the airport authority as a city council rep. I don't know what else there is.

Micheala U: I have been involved when the boys were in daycare, I was on the daycare board. I have been on the church council. I go to all the actives that are sponsored. When

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the kids were younger we would go to all the kids activities and you know there aren't so many activities for my kids anymore. You know you get out and about and support the local stores and movie theatre. I am not on any boards, or groups or anything like that.

Nearly all of the participants commented on how they had been or still are active in their churches. As an outsider, the commitment people have to their church has astounded me. In the rural community where I live, the population is roughly 1,200 and yet there are 11 churches. I recall one of the first moments I stepped into the public sphere, I was greeted by local community members and almost immediately the question asked was "which church are you going to belong to?" Throughout the process of the semi-structured interviews and conversations, I delved into this topic a little more.

Because rural female teachers are also community members, often times they find themselves at the intersect of female teacher and "other" (church goer for example.) These two sections of self can often overlap, as Janet articulates in the following interview:

Janet: erm, I think some of, like if you grow, religiously, you tend to sneak in little things here and there, especially when you have to teach religion as part of the social studies curriculum, some of that comes out and you tend to teach them what causes conflict. You know, war, that happens in other countries, is, a lot of conflict and can't accept each other. Some of your experiences of working with other people....You tend to bring out the lessons you have learned to the students...whether they take it to heart or not I don't know. A lot of times I feel they have to go through it themselves to learn their own lessons.

Memories and Reflections: Religious Ideology

Small town North Dakota is overwhelmingly devoted to attending church, participating in church functions and "belonging" to a church community. In fact, one of the first questions I was asked as a new person in town was which church I was going to belong to. In the town where I reside, there are 11 churches for a population of 1,200 these churches are all full on Sundays.

This is a vast difference from the UK, where I did grow up attending the local village Church of England church. I went to Sunday school and was confirmed along with my best friend. I even tried to join the church choir, although I reconsidered that choice as the difficulty in vocals increased while my ability remained amateur. I did not take part in these church activities in order to belong nor for public service; in fact, looking back, I am not quite sure why I participated in the church in these ways. There were only a small number of us who regularly attended church (a congregation of perhaps twenty people on a good day). I once asked my father why we went to church. His response to me is one I have never forgotten: He told me that, as my father, it was his job to introduce me to what he believed was the good or the right path (or opportunities), and then as I grew up, it was up to me which paths I chose, but he felt he had done his duty by exposing me to different options.

In talking about church and/or Sunday school, as a student I found myself shocked that not everyone attended church or that their parents did not teach them about the Bible or religious etiquette. I found other students to be different from me. As I grew older though, I realized I was the one who was different by going to church, and after confirmation, my attendance gradually declined. I cannot ascribe this lack of attendance to wanting to be "included" in the in-crowd; I believe I just lost interest. After a string of fairly dull vicars, we had finally found one who could relate to children and young adults. However, after his term at our church was concluded, I was

at an age when it was difficult for dull vicars to gain my interest, so I stopped going to church apart from attending on the obligatory holidays.

As a student, I always attended a Church of England school where we prayed, sang hymns and celebrated religious holidays. It was not until I was a junior and senior that I truly appreciated the diversity of religious beliefs held by people. At this time in my life, I decided it would be in my best academic interests if I transferred schools to a more prestigious private school with a Quaker ethos. At first I found Quakerism difficult. As students, we were encouraged to sit in silence in the meeting room for half an hour each day (for three days a week). I was intrigued by the layout of the meeting room: All the chairs were set up in a square so that everyone was equal. No one was better than anyone else, and no one had more of a voice than anyone else.

It was not until this moment that I realized that my problem perhaps was not with the lack of charismatic vicars but might instead be with the fact that I was being preached at by a man who told me what I should and should not be doing. The songs, or hymns, we sang were written by others for others while the bible was chanted (or recited). It did not allow my own voice to be free and receive guidance from someone who would help me through the choices a teen has to make. The Quaker voice was a quiet one that had a mighty impact on my inner person. I got used to the meditation time, the self-reflection and gathering of my thoughts. I thought about my own position in problems as well as about how others could potentially see the issue. I resolved many of my own conflicts and found ways I could help others. I grew immensely over these two years, both academically and personally.

Here in the United States, I am trying to provide my children with the same opportunities my father gave to me by showing them a path they could choose to take. However, I feel

conflicted and this conflict comes from within as I struggle with whether or not I want my children to be a part of a "standardized religion" with its one-size-fits-all model (like my experiences in the Church of England). Although I believe in God, I do not believe in the religious aspect of church, and I feel fake taking my children there and asking them to participate in something in which I do not believe.

Last fall, my internal conflicts further grew when I was approached to teach Sunday School for my daughter's class. After considering whether I could teach something in which I did not one hundred percent believe, I agreed to do it. I agreed to teach because the church needed Sunday School teachers, and I saw it as a chance to give back to my community as well as to be a positive role model for my daughter.

Throughout this teaching experience, I found myself teaching information I did not believe wholeheartedly, but thankfully the students were in kindergarten and first grade so the questions I was asked were not too difficult. This did however raise other questions in my mind about how teachers (regardless of gender) approach material they are not comfortable teaching, such as the Big Bang Theory and evolution.

