

*Charles Banaszewski as Brad, David Vining as Harry, in a scene from the ASU production of Finding My Place, February 2001.*

THE UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS

TEACHERS' COLLEGE  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

# SNEAKY KID AND ITS AFTERMATH

*Ethics and Intimacy in Fieldwork*

Harry F. Wolcott



A Division of  
ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD PUBLISHERS, INC.  
Walnut Creek • Lanham • New York • Oxford

AltaMira Press

A Division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

1630 North Main Street, #367

Walnut Creek, CA 94596

www.altamirapress.com

LB  
45  
W65  
2002

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

A Member of the Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group

4720 Boston Way

Lanham, MD 20706

P.O. Box 317

Oxford OX2 9RU, England

Copyright 2002 by AltaMira Press. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication data available.

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Wolcott, Harry F., 1929—

Sneaky kid and its aftermath : ethics and intimacy in fieldwork /

Harry F. Wolcott.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-7591-0311-9 (cloth : alk. paper)

ISBN 0-7591-0312-7 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Educational anthropology. 2. Dropouts—United States. I. Title.

LB45 .W65 2002

306.43—dc21

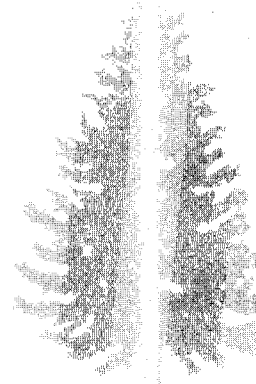
2002003797

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

∞ The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992.

The quote by Norman Cousins on pp. 165-66 is reprinted by permission of *The Saturday Review*, © 1961, General Media International, Inc.

# Contents



Foreword <i>by John Singleton</i> .....	vii
Introduction .....	ix

## **PART ONE: THE SNEAKY KID**

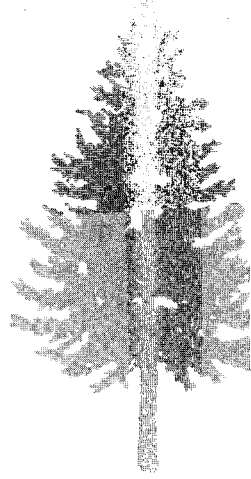
Chapter 1 Adequate Schools and Inadequate Education: The Life History of a Sneaky Kid .....	3
Chapter 2 The Brad Saga Continues .....	35
Chapter 3 The Return .....	65
Chapter 4 Out .....	77
Chapter 5 More Truth, More Consequences .....	105

## **PART TWO: WHERE DO OUR STUDIES GO?**

Chapter 6 The Rebound .....	115
Chapter 7 A Play on Words: The Brad Trilogy as Ethnodrama .....	129
Chapter 8 Drawing Lessons .....	141
Appendix A Play, "Finding My Place: The Brad Trilogy" <i>by Johnny Saldaña</i> .....	167
References and Select Bibliography .....	211
Index .....	217
Acknowledgments .....	221
About the Authors .....	222

## Chapter Four

# Out



**B**Y the time the fire was completely out, so was I. Crazy or not, there had to be some motive for the attack and arson. They were not random acts of violence against a random victim. Brad had come back seeking revenge, and the nature of our relationship needed to be adjusted accordingly. So did the time and severity of Brad's breakdown. So, too, did estimates of his emotional stability and mental age and, especially, his vulnerability to the advances of an older man. The former ranged from average ("In the normal range," stated an examining psychologist; "He could be anything he wants," stated another) to having "the mental abilities of a 10- or 12-year-old, which Harry picked up on to take advantage of the situation," according to his mother.

Brad was initially charged with attempted murder. He gave a voluntary taped interview the morning after the fire, during which he confessed to the arson and assault. But by the time a court-appointed lawyer got to him, his plea was changed to one of insanity. Meanwhile, the strategists in the district attorney's office dropped the attempted murder charge as "too hard to prove." Their job is to get convictions, and they reasoned that a murder charge wasn't going to be necessary to get a conviction for crimes already confessed.

As the defense's position unfurled, it seemed they were intent on showing that I not only forced myself on Brad, but that in so doing I had contributed to his mental breakdown, perhaps even caused it. If, to many minds, that stretched the limits of imagination, it was nonetheless quite clear—and the world needed to know—that I was to be identified as homosexual. It was necessary to identify Norman as a homosexual as well, though most of the attention was on the relationship between Brad and me. Brad's sexual orientation and prior experiences never became an issue; mine were presented to portray Brad as a youthful victim rather than a willing partner.

The crimes were committed—and the case tried—essentially against me and my property. Norman was more than simply an unwitting victim, but

there was no need to incriminate him when the relationship between Brad and me was clearly at issue. As a public school teacher, Norman's career was more at risk than my own as a university professor, as his work put him in daily contact with children. One of the few times we felt a sense of relief was when a courageous school superintendent reaffirmed her support for Norman: "If no children are involved, then this is a personal matter and does not concern us." Would that there had been more like her at the time. (Would that there were more like her today!)

This was the early 1980s, and it had not been many years since the American Psychiatric Association had formally established (by narrow vote!) that homosexuality is not a mental disorder. That was 1973, to be exact (Kirk and Kutchings 1992; Luhrmann 2000). If homosexuality is no longer viewed in most quarters today as abnormal and immoral, it is not necessarily accepted as normal even among those who congratulate themselves on their tolerance for diversity. Furthermore, the argument went, Norman and I were teachers and therefore could and should be held to higher standards of morality. What Brad had done was reprehensible, but in some quarters it was clear that we were reprehensible too, perhaps even more so. As with the early public reaction to AIDS, how many were thinking that we had gotten what we deserved?

The assistant district attorney assigned to prosecute the case—henceforth referred to here as "the prosecutor" (quite aptly, I might note)—made it clear early on that he did not approve of our lifestyle. Among "the boys" at the D.A.'s office, we learned that the case was casually referred to as "the two fag fire." (The chair of the local Right to Privacy Committee, herself an attorney, quickly put a stop to that!) This did not mean, the prosecutor assured us, that he would not work for a conviction. Indeed, in defense of his own self-righteousness, he told us:

At least I'm right up front with you. You know how I stand on this. Anyway, I don't consider this a sex case. Brad was above the age of consent. If he had any problems, he should have settled it then, not now.

In his closing remarks, the prosecutor underscored the impartiality of our justice system: "This is not a case about homosexuals. . . . They too, according to our system of law, are entitled to equal justice." If what we got was justice, then in comparable circumstances I'd opt for wisdom next time.

Trial dates were set and reset as the legal process lumbered through negotiations and differing psychiatric assessments that would eventually determine where Brad was to be sent. It took five months for the case to come to

trial. We were relieved that the court finally was convened, but I got a rude shock when I realized I was going to be the individual actually on trial. If nothing else, the defense wanted to show that *I* was responsible for what had happened. It was also a shock to learn that, as victims, neither Norman nor I would be allowed in the courtroom except when we were giving testimony. Brad's parents—father, mother, and stepfather—who, for once, had rallied on Brad's behalf, were to be treated the same: They were not privy to trial proceedings except when testifying.

The court-appointed defense counsel did not let Brad take the witness stand. Although Brad might have put forward a convincing argument for why he did what he insisted he "had to do," his ramblings were unpredictable, invariably mixing fact with fancy. He would not have fared well under cross-examination from an overzealous prosecutor.

Ostensibly, Brad was on trial as to whether he had committed the crimes for which he had been formally charged in a grand jury hearing: arson, assault, and burglary (breaking and entering). He had to be tried for these offenses because he had pleaded not guilty. Of course, he had already confessed, so there was no question of his guilt. But under the skillful tutelage of counsel, he had pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity. That shifted the point of law to whether or not he was in control of his actions, which, in courtroom jargon, was a question of whether or not he could "conform" his behavior. State law held that if his behavior was deemed anti-social, then the insanity plea would not hold up. If, however, he was also under such psychological stress that he did not know what he was doing, he could be eligible for psychiatric care in the state hospital rather than placement in the penitentiary. The trial really hinged on how Brad was to be sentenced: patient or prisoner.