As a professional teacher, I have worked for a Brethren school and a Catholic school. Many of the challenges I faced when working at the Catholic school derived from the church as an institution. Every week, sometimes twice a week, the school would receive a call notifying us that the abortion clinic was open in Fargo, ND and that we were to pray. I found this idea to be an invasion of a woman's privacy, despite the fact that I did not know any of the women who were attending the clinic, nor did I know any of the circumstances of how they got pregnant or why they wanted a termination. The teachers diligently followed procedure, but I was uncomfortable with the lack of knowledge of each circumstance that did not seem to deter people

from asking a woman to bear a child and raise it or give it away. I felt ill-equipped to tangle with such religious-state politics, or perhaps I was more fearful of being perceived as different. I know that North Dakota is a conservative state that has banned abortion; my problem lies in the fact that institutions (whether they are political or religious) can determine whether I can take contraception as part of my health insurance or whether I have the right to terminate a pregnancy.

Despite these negative feelings toward the politics of the Catholic Church, I had the opportunity to watch many female teachers care for the students who were in their care during my time at the Catholic school. Most of the teachers had families themselves but had sacrificed the higher public school wages to follow their religious ideology and serve their church's school. Many of the students attending this school were from foster homes or were in adoptive homes. Their home lives prior to moving to this school had been less-than- ideal, and many students had been physically, emotionally or even sexually abused. Despite some of the difficulties associated with the students' personal histories, the teachers taught them important lessons about being a member of the local and global community, and this gave many students hope who may otherwise not have had it. There was one particular teacher who stood out: Each student could not wait to reach middle school and be in her class because she was authentic and real. She would answer questions in an honest way and supported students both in school and in their personal pursuits. This teacher was looked up to by students, colleagues and teachers alike. She cared for the school, followed her religious beliefs carefully and was a caregiver to all who crossed her path.

Working for the Brethren school, I found myself being "othered" as many of the Brethren feel in the community. The Brethren are a religious community, although some community

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members refer to them as a cult. They ask women to wear skirts and, if you are in the religious community, women must have their hair long and wear modest clothing. Men must be clean-shaven and dressed in dress pants and collared shirts at all times. They refuse access to TV, radio and the Internet. Their life is simple and, to some extent, refreshing. The women are homemakers and raise the multitude of children and are, for the most part, fabulous cooks and bakers. The men in the family are entrepreneurs and hold the financial responsibilities of the household.

I can see that the Brethren community are considered to be different from mainstream society. They are framed by the powerful and dominant voices in the social network as being different, as not belonging to the rural communities they inhabit. There seems to be a lack of understanding of the social practices and a need for creating social networks between what the Brethren refer to as "worldly" people and people who do not belong. Between the Brethren and the eleven (or more) denominations available in the area, the worldly people seem to feel more privileged, but both groups in society use language to disassociate with each other.

In the rural communities in North Dakota, the religious calendar dominates the school calendar, where Wednesday nights are "free" nights with no sports or other practices in order to allow for religious groups to form and hold meetings. Most youth are involved with the church in some way, shape, or form and, in addition to attending summer camps for sports or music, many older students will also attend a mission camp to help improve living conditions for lower-socioeconomic communities. This idea, although y noble in its mission to provide assistance to others, also asserts a position of privilege. This privilege operates in a group of teenagers who come from a middle class area (despite not all the teens being middle class) and show others (mostly people on Native American reservations) how to build their communities or live.

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Without my internal cynicism towards do-gooders rearing its ugly head, the church provides both young and old alike the opportunity and create a common mini-community. Within this mini-community, identities are forged and ways of life are protected and followed. The idea of caring for each other is transmitted through the Bible and Biblical stories of how to live life and love thy neighbor. However, should a person in the community choose not to belong to a church, they are in some ways subtly excluded from some functions in the community. Religion adds one more layer to the invisible divide of insider and outsider that must be overcome to transition between this dichotomy.

The Voices of the Past

As stated earlier, time is a central part of changes in identity and to places. Referring again to the process of longshore drift in which the waves slowly erode cliff materials and deposit them further down the shore, time acts in the same way as the waves by slowly shifting pieces of the self. This shifting occurs as the self experiences new situations, experiences and builds or changes relationships with others. As Keagan (1982) suggests, this is a layering of oneself.

Time not only acts as an opportunity for self-growth and reflection, it also can act as a borderland where voices frequently visit, reminiscing about better times and better places (Massey, 1995) or about romanticized versions of reality (Pini & Mills, 2015; Schulte, 2016; Tieken, 2014,). As Corbett (2016) suggests, places are active, social and they create an interwoven history. In this way, as I coded the semi-structured interviews I noticed a distinct difference between how the participants shared their experiences in rural places.

Rural female teachers, who had many years of experience of teaching but had not necessarily been living in the same rural community, shared their stories by referring to the old

days or how things "used" to be. They talk of change in values and in ways of doing, particularly in the classroom. The changes they identified in the community often involved deterioration.

> **MC**: I remember 20-30 years ago, walking into a first grade room (can I swear?) It was so damn busy and I was in there for a meeting, I spent the entire first half hour looking at the shit hanging from the ceiling...now if that is distracting an adult who is in there for a meeting, what's that doing to a 6 year old who has an attention span of...who can't focus as well. Is that advantageous or disadvantageous?

> **TW**: When we started teaching there's a tremendous loyalty to your school to do your job the best you possibly can. I don't see that as much. I see people walk out, and you know damn well they're not ready for the next day and they're not ... They're punting a lot. I think there's a lot of punting going on. That's just my opinion of course. I mean, not that you can use that, but when I was younger, you worked all weekend. My kids would play around me when I corrected all weekend. I'd sit down on the floor and that's what you did. You took your job home to do. Teaching is one of those things. I think that's the reason people don't go into it like they used to. They see the workload and it's huge.

> **JB**: I remember when [my son] did very well at Boys State, he got letters from some of the community people congratulating him. They tend to be proud of each other. I notice some of the students are very proud of their school. You know they develop a school pride, and I hope that they still remain, although I feel like with what we have gone through, some of it is lost. I don't know about school pride, but I know that communities....maybe not the support...but you kind of feel that with this community, some of the support may be lost because their hearts are broken a little bit. It isn't like the good old days but change happens and hopefully it will be for the better.

JB: I did like being left alone but I see that did not advance myself or to make the advancements, or the changes that are happening along the way.

Here Janet talks about "being left alone" (which is similar to the island living metaphor discussed earlier). By being left alone, Janet reflects that she did not make advancements or stay abreast of changes in education. Her teaching remained static. To put this statement into context, it can be assumed that Janet feels that had she had support and more open professional relationships with her colleagues, she feels she may have been a more up-to-date teacher. Taking this idea one step further, if we view the classroom in isolation, we can view a rural community in isolation (separated from the larger urban communities where progress and change in socio-cultural norms are first). In this sense, when isolated from cultural progress the values of rural community living will remain static.

Karis talks about this change in the rural community in which I live:

Karis H: ….it takes 3 generations for a new idea to take root and actually not be a new idea any more and it be accepted in a community and especially in a rural community. If you think about 3 generations, it is actually a lot of years! So when we start looking at the age of our leaders who are in place right now, and when you lack that younger voice, a lot of those things that they want to come back to a rural community, or those quality of life issues we talk about that don't make you any money, and some of those older ones look back and think "nah, we don't need that....it was fine for us...ah it was good enough for us" - it just isn't any more and I think that there are a lot of issues going on...and we are losing....and the scary thing right now....when you look at ND, rural communities are really on the back burner.....All of the money is getting funneled to the bigger cities such as GF, Fargo, Bismarck, Minot...the voice is slowly starting to dwindle for the smaller

communities. So how are you going to get those pieces to continue to maintain our infrastructure that is...like our pools...I mean we just don't have community centers now - they are nonexistent...and when it comes to fitness centers and those kind of things.

Time, change and how they shape our experiences and memories can act as an opportunity for rural female teachers to remember "the good old days" or the way things were, which can act as a gatekeeper for progress in both the classroom and the community. As such, there is also the opportunity for people at the intersect of professional and younger to not relate to those who have well-established teaching skills or deep roots within the community.

In contrast to the more veteran rural female teachers, the younger teachers often talked about the future and how they hoped things would be, both in the school system and in the community.

> **AP**: I have already stopped coaching basketball, because of that, because I know that I have things coming up in the future and I don't even want to be pregnant during basketball season…..because you say yes to the job and then the next minute you are going to be coaching basketball and you are going to be doing this and that and then you all of a sudden have 5 other roles on your plate and it is just because the veteran teachers have all done it and they don't want to do it any more and it's time to move onto the next....and I do agree that younger people would have more creative ideas, are more willing to try new things but it is just a lot when there is only two young teachers and 8 teachers who could retire in the next 5 years and pretty soon all of these roles are thrown on two teachers and it's easy to think that I don't want to be here, "I just don't want to be responsible for all this" so I think if there is some way to evenly distribute - find out what a teachers interests are, and find out… and say every teacher do one additional thing

outside of school, whether it be NHS [National Honor Society] or coaching of a sport. I just don't think it is fair that the young people should be thrown into everything. I mean English is kind of hard because I think young female English teachers are expected to be organized, good with drama...so help out with the play and be good writers, so be involved with the year book or newspaper, depending on how big the school is.

HD: I just think it's one of those areas that is so good for students to learn about and do, 'cause it's life skills, so even if they don't go on to more schooling, it's stuff that will pertain to everybody's life, and my husband had worked with a gentleman that was 25 and excited he could brown hamburger, and I thought, oh, my goodness, students need to learn about these things before they're 25, so that's the reason why I went back, and honestly, it's the only subject I would probably want to teach.