Quite predictably, the psychiatrist engaged by the defense argued on behalf of the insanity plea. The prosecution sought a second opinion, either to confirm the first one (and thus skip the trial and go directly to sentencing) or to argue a different view: that although Brad did exhibit symptoms of chronic paranoid schizophrenia—an issue on which there was complete agreement—he had been demonstrating anti-social behavior throughout his life. The methodical way Brad had gone about the arson and assault, something he told the police he had been planning for a year and a half, suggested that although he was doing something he "had to do," and something he acknowledged as being in violation of the law, he was in control. He was doing something crazy, something he recognized as wrong, but he wasn't going about it in a crazy way. Brad had once said to me, "I'm not that rotten of a kid." In short, that was the question the jury was asked to decide. They decided with the prosecutor that he was.

But there was also a moral issue to be aired, something to be entered into the deliberations to cloud the proceedings without having a direct bearing on the case or outcome. Although the judge termed the misdeeds an “enormous” crime, and a case-hardened and upwardly mobile prosecutor conceded it was all “painful and tragic,” and it was further acknowledged that Brad remained a danger to society and out of control, there was a lingering notion that the victim (me) had indeed “gotten what he deserved,” not only because he was homosexual, but also because he had engaged Brad in a homosexual relationship, whether Brad was willing or not.

Homosexuality itself was tacitly on trial, something inherently wrong that could be introduced to enlist sympathy for the accused and antipathy toward the victim(s). Ubiquitous courtroom watchers offered early verdicts to that effect. Indeed, the nature of the sexual relationship, presented as unwanted, even repugnant, on behalf of the younger man, provided some justification for the revenge he had wreaked. Revenge for wrongs, whether real or imagined, is not a defense, but it does provide a motive. Brad’s defense needed that. Why not plant and nurture the idea that the homosexual relationship may have not only aggravated but triggered the mental breakdown? One of the psychiatrists quickly put that idea to rest. Paranoid schizophrenia, which was the accepted diagnosis among everyone who rendered a psychological assessment of Brad, “comes on slowly, usually with no precipitating events.” Yet the thought that I had—or might possibly have—induced it is one of those ideas that, once introduced, can never be bottled up again. What if, what if?

Brad did not take the witness stand, but he did volunteer a succinct version of his life story to a custody officer on the day he was to be arraigned, a statement later introduced into testimony:

I beat up a faggot and burned his house down. I was dropped on my head when I was little and I had a crack in my head. I went to the woods and built a house and along came this faggot and told me I was good looking like a model or movie star. Then this faggot wanted to fuck me in the rear. So I let him. Then I got mad and I beat up this faggot and burned his house down.

Brief as this statement is, it helps explain Brad’s rationale for his return and for his subsequent actions. In spite of its brevity, it also reveals a great deal of information (and misinformation) and helps explain the strategy for the defense:

- Brad confesses to the assault and arson, as he has done all along.



- He returns to a theme mentioned repeatedly during the last months at the cabin, that as a child he had been dropped on his head (“by his father,” he usually noted), and the fall had caused his mental problems.
- He had consented to the sex. Only later did Brad express misgivings about it.
- His delusions about being a model or movie star were gradually working their way backward in time to become part of a seduction. (Originally they were an element of Brad’s delusions, fantasies that did not begin until a couple of months prior to his departure.)
- Everything stays in the singular: The hostility is directed at me; Norman is not introduced into Brad’s recounting of the story.

### **Getting the Help You Need Versus Getting What You Deserve**

Reliving this part of the account only heightens my sense of sadness at the course of events and my anger at the way the trial was mishandled. But it does reveal aspects of our justice system and fundamental issues that cannot be resolved through research. They represent differences in outlook or human values, and differences in what is considered relevant evidence.

The issue to be decided in court, as the legal system defined it, was whether Brad needed to be punished or helped. These positions were reflected in resolving the case on the question of whether Brad could “conform” his behavior, an ironic criterion to apply to someone who had spent so much of his life in rebellion. Did Brad understand that what he was doing was wrong?

The fact that he had been plotting his revenge for so long, so patiently, supported the thesis that he knew what he was doing was wrong, in spite of the fact that he felt he had to do it, and knowing he would have to suffer the likely consequences. As a psychiatric issue, the question boiled down to whether he acted solely on the basis of mental defect or whether he also exhibited anti-social tendencies indicative of an underlying personality disorder. (For literature on male schizophrenia and anti-social personality disorder, see, for example, Tengström, Hodgins, and Kullgren 2001.)

That homosexual behavior itself could also be put on trial was something of an extra bonus, a dividend on the investment our society makes in maintaining a moral order through court actions. Although as victim I was not technically on trial, I discovered that I needed to protect myself against both the attorneys for the defense and prosecution: the defense because he was so intent on maligning me (thus making Brad’s actions appear “justified,” even

if wrong), the prosecutor because he was so single-mindedly focused on getting a conviction. The thought of Brad being sent to prison depressed me far more than the thought of him hustling on the streets. Brad himself recognized the physical threat of a sentence to prison: "Send me to the hospital. Otherwise they'll fuck me in the ass."

Based on somewhat conflicting assessments by two psychiatrists, the attorney I hired to protect me from both the prosecutor and the defense suggested making one last effort to forgo the trial and opt for treatment. On the basis of the two psychiatric assessments, my attorney addressed a letter to the prosecutor urging that Brad be sent to the state mental hospital, acknowledging that he was suffering from mental disease and defect and would benefit from a stay there, versus the risk of what might happen to him in prison. Under then-current sentencing standards and parole procedures, it was quite likely that he would spend even more time in the mental hospital, since his release would require psychiatric review. And he would undoubtedly receive superior treatment for his mental problems there. As my attorney reminded the district attorney:

Mr. Wolcott does want you to be aware that he is not vindictive in regard to Brad. He has no personal vendetta or personal commitment to see him sent to the state penitentiary. He wanted you to be aware that if you were to choose to follow the report of the first examining psychiatrist in stipulating that Brad was operating under a mental disease or defect, he would be supportive of that decision.

The prosecuting attorney simply could not, or would not, accept the mental defense plea. He and the psychiatrist he selected for a second opinion shared a hard-line (but not irresponsible) view that the insanity plea was overused to get people "off" for criminal behavior. He felt that Brad was fully able to conform his behavior and should serve time in prison. In his view, and in spite of general agreement about Brad's disordered mental state, he viewed Brad as a criminal case, not a mental one: Brad was crazy, yes, but he was not *that* crazy.

On the day the trial was finally to begin, my daily horoscope in the local newspaper said: "A legal matter is settled out of court." How I hoped for another phone call! But it was not to be. A trial began that dragged on for the next two and a half weeks. By the end of it, everyone was fed up with everyone else. I learned later that the jury—who, deep down, may not have had any more sympathy for me as the victim than for Brad as the accused—was shocked at the treatment I had received at the hands of the court. They

received their final instructions at 3 p.m. on a Friday afternoon and were determined to reach a verdict before returning home that evening. They rejected the insanity plea—unanimously. Brad was returned to the county jail to await sentencing. That took two more months, while more reports were written and screening materials assembled in a pre-sentencing investigation.

Brad received what seemed a harsh sentence: 20 years. But it was imposed with no minimum. Skeptics argued that he might be released after three years, less time off for the eight months he had already spent in jail. After the suspense and agony of the trial, and now fully aware of Brad's delusional state and how I had become mixed up in it, I was as distressed by the fact that he might be out in less than two and a half years as by the fact that he had been sent to the penitentiary in the first place. The one person who seemed to find any satisfaction in the outcome was the prosecutor, who summarized, "Only three words really mattered: 'Guilty, guilty, guilty.' "

### **Learning How to Be a Witness**

Failing in efforts to ward off the trial and have Brad sent to the state mental hospital, my private attorney offered advice on how to be a witness. I thought the advice not unlike what we tell students preparing to engage in fieldwork, except for the dramatic difference that field researchers are responsible for the ultimate interpretation of the information they gather, whereas witnesses serve only as informants for an explanation in a trial in which others do the interpreting. Interpretation is central to both, with the keen distinction that various interpretations are presented and argued before judge and/or jury in a trial, whereas researchers customarily offer their interpretations singly, one to a case.