Hannah clearly demonstrates how time and experience have an impact on our lives as she feels that not being able to brown hamburger until the age of 25 is unacceptable. This leads me to question who has browned this young man's hamburger until now and how the role of the rural female teacher, whether affiliated with the elementary school or high school, still maintains that image of "mother-teacher." Here, it can be seen that Hannah wants to teach this young man a specific skill to enable him to be able to live on his own. At the intersect of mother and professional, does Hannah find herself with the opportunity to become a border crosser by wanting to teach this young man a skill that was once taught at home? However, does Hannah herself identify this as an opportunity to cross borders, or is it an opportunity that has risen in my mind in hindsight only following much reflection? It is at this point that I find the lines between the home and school blurry—not only for this situation but also in looking forward to the role of

education in society today and to the apparently dwindling role of the home in the lives of young

people in rural communities

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Beyond the Map: Understanding the Unseen and Unheard Boundaries

My initial research question about which border crossings do rural female teachers encounter can be pondered rather than answered. Referring back to the analogy of the quilt, the experiences that the participants shared indicate that rural female teachers' experiences and identities can form a block-shaped quilt.

The construction of insider and outsider is salient because, as the participants find themselves experiencing a sense of fragmented identity, an instability where different intersects of Self (Powell 1996) are created due to society's dominant discourse. As I reexamined each female teacher's story, I noticed how every teacher spoke about the idea of fitting or not fitting, belonging or not belonging or trying to be one thing or the other (wife, teacher etc.). Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who believe that "the human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined" (p. 6) would characterize this idea of being an insider or an outsider as a container metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson suggest:

> We are physical beings, bounded and set off from the rest of the world by the surface of our skins, and we experience the rest of the world as outside us. Each of us is a container, with a bounding surface and an in-out orientation (p. 29)

Like a container, we have an inside and an outside which "fit" ideologies and social constructs of ourselves, but we find that there is a dividing line between inside and outside. In this same sense Powell (1996) refers to Zora Neale Hurston's reflections on her sense of Self. During her narrative, she recounts what it felt like the day she became black.

> I remember the very day that I became colored. Up to my thirteenth year I lived in the little Negro town of Eatonville, Florida…[Then] I was sent to school in Jacksonville. I

left Eatonville, the town of oleanders, as Zora. When I disembarked from the river-boat at Jacksonville she was no more…I was now a little colored girl. (p. 1492)

What may be constructed externally however may eventually become internal or put inside the container as a fragmented identity is not static; the sense of Self changes with social identity. Like Zoras' racial identity was "changed" or, at this moment in time, she found herself at the intersect of her racial and gendered sense of self. While this sense of self may have been thrust against Zora, the change in her identity came from her stepping into a new place. She stepped out of her container and became othered, or an outsider as she remembers being "that colored girl."

It is not only those who are victims of multiple systems of oppression who experience intersectional sense of Self, but all individuals experience a fragmented sense of Self. This however is more salient in rural communities where the lens of insider and outsider acts more as a magnifying glass. As Powell (1996) suggests "The significance of each of these fragmented "selves" for one's sense of identity shifts as a result of both external and internal stimulus and experience…[the] sense of identity [is] depend[ent] on environment (p. 1496). Even where there is no natural physical boundary that can be viewed as defining a container, there is a false sense of unity between places as we impose boundaries – marking off territory so that it has an inside and a bounding surface-whether a wall, a fence, or an abstract line or plane (p. 29).

Just as choice of fabric, color, pattern and shape contributes to the whole quilt, it becomes evident that these females have faced border crossings between "strings and empty spaces" (Benstock, 1991, p. 13). As we examine the zig-zag motion of the stiches or scars, it is important to recognize that each stitch offers both a forward and a backward motion. Like a zig-zag stitch, rural female teachers cross and retreat again from the borderlands. However, unlike a stitch, the

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starting and ending positions of the border crossings are not so well defined. In fact, they can be quite ambiguous and unclearly cut. As the stitch returns, there are often two pieces of thread within a certain proximity of each other. This, like a border crosser, can represent the individual being both a border crosser and a non-border crosser. As a result, it is difficult to construction definitions of border crossings, as each individual, or each square on a quilt, identifies the border crossing and the borderland themselves.

Unlike The Map which gives a "definite" place in which institutions are marked and labeled, the borderlands rural female teachers emerge into or feel submerged in are often an imaginary space, a feeling of discomfort or a "juggling" where the rural female teacher finds herself in the "empty spaces" between the string (Benstock, 1991).

Defined Border Crossings

The unique social, historical, economic, linguistic, cultural histories and experiences of the participants complicate the understanding of border crossings. For example, my own life history (being from England and having grown up with different and similar experiences) created its own defined border crossing when I commenced my journey as an immigrant. My family has never moved more than 15 miles from the area to which our historical roots can be traced, and yet I chose to marry a non-English person and move to a country that is not England. Likewise, I am the only one in my family to pursue an advanced degree or to have a large family (5 children). These axes create border crossings as my family in England finds it difficult to understand and accept each of these individual facets of me, let alone compile them into one person. Jenny K made a stand against the good girl border crossing when she stood up to administration and shared her thoughts on child advocacy for a particular student. Meris

challenged social notions that teachers are pillars in their own communities by teaching outside of her community and made a bid to be known as a tree farmer within her community.

These highly different border crossings once again indicate that while the diversity wheels give us a foundation as to how time, relationships and places have informed the participants (and my own) identities, such containers do not share the multifaceted nature of identity. From a container, it is difficult to see the influence of generation to generation expectations, or the social expectations imposed on individuals who live within these rural communities. Therefore, in recognizing the multiple layers of a rural females identity, one must also recognize the multiple crossing made over time, as rural females, both individually, and together renegotiate and remap the social expectations of rural female identity.

New identity borders require holes being kicked into the old boundaries to enable rural females to "move beyond limits" (Hooks, 1994, p. 201) but this time could be messy, unpredictable and require the border crosser to be able to straddle the current and future border zones, which causes a feeling of displacement, discontentment and retaining courage. As (1987, 1999) states:

> Every Increment of consciousness, every step forward is a traversing, a crossing. I am again an alien in new territory. And again, and again. But if I escape conscious awareness, escape "knowing," I won't be moving. Knowledge makes me more aware, it makes me more conscious. Knowing is painful because after "it" happens I can't stay in the same place and be comfortable. I am no longer the same person I was before. (p. 70)

The way of knowing and moving forward describes above is retisent of how Susie S and Holly discussed the more veteran rural female teachers. They indicated there was a discomfort in being "current" in practice, in trying new things, in being alone in this place. As these younger

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and new to education teachers navigate these borderlands they also found themselves growing and changing; adapting to their environment on a both a professional and personal level as they try to establish their identities.

The Intersect of Fitting and Not Fitting

The coordinates of the self cannot be graphed or plotted....Self is both culturally constituted and composed of all that culture would erase—rather like a fishnet, composed both of strings and empty spaces between the fibers. Or a skein of tangled yarn that cannot successfully be untangled— where knots and frayed elements remain (Shari Benstock, 1991, p. 13).

When faced with the possibility of a border crossing, the participants often found themselves at a proverbial fork in the road where the intersects of their identities were questioned internally and perhaps externally in some cases.. At these times, the participants had to choose whether to be seen to exaggerate one or more components of their identity in order to make it impossible to fit into the neat boxes rural communities constructed for them as the school ma'm, the dutiful daughter or simply a docile body.

The transition of crossing a border is seen as a difficult choice, but the participants often spoke either with nostalgia or with pride that they defy the social expectation of compliance and that they have a secret power to yield at times when they are faced with the impossible.

Faced with continual choices throughout their life experiences and years in the classroom which were not necessarily black-and-white, all-or-nothing or either/or decisions, the participants at times chose to cross the border and at times they chose not to. Just because a participants once transcends a boarder does not make them a perpetual border crosser. The imperfect zig-zag motion can be likened to the waves of advancing and retreating during the process of longshore drift. Munro (1998b) calls this drifting back and forth a "never-ending dance" where "resistance

is not an 'act' but a movement, a continual displacement of others' attempts to name our realities" (p. 125).

Consequently, the voices that emerged were that of comfort and discomfort, of fitting and not fitting and by listening to the participants I was able to identify with many of their experiences. For me, I feel that I "fit" in more in the rural community than I had anticipated, both ideologically and within the built environment—the physical space, because I share the experience of not fitting at different times of my life and of my career.

This shared experienced of not fitting, of crossing borders helped me understand that as a rural female teacher, the choices I make are often the choices others have had to make before me, at the same time as me and in situations which are parallel to mine. As a rural female, these decisions come to the forefront of my stream of consciousness when faced with different intersections of identities. However, what is different for me compared to my participants is that I feel that the borderlands into which I venture are more forward, more progressive (in terms of teaching techniques, religious ideology as well as acceptance and tolerance) than others have experienced at this point, partly because rurality is or can be seen as a container, or as Corbett (2016, p. 142) suggests, a "static container for historical analysis and social action." Thus, the participants who have historical roots or a longer history in rural communities tend to be more accepting of their current way of life and less open to the diversity offered in other cultures or even in other rural communities.

This sense of wholeness that people who have historical roots, or are more accepting of the cultural practices, are either able to project multiple, inconsistent representations of the Self that shift rapidly, depending on the social context they find themselves in. Ewing (stated in Powell 1996)

[p]eople construct a series of self-representations that are based on selected cultural concepts of persons and selected 'chains' of personal memories. Each self-concept is experienced as whole and continuous, with its own history and memories that emerge in a specific context. (p. 1496)

An individual's sense of wholeness is challenged by an onlookers ability to integrate and synthesize the various intersects of Self. In applying this to rural communities, where the populations are small and under the magnifying glass, there appears to be a dichotomy of people; those who present a wholeness and those who are marginalized or othered because of their sense of the fragmented Self. Thus, these marginalized individuals become border crossers.

In light of this, perhaps it is more appropriate to show women as fragmented, rather than whole, but scared from prior acts of border crossing.