In that one regard, qualitative researchers might benefit from an approach that entertains multiple theories, interpretations, or explanations, rather than an approach that looks so single-mindedly for one, a point I have argued elsewhere (Wolcott 2001). On the other hand, the rules of evidence and of procedure followed in court, as exhibited in this case, astounded me for the way they restrict evidence and argument, eliminate considerations of context, and provoke endless argument about procedure, in efforts that seemed to facilitate the (eventual) arrival at apparently crisp decisions to hopelessly complex issues. I am committed to the notion that human behavior is overdetermined: There are always a multiplicity of causes and motives for what we do, how we speak and act. There was no such tolerance of ambiguity in the court. Lots of aimless wandering, little room for context.

The advice I received:

- Don't try to help anybody. Tell the truth. Be direct and succinct. Don't provide more information than asked for. (Recall Sergeant Friday's line from radio days: "Just the facts!")
- Listen to the question. Don't tune out. Force yourself to get the question clearly in mind. If necessary, ask to have it repeated. "I don't understand what you mean by . . ."
- Have your answer clearly in mind. Answer the question. Prevent runaway answers or wandering, especially during cross-examination.
- Be alert for questions or statements that are partially true, partially false. If that is the case, just say, "I can't answer."
- Truth is the only way to proceed. Even when it's harmful, put it out there.
- Let the questioner finish before formulating your answer.
- Don't let yourself be interrupted. If necessary, say, "Excuse me, I haven't completed my answer."
- Retain composure. Don't get angry, show hostility, or allow yourself to get to a point where you can't control your answer.
- Let your testimony stand as given. Its "meaning" is up to someone else.
- Don't feel a need to fill silences with talk. Use silence effectively.
- Remember that all measurement is approximate: dates, times, places. Indicate when you are estimating. Be as accurate as you can and emphasize when you are giving estimates.
- You don't have to answer argumentative questions or abusive ones: "Didn't you know . . . ?" "Didn't you realize . . . ?" Or: "Which one of you is telling the truth?"
- Remember that the state is bringing the charges. You are there to provide information. Don't be dragged into the conflict; don't give the defense any ammunition. Be straightforward.

The advice was good, although I wasn't very good about following all of it. I certainly did get angry. I'm still angry. That anger serves as a source of energy for delving again into this aspect of the story. As a witness I found myself to be both victim and victimized. Under oath and asked to tell what had happened, I did not get more than a couple of sentences into the story

when the defense rose to object to "hearsay." The judge muttered "sustained," and I realized that I was not going to be allowed to tell my version of "the truth, the whole truth" at all.

I remember getting muddled by the proceedings more than once. On one occasion when the prosecutor (ostensibly on *my* side) raised an objection on my behalf that was sustained, I misunderstood and answered the question anyway. No one in the courtroom had the decency to inform me that I did not have to answer.

On another occasion, the defense wanted to probe into details of my sex life. The prosecutor accused him of being on a "fishing expedition" and argued that the question should not be allowed. The judge agreed, then allowed a "little" fishing expedition anyway. The circumstances are familiar but were seized upon by the defense to condemn my infidelity, for although the nature of Norman's and my relationship was deemed abhorrent, I was also condemned for violating it. The defense hastened to interpret:

Harry and Norman are essentially married. But Harry has gotten involved with Brad with or without Norman's consent. He gets Norman involved. Norman has a good reputation as a teacher who is caring about kids. But Harry and Norman have a real gap between professed ideals of helping people and exploiting Brad, sexually and professionally.

I wanted to explain that I had a caring and stable but no longer particularly sexual relationship with Norman and a caring and sexual but not particularly stable relationship with Brad. That not-unheard-of "best of both worlds" approach made me fodder for the defense. (I'll admit to personal satisfaction in the knowledge that the defense had not been successful in maintaining a "normal" married relationship of his own.)

The defense asked whether it had been my assessment that Brad had not experienced much love in his life. He insisted that should have told me he was vulnerable. I responded that it told me Brad was lonely, unconnected. I had to remind counsel that Brad and I talked about virtually everything; sex was neither the basis of our relationship nor the focal point of it. But because our relationship had a sexual element to it, that element was represented as dominating every other aspect. Could anyone really believe that for an entire two years, or for the few months that included a sexual relationship, we did nothing else except fool around? That's certainly the impression one would have received from a visit to the courtroom. The defense was allowed to probe intimate details of Brad's and my physical relationship, following which the prosecutor reminded the jury of how they had been made to listen to "nauseating details."

It's all "adversarial," I was reminded. Truer words were never spoken. I came away with no respect for the courts. No doubt things could be worse, but I had always assumed the system to be much better.

### **Notes from the Trial**

We were advised in advance that we would not be allowed in the courtroom except when we were testifying. However, it was suggested that we could ask someone to sit in on the proceedings and take notes for us. I asked a close friend (who had also been a student in my graduate classes on ethnography) to cover the trial. We referred to her as "Sam" during the trial, and the district attorney never did figure out that Sam was a woman. Apparently the trial sparked community interest as well; there were always others present to observe the courtroom antics, and a reporter from the local newspaper was usually present.

Through Sam's exquisite notes, I can offer some insight into the trial proceedings. I have had to comb through those notes, something I have been reluctant to do for the past 16 years. The comments were recorded verbatim to the extent possible. Sam does not take shorthand, but the notes are extensive and she filled in extra detail whenever there was a break in the proceedings. I regard the notes as highly reliable in terms of what was recorded, without claiming that they are complete. Sam was asked to get as much detail as possible, with an emphasis on verbatim data rather than paraphrasing in summary fashion. Future fieldworkers take note: Firsthand quotes are far more powerful than secondhand summaries.

Not until this writing did I learn that an appeal had been filed after the trial and thus, at public expense, a typed copy had been prepared from the court reporters' (there had been 11 in all) transcripts. The complete record, a public document, was available for my viewing at the office of the State Supreme Court in the capital. It ran to 1,588 pages. Had the trial not been appealed, the cost of having it transcribed at current rates would have been almost \$4,000! As it was, I could obtain copies of pages I wanted at 25¢ per page, or \$397 for the entire document. Sam's notes are better contextualized, but they are not the word-by-word transcript of the reporters. I have drawn from both sources. I remain more impressed than ever by the accuracy of Sam's reporting.

The fact that I commissioned the notes reveals something of my research orientation and my effort to distance myself sufficiently to see the trial in broader perspective. Although it was by no means a welcome opportunity, I felt that the trial would provide a chance to observe another social system at

work. Perhaps it could even lead to extending the Sneaky Kid story, although this was not the direction I would ever have imagined the account would lead. At the least, my perspective allowed me to distance myself from events too close at hand.

But the trial was, and remains, a personal horror story that pitted me against Brad explicitly, and implicitly pitted society against me. That is why I later proposed the title “Finding My Place” for recounting the Brad story. I wanted not only to describe how Brad happened onto the property and into a personal relationship with me, but also to show how, in the end, “society,” through the courts, found a way to put *me* in *my* place as well.

### **Sentence First, Verdict Afterwards**

The Queen in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* voiced a dis-comforting idea for expediting legal proceedings: Sentence first, verdict afterwards! We could have seen far more dispatch in this trial. The judge reminded counsel at one point, “This is a trial about arson, not a trial about homosexuality.” But I had not realized the extent to which the trial had begun the process of putting me in my place from the very outset, through comments made to which I was not privy at the time.

The process proved particularly onerous during voir dire, the selection of jurors through questions ostensibly designed to assess their competence to hear the case. In reviewing Sam's notes, I realized that although jurors supposedly were being examined for their impartiality, they were being carefully coached through what might be described as tacit instruction. While being queried about their ability to remain open and fair-minded, they were informed with phrases like “even if the victim is a homosexual . . .,” or told that even if Brad was recognized as having a “mental defect,” it nonetheless might be shown that he exhibited sufficient control that insanity would not hold as a defense. By the time the trial formally began, jurors had been warned, advised, coached, informed, questioned, or instructed on several important points.

This part of the trial contains a note in the official transcript, “VOIR DIRE OF JURY reported but not transcribed,” presumably because it would have added unnecessary expense (another day and a half of transcription) irrelevant to the appeal. Yet I found Sam's notes of this part of the proceedings exceedingly rich, especially for making the point about the implicit messages the jury was receiving as to what was ahead and how, as good citizens, they ought to be thinking about it:

1. **Homosexuality** was to be a central concern, though, of course, not something to be decided. It was specifically mentioned more than two dozen times in addressing prospective jurors, conveyed through such questions as:

- a. Do you ever come across homosexual people in your daily activities? Do you know any homosexual people?
- b. Can you set aside your personal feelings about homosexual relationships?
- c. You will hear that the defendant was in a homosexual relationship. Will that be difficult to hear? Would that prejudice you?
- d. The defendant and victims are all homosexual. Are you OK with that?
- e. You may feel that Harry got what's coming to him because he is homosexual. Can you put that aside, because he's still a victim, nonetheless?
- f. Because a person is a homosexual, is it OK to burn his house down?

2. **Brad did have a mental problem.** The prosecutor needed to separate Brad's mental state at the time of the crime from a history of anti-social behavior. He reminded prospective jurors that they were to determine guilt, not say what they thought should be done with Brad.

- a. Have you ever heard of paranoid schizophrenia? Do you have any preconceived notions about it? [The defense subsequently described paranoid schizophrenia as "disordered thinking; excessively fearful."]
- b. Brad has a delusional system. His attorney will employ a "mental disease and defect" defense, attempting to show that Brad "lacked substantial capacity to conform to the law" and "could not appreciate what was wrong or was unable to control himself."
- c. Harry is involved in Brad's mind in a delusional system.

3. **The trial will be unpleasant.**

- a. You will hear explicit, nauseating sexual testimony.
- b. Are you willing to listen to sexual details? [Acceptable answer: I may not like the details, but I think I can be fair].

4. There is an **age difference** between the victim and the defendant, who was 19 at the time. [Brad was 20, but the age "error" communicated to jurors effectively portrayed him as a teenager.]

- a. Will the age difference cause a problem for you?
- b. Brad is referred to as "the boy." The Sneaky Kid article is mentioned in an offhand reference as " 'Sneaky Boy,' or something like that."
- c. Brad was seduced by an older, more experienced homosexual man. Will that cause a problem for you?



- d. If you seduce a troubled *boy*, you can cause him serious problems.
- e. [Addressed to the juror who was later elected foreman:] You have a 19-year-old. Will that affect your deciding about Brad's consenting relationship with Harry? [Implied: Is your own 19-year-old *really* capable of giving consent?]

Indeed, the defense so overdid references to Brad's youth that after his closing argument, the prosecutor included a comment to the effect of, "How many times did the defense call Brad a 'boy' or a 'kid' during his closing argument? Twenty-three is what I came up with. If he is a boy or kid, he is in the wrong courtroom. We try adults around here. . . . The reason for doing that is pretty apparent. It is trying to get your sympathy for him. . . ."

- 5. Harry has acted in an **unethical** and unprofessional way:
  - a. There may be a question of Harry's credibility, his intellectual dishonesty in writing and publishing an article about Brad. Will you have any problem in considering this? [There is no real question here, just slipping in some prejudicial material.]
  - b. Can you say that you won't let the fact that these two homosexual men [Harry and Norman] are teachers influence your determination of the case?
  - c. [Addressed to a potential juror serving as a school board member in a local school district:] Harry's article ["Sneaky Kid"] is critical of schools. Is that a problem for you?
  - d. The prosecutor refers to the Sneaky Kid article as "an article about Brad's stealing" [e.g., Harry provides a life story that disparages the informant].

Typical of what seemed to be "approved" or "expected" answers were responses such as, "I think I can hear the case objectively," "I don't have any preconceived notions," and "I'm willing to listen." In my experience, a kind of unofficial contest develops at trials like this, in which prospective jurors willing or eager to hear a particular case strive to give approved answers affirming their fair-mindedness. I had not realized how the questions (pseudo-questions?) addressed to them individually served to instruct the entire group of potential jurors.

Anyone who had worked with Norman or me was quickly excluded, including one teacher who had taught at the same school with Norman, and on whose doctoral committee I was serving at the university.<sup>1</sup> One kind heart was dismissed for answering that "everybody deserves a second chance."

Lawyer intuition led to other dismissals. By the time the impaneling was concluded, the defense had, as the prosecutor complained aloud, already started to present his case. In truth, they both had given jurors a substantial preview of where they intended to go with it.

### **Insights and Reactions to the Trial**

Prior to the trial, I had not realized that the hostility that Brad expressed at the final moment of his departure was the *only* emotion he ever again expressed toward me. At the time he left, I interpreted his comment as nothing more than an explanation as to why he was removing things he had spent all week storing in my basement: "I've had a vision. You'll be gone, and my things aren't safe."

I had no way of appreciating the depth or origins of his anger. They were not relayed in his few telephone calls. He never wrote, as he had promised and as I always hoped he might. I learned that at first he tore up letters sent to him. Then his mother stopped passing them along, which probably explains why the birthday checks were not cashed. During the trial, his mother made a point of expressing her annoyance that I kept trying to reach Brad when I (supposedly) "knew" how much he resented me and resented hearing from me. The only thing Brad said to me in the courtroom, spoken as I exited one afternoon, was, "Why don't you admit you hate me?," returning to the theme he had repeated at the time of the fire.

"Why did you continue to write to him?" I was asked. I answered that a substantial portion of his life, and almost all of his adult life to that point, had been spent at my place. I felt strongly that those had been the best years of his life, not the worst. Although I couldn't imagine exactly how we would ever re-create the way things had been, I didn't want to abandon him if he wanted to return. Further, Brad and his mother both said they would keep in touch. No one said not to write. His mother seemed to think he'd return to Eugene. I thought so, too. Was it too much to want to know how he was or to try to get in touch with him?

If those efforts to reach him were a mistake, it is a mistake I would make again under similar circumstances. I presumed, correctly, that Brad was not going to be welcomed back into the home of his mother and stepfather. Given the angry outburst in his final departure, I felt that I should be the one to keep the way open if he needed someday to return to the cabin and take up where he had left off. I had no way of gauging the extent of his mental stress. All I knew of his formal diagnosis was his mother's succinct summary that he was now "insane." I underestimated the depth of his psychosis. Most certainly

I overestimated the regard he now held for me or any positive feelings he had about the two years he had spent at the cabin. But I did want him to understand that he hadn't completely closed off the opportunity to return.

Although I missed him terribly, it was also the Brad of better times I thought of, not the tormented individual of his final days at the cabin. Realistically, I couldn't imagine how we would ever get things back on an even keel. But I wasn't about to abandon him, as everyone seemed to have done in the past. Big mistake? Or just hope, springing eternal?

Only after departing did Brad introduce hatred into his perception of our relationship. There was no evidence that it existed prior to that moment. Subsequently, he claimed that it was I who hated him because he had cut down trees to build his cabin. That would have dated back to our first meeting. At that time, I was far more impressed with the shelter he had constructed than with the sapling trees he had cut to build it. There were so many similar trees that I never found where a single one had been cut. Brad never expressed anything stronger than annoyance when I asked him to do or not to do something. The instance I reported earlier of taking down the cable for the swing was as touchy as our interactions ever got. His insistence, "You hate me," came as a complete surprise during the attack. I felt I was probably taking a big risk to counter with "I don't hate you. I love you." But I wanted him to hear those words, although I realized that the way things were going, during those moments before Norman arrived, they might have been the last words I would ever speak.