Crossing over the Tracks

In listening to my own voice and the polyphonic voices of others, there appear to be some instances where border crossing are intentional and do not endlessly weave back and forth as suggested above by Munro (1998b). Using the metaphor of crossing over the (train) tracks (a common metaphor for changing from a wealthy area of a community to a more ghetto-like or lower socio-economic area in a rural community), there are times where the participants declare that they "don't care" how they are perceived or will deliberately use their voices to create influence in the rural community (such as Micheala U using her polyphonic voice to not refer new parents to certain daycares because the daycare provider had been opposed to decisions made by the school and teacher). Norquay (1999) contends, "rebellion is a place to visit, but not a place for a good girl to remain" (p. 421). By voicing resistance and rebellion to the "good girl" or "school ma'm" image, the teacher finds themselves authoring a new intersect of rural female

teacher, outsider (outside the prescribed socially accepted identity for female teachers) and draws attention to themselves, allowing the community to "know your business" and know your opinions, which is likely to create new borderlands of either insider or outsider, depending on the community member(s) reflecting upon the conversation.

These "disruptions" (Butler, 1996) create sites of "error, confusion and trouble" (p. 437) and can rupture an individual's identity not only in how they see themselves but in how others see them too.

The crossing of the tracks, or disruption, occurred for Hannah at the intersect of family and teacher. In reference to the conversation one rural female teacher had about how conflicted she felt about school imposing on family life. In this instance, the child was bringing hours of homework home which was effecting his social and emotional wellbeing. In this instance, the rural female teacher had to assume her role as a mother in school and address another teacher regarding the concerns she had for her son. In showing her resistance to the classroom teacher and to her policies and practices, the mom was going against what every female teacher strives to be – the 'good teacher.' Although this form of resistance is socially acceptable, it guaranteed public discourse in which others felt the need to use their voices and opinions, which impacted the relationships of colleagues as people deemed the mom to be either right (insider) or wrong (outsider) in her need to address the teacher.

Relationships between rural female teachers can be ambiguous at best. While expressing my own voice and reflecting upon The Map, I felt my own relationship with another rural female teacher come into question. At the intersect of friendship, colleague and community member, I found myself internally questioning the motives and rights of Meris who had recently given up her career as a rural female teacher. These questions remained within me, but I felt myself

defining a border crossing of "discomfort" with her decision. At the same time, she herself was "crossing the tracks" into new territories while being a stay-home person (whose children were old enough to be in grade school). At the same time as this happened, my own circumstances changed as my family grew and Meris has externally expressed discontent that I decided to return to work rather than stay at home with my growing family.

This relationship had been built over the past decade but both of us chose to use our life events at this point in time as the opportunity for a border crossing. As we became more distant, I reflected on the importance of self-need and self-respect. For Meris, she felt she needed to "give up" her profession to deal with her father's death (and was financially stable due to her husband's job and the inheritance her father had left her). For me, I chose to go back to work because the thought of isolation on the edge of a rural community and of being solely reliant upon my husband for social contact and financial matters made me feel as if the person I am now would be eroded further as I tried to participate in the community in order to gain social interaction. I felt that my ideals would change and that I would become reliant. In this sense then, the act and opportunity to cross into another borderland can be seen as something that needs to be developed over time rather than as a whimsical response. It can be both a choice made from within but also an acceptance of one's current relationships. It can be out of a desire to define one's own borders, to make the edges of your square on the quilt or to position yourself inside your own container—your own space on The Map.

Border Crossings: The Place and the Person

The experiences of the participants differed based on their variations found within the diversity wheel. The voice of each participant created an identity that was unique to their social, cultural and historical past and present. Holly was not a mother but a younger participant who

was single and had been raised in a larger urban area. She was a border crosser because she had moved into the rural community to teach without having historical rootedness, nor did she share the intersect of family and professional with many others within the district she worked. Anna C can be identified as a border crosser as she finds herself having a career, being a single parent, looking to her future by pursuing a master's degree in education but is tied to the historical and family aspects of belonging to a rural community. Jules K is a positioned outsider as her marital relationship is unconventional, as was the level of care she provided to her father in his last year while maintaining her identity as a teacher. In addition, Jules K also identified insider and outsider paradigms within the school institution. For me, I feel as though I both intentionally and unintentionally zig-zag through the socially constructed expectations of rural female (teachers) in the way I teach, in how I have adapted my language to fit the "twang" and words of the rural community in which I live and in how I have both preserved my own family values while accepting and assimilating into those of my extended family.

The places on The Map have provided me with internal conflicts as they challenged my ways of doing and knowing, but they have also provided me with support and care just as the mother teacher does for her students. As I reflect on the journey on which this research paper has taken me, I now understand that my experiences as an immigrant and subsequent identity shifts (to mom, in law, wife and rural female teacher) are a layering process, where the push and pull of cultural conflicts are also experienced by other rural female teachers. In the examination of my own voice, I recognize that it is the others (people in the community) who have witnessed my act as a border crosser (as I assimilate into the community) and it is this knowledge that makes me feel different, an outsider. As an outsider, I feel I am less able to use my voice, to be a

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"rebel" or to dismiss the notion of the docile female teacher, as I feel it will increase awareness of my lack of historical rootedness in this community.

Throughout the study, I reported my frustration and anger at the place where I live, at the assigned gender roles men and women take on as well as at all the other roles I juggle as mom and rural school teacher. As I come to the illumination stage in the heuristic inquiry, I now feel more at ease with the place I live. I feel more in control of the border crossing I make, and ensure, that they are intentional. The scars on my face are still there, but they are proof of my experiences and my prior border crossings.