Brad's father did not earn high marks during trial proceedings. Under oath, he was asked, "Do you love your son?" "Yes, very much," was the reply. But he was reminded of an incident between them at the cabin when Brad had struck his father several times while shouting repeatedly, "I hate you, I hate you." Brad often stated that he thought his father was "a total asshole." His father had to acknowledge Brad's outward expression of hate, yet insisted, "Yes, but I think he loves me." I wonder if my own logic was about as realistic, except that Brad insisted all along that it was I who hated him!

In trying to explain the basis of his delusional state, Brad always mentioned having been dropped on his head by his father when quite small, that he was unconscious and had to be taken to the hospital. He said skull X-rays showed a "hairline crack" and that he could still feel the ridge. He attributed his psychological disorders to this injury and he blamed his mental condition on the fall, although subsequent medical examinations never confirmed any physical evidence. During the trial, his mother also related a story of when Brad's father had picked him up and was headed down the lane on the farm where they were living, saying he was going to drown Brad, then about age

seven, in the river. The only thing that stopped him, she reported, was her screaming that he would go to jail. Brad had not forgotten that incident.

Brad's father was portrayed as ineffectual and inconsistent as a parent, a person who found little joy or success in efforts to raise his recalcitrant son. Brad's mother reported that Brad never wanted to do anything with his father and that he resented anything his father liked. The fact that Brad's father had abused his mother, even while she was pregnant with Brad's older sister, was another part of the picture that surfaced during his mother's testimony. The beatings, coupled with Brad's father's financial problems and infidelity, provided the basis for their breakup. Hearing that Brad's own life had been a problem one, a business associate of his father's reflected: "I'm not surprised. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree."

As a result of the trial, I also learned that about two years after he had left the cabin, Brad was involved in a major accident. Skateboarding late at night, reportedly on his way to a McDonald's for a midnight snack, he was struck by an automobile and sustained serious injuries. He suffered a broken back; multiple fractures of one leg; head injuries; and skin burns on his face, chest, and stomach. He spent five weeks in the hospital and underwent two surgeries on his leg. Through X-rays he was found to have an unstable break in his upper back that required further surgery. He was in a body cast for about four months, and also in a leg cast. For a while he was cared for at home by his mother. She noted that during his long recovery, he had a lot of time to brood about his past, instead of working out his frustrations as he usually did through physical activities like riding his bicycle or skateboarding. She stated: "His relationship with Harry had been eating away at him during the previous couple of months to the point where he could no longer face it. Everything had to come to a head in the way it did." And she added, "There was no way I could have stopped it!"

His mother's interpretation of the relationship that developed between Brad and me may have played a pivotal role. In order to get back into her good graces, he may have had to absolve himself of any compliance in the relationship, to become the person put upon rather than a consenting, willing partner. I saw it as difficult (nay, impossible) for her to accept that aspect of Brad's behavior. Perhaps more disconcerting still, the prosecutor conjectured, Brad's sense of guilt became more intense after his mother learned of the relationship.

Brad's sexual orientation remained (and remains) a matter of conjecture. Everyone had an opinion that fit the case as they sought to portray or interpret it. Needless to say, I was not portrayed as a loving, caring person, nor was Brad ever portrayed as a willing sex partner or as someone who might have

craved male affection that he had never experienced. The most sympathy our relationship ever received was when one of the psychiatrists allowed, however reluctantly, "Maybe it was voluntary at first." But even he quickly amended his answer: "Maybe that is how Brad paid the rent. And maybe he couldn't effectively say no." Brad paid no rent, and he effectively said no whenever he wasn't in the mood. Wish someone had asked! But, then, I wasn't even able to get the prosecutor to refer to our relationship as a "sexual" one rather than as a "homosexual" one.

The second psychiatrist was asked if there was anything in the psychological assessment data (MMPI) to show a homosexual orientation. He explained that sexual orientation cannot be diagnosed from the MMPI. The questioner then asked, "Is Brad someone who would *initiate* sexual behavior?" The answer was: "I only have Brad's opinions on that. To probe deeper would require special testing." Phrased again: "The question is whether Brad would take the initiative." Answer: "I don't think he's an aggressive homosexual *or* heterosexual."

I agree with that assessment. I also agree with the opinion rendered that "having homosexual relations, voluntary or not, doesn't make you a homosexual," although I would want to modify the declaration to read, "doesn't *necessarily* make you a homosexual." What was curious from my point of view was that, although I acknowledged having had sex with females as well as with males, I was branded "homosexual" for purposes of the trial. And Brad, who affirmed in a pre-sentence hearing that he had never had sex with a woman, was described informally as "bisexual, if anything." If anything? For a trial that was "not about homosexuality," a great deal of time was spent addressing that nonissue. Had the court found it as convenient to label Brad a homosexual as they did me, we could have spent a lot less time delving into a subject that the trial was "not about." Instead, in closing, I had to hear the defense state, this time in my presence:

The only reason Harry let Brad stay was because of the sexual possibility. . . .  
Harry seeks help for Brad, but it's help with a hook . . . to get him well to continue the sex. Get well here, where I am, where the sex is.

### **Getting Help for Brad**

"Getting help for Brad" came up frequently as a topic, although it was usually noted by its absence. I can't help wondering how much less serious the consequences might have been had Brad's mother reacted differently when he

decided to reveal the sexual dimension of our relationship. What if she had said something like, "Well, at least you're having sex with *somebody*. And somebody who seems to care a lot about you. And you're apparently enjoying it!" What then?

But in looking back, there were all kinds of opportunities missed to help Brad, even getting him adequate legal counsel. As more than one observer noted, "That defense attorney really did him a disservice." Right up to the night before the fire, no one took responsibility upon themselves to intercede in Brad's stated plan to "get Harry and burn his house down."

Brad's mother had been instructed to contact the psychologist immediately if Brad gave any indication of leaving town. Instead, she drove him to the bus station and telephoned his father to inform him that Brad was on his way to Oregon. If Brad's father was not likely to notify the police, he might at least have called me. He was asked at the trial why he hadn't done so. Brad's father answered that he was "too disturbed." Instead he lodged Brad in a motel and reportedly told the manager, "Let me know if he goes out."

His father later telephoned a former employee and asked whether Brad could stay there for the next few days, because his new wife objected to having Brad stay in their house. She, in turn, called an attorney to ask whether they should call the police, but received no satisfactory advice. His wife "also might have wanted to call the police," Brad's father testified, but he claimed to have been so distraught that he "pulled the phone out of the wall so she could not call." He said he did not believe that Brad would attack me, but he was worried. "With hindsight," he noted, "I would have done a lot of things differently."

The former employee in whose home Brad spent his second night in town was also hesitant to call the police, but reported that he did feel he ought to warn me. Unfortunately, he had understood my name as "Wilcox." He could find no match between name and address. He did call Brad's father to tell him about the threats, but reported that he did not really believe that in a confrontation Brad would do anything so serious. Brad had not confided his plans to him. In retrospect, everyone testified that they *should* have done things differently.

### **"When the Experts Disagree . . ."**

I recall, from undergraduate days, examining the proposition "When the experts disagree, the layman can hold no positive views." Yet the trial, after days and days of haranguing, eventually turned on a single point of disagreement between two psychiatrists: Can a person be labeled both paranoid schiz-

ophrenic and anti-social? Does one diagnosis rule out the other? The proposition I learned in school had to be turned on its head. Because the experts disagreed, lay jurors were called on to render an ultimate decision that hinged on a topic on which they were eminently unqualified.

The psychiatrist for the defense argued that when paranoid schizophrenia is diagnosed, then anti-social behavior is disqualified. He summed up his testimony this way:

In Brad's mind, Harry was interfering in his life with Lucy. He projected all that onto Harry. How can you blame Harry for all that was going on in Brad's life? You can't. Brad couldn't separate things out; everything becomes a product of his delusions. While recovering in the hospital, Brad decides to retaliate against Harry, but even if he had ended Harry's life, the delusions wouldn't have stopped. . . . Paranoid schizophrenic people feel justified in what they are doing. It's part of the craziness.

The prosecutor, acting the role of devil's advocate (or possibly by virtue of actually being one), posed an opening question to "his" psychiatrist this way: "The case before us today is a case of a paranoid schizophrenic who is nonetheless being held responsible for his crimes. How can that be?"

The psychiatrist responded: "Paranoid schizophrenics still have a capacity to live their lives. The laws have changed; the mentally ill have retained all their rights because they do retain their capacity to reason, in spite of the mental illness."

Question: "Because in some cases mentally ill people are not necessarily irresponsible?"

Answer: "Emphatically I can say [confirm] that . . . paranoid schizophrenia and anti-social personality are two distinct mental disorders. An individual doesn't *usually* have both. But my opinion is that Brad *does* have both. . . . The crime was the product of a lifestyle of disregard for the property of others. Brad's anti-social behavior is not due to his paranoid schizophrenia. The majority of paranoid schizophrenics don't commit anti-social acts unless it is the product of delusions. Brad's delusions were beliefs based on his homosexual relations, which added to his anger. He felt used in the relationship and that he lost things—like Lucy, his Hollywood career—because of it."

### **Rose-Colored Glasses**

In his closing comments, the prosecutor did finally concede that "Harry probably did harbor a very deep-seated affection for Brad." It appeared, he stated,

that I had viewed the relationship with Brad "through rose-colored glasses." On reflection, I would have to agree. One can, after all, see with rose-colored glasses; things are not distorted, they simply aren't as harsh. The prosecutor might have stopped there, but that was not his style. He added:

Mr. Wolcott, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, is a fool. And, like they say, there's no fool like an old fool.

The prosecutor reminded jurors once more, and they probably did need reminding: "This is not a case about homosexuality. Everyone's entitled to their own choice of lifestyles."

The prosecutor reviewed the psychiatric testimony and emphasized, "I didn't tell Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ [the second psychiatrist] what to think. I even gave him Dr. \_\_\_\_\_'s [first psychiatrist] report. If he had agreed with it, we wouldn't be here today. But *he relied on the facts*. He says Brad is delusional, but that such people can still make decisions and have rights. Brad made criminal decisions. If you make criminal decisions, you can be held responsible even if you are mentally ill."

He concluded: "You have enough exhibits [e.g., photographs, police records, mental-health assessments, the Sneaky Kid article, letters produced by Brad's mother, everything entered into evidence] to last two more weeks. At least 10 of the 12 of you must agree. Keep your bias out of any verdict. That way, when you give your verdict, we won't have another tragedy."

And the defense attorney, whom I came to despise with a passion, nevertheless seemed to sum it up best. It was his theory (hunch, interpretation, premise) that I became incorporated in Brad's delusions by continuing to attempt contact with him while he was undergoing psychiatric treatment. "Wolcott is sticking himself into that boy's life if he can, but what he's really doing is sticking himself into that boy's delusional system," he concluded. That "boy" was the 24-year-old waiting for a jury to vote his future.

If at 3 p.m. on a Friday afternoon the jurors were tired, they were also tired of the long, drawn-out trial. They were determined to put the case to rest before adjourning for the weekend. By 9 p.m., with time out for a dinner paid for by the court, they returned a unanimous verdict: guilty on all three counts.

### **"Would You Like to Make a Statement?"**

It was another two and a half months before Brad appeared for sentencing. In the interim, more reports were prepared anticipating that final hearing and



the ruling the judge would make. There was no audience in the courtroom this time except Brad, the prosecutor and defense, others awaiting sentencing, and our faithful observer Sam. Norman and I were out of state and would not take up permanent residence again for another year.

The proceedings went so quickly that Sam had to reconstruct most of the dialogue after the event was finished, so for this text I quote the trial transcript. There was time for only the briefest exchange between lawyer and client, during which Brad was asked the usual question ("Have you been taking your medicine?") and had learned the proper response.

The prosecutor reviewed the charges and announced that for sentencing purposes the three counts had been merged into the most serious one, arson, which called for a 20-year sentence "with a minimum of 10 years served." It was not clear at the time (and has never been clear) what that meant, since Brad served less than five years total, including an extra year for parole violation. But his fate was sealed as prison-bound, in spite of last-ditch efforts by his defense counsel and himself (see below) to be sent to a mental hospital. The defense emphasized how Brad's safety would be at risk in prison "because of the facts of the case, his serious illness, and the kind of overtures that will go on in a jail setting." (The defense's personal opinion, expressed earlier to a courtroom spectator, was that, if sent to prison, Brad was likely to be killed—that prison for him was a death sentence.)

The court asked Brad whether there was anything he wished to say. I provide his complete statement because these are the final words that he gets to utter in this retelling, except for the proclamation he made at his first parole hearing: "I don't even think about Harry Wolcott any more." By now, you, the reader, should feel sufficiently familiar with the case to understand the references.

Your Honor, there is not a doubt in my mind Professor Wolcott hated me for ruining his property and he broke me so I couldn't become famous. What that man did to me was a crime and I could not let him get away with it.

Your Honor, if I do five years I will be a virgin until I am 29 years old, and then how am I supposed to meet a girl when I don't know anybody? I am not going to go to a prostitute, or any girl, I don't want any girl. I want Lucy. I am not that bad. She wouldn't meet me in the county jail between the glass, but when I get to a prison or in the county hospital, she might meet me there and I can show the Parole Board I have the prettiest girl in the world, that can be the most prettiest girl in the world and have a big house and a swimming pool and a Corvette with my name on the license

plate and they will know I will leave the school teachers [i.e., Harry and Norman] alone.

Your Honor, in being famous it is good looks or good luck, and I have good looks. I know I could be a movie star or model or dancer. When I was 19, I cut down Professor Wolcott's precious trees. I didn't know I did anything wrong. I could have cleaned up the place. I could have said I was sorry, but he didn't want me to become famous.

Your Honor, that was a low-down, dirty, disgusting perverted thing to do and that is what I have to live with for the rest of my entire life.

Your Honor, Professor Wolcott screwed with my head, my ass and my life too much. He knew there was something wrong with me and he thought it was funny.

Your Honor, I think I should have been found guilty except for insanity. I couldn't control myself. I couldn't control myself. I was obsessed with hate for that man.

Your Honor, I had been dead my whole life and my life won't begin until I make love to Lucy, so I would hope you and Lucy have some sympathy in deciding when my life is to begin, and, your Honor, I couldn't live the rest of my life thinking that that house, where my potential career was ruined, was still standing. Thank you.

The judge then read his decision:

It is the judgment of the Court that the Defendant be imprisoned for a term not to exceed 20 years. The Defendant is committed to the legal and physical custody and control of the Corrections Division of the State of Oregon for service of that sentence and is remanded forthwith to the custody of the Sheriff to be transported to the Oregon State Penitentiary for service of the sentence. It is the recommendation of the Court that the Defendant be considered for and receive a mental health evaluation and treatment as it may be deemed appropriate and necessary during the period of confinement. [Instructions on rights and procedures for appeal omitted here.]

The Court is bound by the verdict rendered in this case. The Defense has been fully presented to the jury and they have considered it and rejected it and the Court is bound by that. Nevertheless, the Court shares the view expressed here this morning that the Defendant is in dire need of assistance and rehabilitation in that particular and it is my hope that he receive it. In addition, having that recommendation in the sentence order, the Court must send an order to the institution to the same effect so they will be advised of that situation upon receipt of the Defendant.