Relationships and Border Crossers

It has become evident to me that *"Our sense of self is socially constructed and exists in relationship to other people"* (Carey & Russell, 2003, p. 14). It is these relationships that provide the acts and opportunities to become border crossers. As a rural female teacher, the relationships created are like a web and blur the lines of home and school, family and students, community and school, church and home, home and church. These relationships are often the site of internal turmoil for the self as our ways of knowing become socially constructed (Belenky) or, as Kegan (1982) suggests, as another layer of experience builds upon the emergence of the self.

The internal conflict or way of knowing does not always become a voice and the struggle remains internal. At other times, rural female teachers find themselves sharing their voice and challenging the voice of the "mother daughter" and the docile body, which presents the teacher with the opportunity to become a border crosser. Many of these acts of border crossing are temporary but remain with us as a scar on the face of our quilt.

As our lives move through time, change occurs in us whether unconscious or conscious. Relationships change as people move in and out of places and people's lives. In this way, the

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identity of the rural female teacher also changes, just as the East Yorkshire coastline being eroded and replenished through the process of longshore drift. However, with each lapping wave that shifts the clay silts from one place to another comes the remembrance of another time, another place and other people. The more time that goes by, the more fondly these things are remembered and nostalgic ways of doing become tied to history. In rural places, this history becomes a way of life and a way to both include and exclude others. It is during this inclusion and exclusion that rural female teachers find themselves becoming temporary border crossers.

The very act of trying to define a border crossing is thus a difficult task, as border crossings are place dependent (as James C said, each place has its own personality), and within each place, the people, the selves have their own social, economic and historical pasts and presents which shape what a border crossing may look like. This is similar to how being a "good teacher" differs between participants, as in the process of defining a good teacher for each of the participants, the teacher chose to ignore and accept certain aspects of what being a good rural female teacher means to them. In the same sense, these females can choose to accept or ignore all or part of their encountered opportunities for border crossings during different intersects of their lives, and as such, it is also recognized that rarely is the whole self transitioned to a new borderland.

In each instance, the opportunities for border crossings are revealed by each person in each different situation. Border crossing is wrapped in feeling, in relationships with others and is found at different intersects of time and places as we grow and are eroded and as we make choices and reevaluate them. Straight lines are infrequently found but occasionally a person may choose to cross over the tracks, but more usually border crossings occur quietly in a steady zig-

zag, stitch or wave-like motion that provides messy spaces between people as they dance the dance of life.

Recommendations for Practice

In order to effectively use the findings from this study in practice, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Place-based learning: Due to the nature that each community is unique, but also shares similar characteristics and problems with each other, it is important for students and adults to learn about how rural communities can become sustainable (in terms of new ideas flowing in, attracting young people back to the community, economic and social offerings) (Andresen, Dallapiazza and Calvert 2006, Theobald 2007, Bauch 2001, Shamah and MacTavish 2009)

- To address the recruitment and retention problems of rural schooling: Schools should look at being innovative with their leadership (Heslings, 2013, Acker, 1995; Zembylas, 2003) and their schedules. Many schools currently maintain the same schedule each day (due to the state requirements). However, should this be changed, schools could allow for more innovative practice, allowing new teachers additional time during the day to create deliberate teaching practices / resources or build meaningful relationships with colleagues. This would also allow for veteran teachers to engage in professional development opportunities. (Gallay, Marckini-Polk, Schroeder, and Flanagan, 2016, Halsey, 2005, White et al., 2011, Christianaskis, 2008, Monk, 2007, cited in White, 2016

- Rural communities should establish a "new to the area teacher" mentor program, assisting teachers with assimilation into the roles and responsibilities of rural

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teachers. This could be part of the duties of university outreach / extension services that are already established in rural areas, or it could be a new branch of outreach within the teaching and learning fields. (Johnson, Thompson and Naugle, 2009, Kelchtermans 1996, Azano and Stewart 2015)

- Teacher preparation programs could ensure students who are geographically mobile are exposed to rural schools during the student teaching phase of the preparation. (Halsey, 2005, Christianaskis, 2008, Roberts 2005, Kardos and Johnson 2007, Webb 2005, Trinidad, Shaplin, Ledger, and Broadley 2014, White & Kline 2012, TERRAnova, Beutel, Adie and Hudson 2011)

- Communities could offer financial incentives for teachers to act as community leaders and bridge the dichotomy between students and older community members. This would be especially beneficial for teachers who are living away from their family members (TERRAnova, White et al 2011, Autti and Hyry-Beihammer, 2014)

- Rural communities could empower change by facilitating rural leadership programs such as *Annie's Project* that is offered to farm women to help them understand the mechanics and operations of farming incase their spouse becomes unable to run the operation.

- In the home, families can ensure children are asked to do a variety of tasks, including those that have been traditionally done by females.

Future Research

Future research opportunities exist by conducting more of a comparative study with women in the UK and the USA and analyzing whether the sense of rural place remains the same in both countries as well as whether teachers identify similar border crossings.