The Court derives no pleasure in imposing a heavy sentence on a young man, but the crime was enormous and I share the view of the State at the present time and certainly in the circumstances that are described in the evidence before the jury that the Defendant was and continues to be dangerous, even more so on his own statement. He is unable to control that. That will be all.

Model? Movie star or rock star? Dancer? . . . Dancer! Strange to contemplate how well Brad might have been suited for that: agile, muscular, light of foot, fearless, good sense of balance . . . How differently it all might have turned out!

### **The Article on Trial**

Where do our studies go, and what do they do there? It shouldn't take too much to convince you that one place an anthropologically oriented researcher would never want a life story document to go is to court, to be used against the person who gives it. But it was hopeless to try to keep the Sneaky Kid article under wraps. It had already been published and in circulation for almost two years when Brad returned. It was one of the first things mentioned to investigators to establish how well I knew him.

At the time of the fire I had also drafted what eventually became the second piece of the trilogy, "Life's Not Working." I was looking for a home for the newer article while continuing to revise it. My comments were based mostly on the literature I was looking at, rather than on any further information about Brad himself. As was my custom, I had put a copy of the current working draft on reserve in the university library for students who might be interested in what I was writing at the moment.

Given Brad's unexpected return and the events that followed, I was not anxious to add fuel to the fire, figuratively or literally. From my hospital bed I sent word immediately to withdraw the new draft from circulation, since it dealt, however conjecturally, with Brad's seeming choice to take the "crazy" route. As sides quickly became drawn, I was advised not to give the defense ("the opposition") any ammunition. However, I did think that the prosecutor might find the paper of interest, since Brad's sanity was now looming large as a critical issue. Yet another source (there's lots of advice floating around under such circumstances) warned that anything turned over to the district attorney's office had to be passed along to the defense as well. So I gave the paper to my lawyer, who could then tell the prosecutor he had something of possible interest, if he cared to drop by.

But the original Sneaky Kid article enjoyed no such restricted readership. I could only imagine how it would be used as evidence to indict Brad and to show him already well on his way to a life of crime (“in the chute,” as I had expressed it), although my intention had been to show how Brad seemed to be succeeding at getting his life together. A social scientist’s worst nightmare: Brad’s freely given account of his misdeeds now turned back to haunt us both.

Well, not quite. With his confession already in hand the morning after the fire, there was no real need to strengthen the case against Brad. From the prosecutor’s perspective, the article was, at most, incidental. But in terms of impugning me as a credible witness and person of integrity—ah, plenty of potential there. If a strong offense is the best defense, that would be a way to deflect the damage Brad had caused, explaining, or at least rationalizing, his actions as a consequence of abuses he had suffered at my hands. Discrediting the article, and the person who wrote it, became another element in the defense, a diversionary tactic that ran a nice parallel to “concerns” about my sexual orientation. Combining the two was even better. The defense fired such questions at me point blank.

“Didn’t you have a duty to add about the homosexuality in the article? Isn’t the article about deviant behavior?” I was asked. My response was that the article was about social, not psychological, behavior, and about society’s direction with schooling. It was not an exposé. The point I had raised was to ask what can be done to help people like Brad. “And anyway,” I added, “I don’t consider homosexual behavior ‘deviant’!”

The defense pounced on this as an opportunity to raise the kind of tricky question about which I had been warned: “As an anthropologist, don’t you think that people in this society think homosexuality is wrong?” Had he asked whether I thought that both the prosecuting attorney and the defense thought homosexuality wrong, I could have answered, emphatically, “Yes.” But the phrase “as an anthropologist” gave the defense an opportunity to denigrate a whole academic discipline, just the opposite of what he would have done had I been called on for expert testimony. He had already primed the jury for my appearance:

Harry Wolcott is not Mr. Average Fellow; he’s a genius. I think you’ll see it when he’s on the stand. You will see when he answers the questions. Tough person to deal with as a witness. Ph.D. Has got some other degrees . . .

But he’s an anthropologist, who first studies foreign cultures, but our culture now. . . . And the way he does that is he integrates himself, insinuates himself, perhaps, into human situations, makes himself accepted as just sort of part of the fabric. . . .

And part of his business, and a necessary part of that, is that he knows people. He is not some abstract ivory tower that backed into a situation here. As part of his job he manipulates people. He manipulates them in a higher cause to find out the truth, to reform our schools, to make our society, quote, a better place, by showing us the truth. . . .

He is the kind of guy who is prepared, for example, to follow around for a whole year, two years, a school principal, and integrate himself in, invade himself into the fellow's life, and then basically write a full book. Maybe it says some good things, but also showing what a failure, in many respects, this person is, with the idea that he is going to reform education.

This guy has expressed all sorts of humanitarian ideas throughout his life, caring for people. But in doing that, in getting close to those people, he is a person who has studied "How do I appear when I want someone to talk? What do I say so people won't shut down when I'm around? How do I direct the situation so that I learn the information I want?" And he's done that as part of his profession, and you'll see that.

And he does that with Brad. . . . He manipulates the situation so that he initiates this relationship, and that is what the evidence is going to show. . . . As part of that process, he writes this article about Brad, something of a sneaky boy, "Anatomy of a Sneaky . . .," I don't know. We will hear about it in detail. It's a long article. He pays Brad to talk to him. You can decide whether that was part of the seduction process or not, bringing this boy in, to contact this boy, that is really living on subsistence level, with no father figure, that is looking for some company, and led it into that . . .

In that article which Wolcott publishes he is basically saying things [like] "This boy, since he's left school, is not getting any skills or education, dropped from the system. What can we do to help this poor boy?" And that is published for basically an audience of teachers, university professors, people that will use it. Perhaps he's got some suggestions as to how do we make our schools better.

He never tells those people that he's established a homosexual relationship with this boy. He doesn't tell them that. He doesn't tell them that he's got any relationship with this boy that he is using as the basis for telling the rest of us how to structure our schools. Doesn't tell them anything like that.

He also doesn't say that he sees any signs of mental problems in the boy, which would be pretty obviously significant if you're going to be using this boy as a paragon, an example, a study for which we can just change all of our schools and our books with kids like this, with normal kids, because that is the approach it takes.

Has this relationship. He writes this article. I think that article, when you look at it and you hear it, is fundamentally dishonest. And think, all those are things that you have to take into account in weighing Harry Wolcott's credibility as he testifies about this. He is not an honest person.

[Court recorder transcription.]

Similar comments by the defense helped to show me in a bad light, as someone constantly taking professional advantage of the situation:

- Harry writes Brad that Lucy doesn't exist. Harry will say that he was trying to help Brad. And he encourages him to take his medicine. Now the average person might not know or pick up on Brad's mental problems, but Harry is closer to being able to describe people and how they act and think.
- Harry gets Brad's mom and dad to come to the cabin to further his article [?]. He pumps them for information for his article. In the article he says that Brad is headed for trouble, but he doesn't tell the mother or father.
- Because of the letters, Brad thinks Harry wants to maintain contact, sending photos of the cabin. The assumption that can be made here: Harry is saying, "Come back to me." Harry is not letting go. Yes, there's affection, but it's exploitative love. Harry tells Brad in a letter, "My article is coming out. Sign the enclosed release so I can get more psychological records."
- Harry was the most intelligent person in the courtroom and he knew it. Smarter than me and smarter than Brad. He's a professional. As a professional, he manipulates people. He uses masks.<sup>2</sup> It's part of his daily work.

The prosecutor was equally relentless in pursuing the matter of ethics, asking whether I felt it was intellectually dishonest to write an article about someone with whom I was involved, or failing to mention the emotional involvement. My answer during testimony:

No. This is an article about schools and educational effectiveness, not about a relationship. The relationship was irrelevant for purposes of the article. It's simply not thinkable to me to put anything like that in this article and embarrass either one of us. The article stressed cross-cultural dimensions, not psychological or individual ones. The article was about the shortcomings of the American educational system and how it might be improved.