Alternatively, conducting a study that included participants who are more racially and socioeconomically diverse would present a wider range of differences on the diversity wheel and perhaps in their border crossing experiences. As of this current study, all the women were Caucasian and middle class, although the age range spanned from 24-65.

Changing the sample population could involve distinguishing between elementary and high school experiences to see whether there are correlations between border crossing experiences, especially since elementary teachers tend to be female and there is more of a balanced gender mix at the high school level.

In a similar vein, the experiences of teachers who were new to the field of teaching could be compared and contrasted to those who were considered to be veteran teachers with a consideration of place (within the school and the community).

In the words of Khan (2006), conducting further research on these topics would provide another perspective or layer of understanding, creating a multifaceted way of thinking of the border crossings of rural female teachers.

Final Reflections

For me, this study has given me the opportunity to reflect upon the borderlands that exist in my life and how I have danced across the border crossings, both intentionally and unintentionally. While constructing my own definitions of the acts of border crossing, I have

been able to reflect on my journey as a rural female in the UK and ND and on the transitional journey that immigrating had on my identity.

At the beginning of the study, I imagined that my experiences and journey were highly different from those around me and from other people who fall into similar categories in the diversity wheel. However, as I listened to the stories of the participants who agreed to be in the study and as I reflected upon my interactions with others in rural communities, I began to realize that my experiences were not too dissimilar from other rural females. This realization did not make me "an insider" in the community, but rather it positioned more rural female teachers as border crossers and outsiders.

The act of border crossing is often temporary. It is a feeling, a broken relationship, a shift in family dynamic or an emotion that is constructed out of a perceived way of knowing or correct way of doing. These border crossings are often messy and undefined in nature and are the result of a collection of streams of consciousness that result in uncertain decision making and unsureness about the path we are taking. There are, however, times when the path is clear, as making a direct crossing is necessary when one of the intersects of our identities weighs more heavily on our consciousness or when internally there is a power struggle between being the public self and the emotional self at home.

However, the frequency with which rural female teachers cross into the borderlands often depends on their historical rootedness, their sense of belonging to their rural community and their acceptance of community-constructed norms. The amount of times I cross over into the borderlands occurs more frequently than the veteran teachers in my study, partly because they, more often than not, have longevity in place, meaning that they have taught at the school a long time and that parents and other community members have come to "know" them and all the

different identities they hold. For the younger female teachers, there is a more emotional sense of self where we "cope" and "manage" ourselves as we learn the craft of what it means to be "a good teacher" but also what it means to be a mom, be a wife and live in new or different surroundings.

Throughout this journey, I have experienced many highs and lows. During my low times, I have spent great amounts of time reflecting on the meanings of relationships, on how time weathers our identities and on how we slowly change into different ways of being. There were times in this journey that I looked out at the landscape and saw barren lands where I was marginalized due to my accent or the language I have used or due to my choices to work. However, the highs have brought closer camaraderie with many of my colleagues. Some of them have mused the issues I asked them about and have come back to me, often months later, when a memory or an action triggered a new way of understanding. Together, we stand closer than we did before, with a new understanding that our border crossings may not occur in isolation.

While searching for more of an equilibrium as I come to terms with my findings and knowledge, I have come full circle in knowing that I am not isolated nor living on an island, but instead I know that others find themselves challenging the accepted norms of rural places. The challenge is creating a silent way of knowing, a silent way of dancing the zig-zag dance and navigating those spaces between us enabling me to participate in the community and feeling, at times, to be an insider while retaining my own values and ideals.

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APPENDIX. IRB APPROVAL LETTER

NDSU NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

March 16, 2016

Dr. Elizabeth Roumell
School of Education

Re: IRB Certification of Exempt Human Subjects Research:
Protocol #HE16218, "Pilot study: How is teacher identity shaped by gendered landscapes"

Co-investigator(s) and research team: Lizzie Crowston, Nathan Wood

Certification Date: 3/16/2016   Expiration Date: 3/15/2019
Study site(s): North Border School District – varied locations
Sponsor: n/a

The above referenced human subjects research project has been certified as exempt (category # 2b) in accordance with federal regulations (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 46, Protection of Human Subjects). This determination is based on the original protocol submission with revised consent (received 3/15/2016).

Please also note the following:
• If you wish to continue the research after the expiration, submit a request for recertification several weeks prior to the expiration.
• The study must be conducted as described in the approved protocol. Changes to this protocol must be approved prior to initiating, unless the changes are necessary to eliminate an immediate hazard to subjects.
• Notify the IRB promptly of any adverse events, complaints, or unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others related to this project.
• Report any significant new findings that may affect the risks and benefits to the participants and the IRB.

Research records may be subject to a random or directed audit at any time to verify compliance with IRB standard operating procedures.

Thank you for your cooperation with NDSU IRB procedures. Best wishes for a successful study.
Sincerely,

Kristy Shirley

Kristy Shirley, CIP, Research Compliance Administrator

For more information regarding IRB Office submissions and guidelines, please consult http://www.ndsu.edu/research/integrity_compliance/irb/. This Institution has an approved FederalWide Assurance with the Department of Health and Human Services: FWA00002439.

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