That was much too fancy an explanation for one of the testifying psychiatrists, who summarized the thrust of the article thus: "It was my impression that Harry was picking a bone with the school system." When asked whether he used the article in making his assessment, the psychiatrist answered, "No, it was pretty much secondhand, so I didn't base too much on that [i.e., the article is Harry's interpretation]. I used psychological reports and what Brad himself said." Question: "And what did he tell you?" "That throughout a lot of his youth Brad thought he wanted to be a criminal."

When convenient, however, the Sneaky Kid article was also cited in support of points being made. It offered ideas about where to ask, what to look for. For example, Brad's father, mother, and stepfather were all asked about stolen bicycles. Brad's father, who seemed to have a difficult time recalling any negative evidence, did in fact recall that there had been bicycles that mysteriously appeared when Brad was living with him.

Drawing upon the Sneaky Kid article for support, the prosecutor reiterated the (academic) purpose of the article and asked jurors to look at the facts within the article, which meant to examine it as testimony to Brad's anti-social nature. Thus the article itself earned his seal of approval, although its author did not: "You might say, 'I don't like that man [Harry], I don't trust that man,'" he told the jury. "But you see how it fits together" [i.e., how the observations in the article are corroborated by the reports of others]. "Brad told Harry these things at a time when the relationship was good between them. Harry wrote the truth, and Brad OK'd the article."

The most astounding dismissal to me was the implication that the Sneaky Kid article—or at least the majority of it—was fabricated by Brad, this the one time when I felt I had really gotten the story straight and gotten the straight story. Brad's mother stated as much by testifying under oath that she thought Brad had made up *the whole thing*, although I seriously doubt she ever read it. That idea was supported by the testimony of one of the psychiatrists, who explained:

I had the impression Brad was creating an image—a fantasy—to please Harry, a fantasy of a man who had hard breaks but was succeeding. Harry wanted to prove this intellectually. It was a mutual game they were playing.

I think Brad thinks that Harry finally got the advantage and abused him. But Brad could still manipulate. Initially Brad was the aggressor, in moving onto the land. Brad wanted to present an image of an individual abused by his parents and by school who was now making it on his own. But Brad didn't do most of the conning; it was mutual.

Q: Are you as confident about Brad conning Harry regarding the article as you are confident of your diagnosis of an anti-social personality?

Yes. I think Harry saw the whole thing through rose-colored glasses.

Q: Was there a disregard for the truth?

Yes, that's how Brad was living, by "conning" Harry to some extent. He was living off Harry.

The idea that Brad and I were conning each other appealed to the prosecutor as a satisfactory explanation of the relationship between us. In private, he offered another interpretation as well, that he wondered if the underlying problem had nothing to do with me, but was about working out the unsatisfactory relationship between Brad and his father. Was I perhaps just an innocent bystander? Ah, but he would not have wanted to portray me as "innocent" in the courtroom. Making me out to be a "father figure" was much more sinister.

## Notes

1. For those familiar with my other writing, this is the person referred to as "Alfred" (Wolcott 1990, 2001). Small world!

2. This oblique reference to "masks" is from a chapter in *The Man in the Principal's Office* (Wolcott 1973). Presumably, the defense intended to develop the idea that anthropologists use masks [i.e., yet another form of deceit] in gathering data, but it was too convoluted an argument to pursue.



## Chapter Six

# The Rebound

PRIOR to this book, I have written only one other piece about the Brad story. It deals with how the material can be used and some questions it raises for research, not with further details of Brad's life. And that is the direction this book now takes, looking at lessons from the case, not from the story of Brad.

As a matter of fact, I do not know more details of Brad's life beyond what I have said here. I did not even know whether he was still living, until it occurred to me during this writing that the Social Security office might be willing to help me with that fact. They did confirm that he is alive, or at least he was in summer 2001, the time of my inquiry. They are allowed to do that, but no more. Brad would now be in his 40s. He lives in Southern California.

The Brad story separated itself from Brad years ago as it became involved in a host of issues dealing with ethics, intimacy, and the politics of research. And I can bring the story of the Brad *story* right up to the present.

Ethics is, or quickly becomes, one such focal issue. For instructors willing to bite the bullet, a class discussion can turn on the question of researchers' responsibility to their informants (although the term *responsibility* serves notice that the issue is to be treated as a self-evident moral obligation) or, couched in what strikes me as a more neutral approach, on the broader issue of intimacy in fieldwork. Given one popular definition of fieldwork as "long-term, intimate acquaintance," the Validity chapter prompts a delicate question: Just how intimate is intimate?

For the writing in question, I was invited to prepare a response to an article that Reba Page submitted in 1996 to the editors of *QSE*, the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. In the article, Reba described a one-term course she had been teaching for several years. She had her students read and discuss the Sneaky Kid article, among many topics probed. Then, for a later class session, she had them read and discuss the Validity chapter. Students

were asked to reflect on implications of the chapter for a fuller understanding of the earlier piece.

Reba organized and conducted her class sessions entirely through reading and critiquing existing work, rather than through the more familiar hands-on technique, in which students conduct field exercises or do a mini-qualitative study. She selected topics and readings with care, and her class discussed them in great depth.

The editors of *QSE* were pleased to accept Reba's article, but they were anxious to offer me an opportunity to respond, given the critical reading to which my two articles had been subjected in her class discussions. The editors opted to invite several responses and published the pieces together. By the time the discussion appeared in print in 1997, the Sneaky Kid article had been around for 14 years. It was apparent that the Validity chapter, and the issues it raised, were keeping the account at the forefront, especially in classes and seminars like Reba's, where instructors were intent on introducing dilemmas of fieldwork beyond the "gaining entrée and maintaining rapport" stages.

In the article, Reba described the general sequence and tenor of class discussions, with particular focus on the pair of Brad-related articles she had used to raise the issue of validity. One can marvel at the analytical acumen her students achieved under what I assume was some gentle but persistent prodding. Her account is a masterful critique and an example of masterful teaching. Students are first led down a primrose path: empathy for Brad, coupled with admiration for Harry's skills at interviewing and reporting. Then they are sparked with caution and doubt once the previously unreported relationship is revealed. Questions arise as to how much Harry's account—and Harry himself—are to be trusted. Finally comes the kind of healthy skepticism that I think Reba intends to instill in her students—not only toward research reports but toward the whole research enterprise.

Where do our studies go and what do they do there? When I wrote the Sneaky Kid article, I intended it to raise issues about out-of-school youth and what might be added in some educational way to shape the course of their lives. When I wrote the Validity article, I intended to call into question the notion of validity itself, and to join with others who were calling for terms better suited for assessing the worth of qualitative studies. Reba's article was evidence and illustration of how my Validity article was more generally received, raising broad issues about relationships in fieldwork and candor in reporting.

Those issues were indeed issues I wanted to see raised. I had not realized that whatever I had done in confronting them would become the fodder for

such a debate, but by then I had been living with questions raised at the trial some dozen years earlier. I responded in a manner intended to keep the discussion focused on issues relevant to fieldwork—which was what Reba was doing—rather than allow the dialogue to degenerate into a character assassination, as had happened at the trial. I faced that issue head-on by noting in my rejoinder to her piece:

I never anticipated that the “Validity” article would be turned back on the original Sneaky Kid one to prove me a rogue and rascal for becoming so involved with a younger guy whose life ever so gradually became inextricably wound up with my own. [Wolcott 1997:158]

I didn’t really feel like a rogue and rascal (well, rascal, perhaps, just a bit). Given the widespread and varied response the Validity chapter—or the combination of chapters—seemed to provoke, I felt vindicated in having presented students and colleagues with a real live set of dilemmas to discuss. I say “set of dilemmas” because there did not seem to be a single issue universally defined.

Too often, the issue of homosexuality became central; but in those instances I really felt vindicated, because it was certainly time for my fellow researchers to realize that they, too, were wearing rose-colored glasses. Questions of intimacy in fieldwork needed to be addressed, as did issues of what needs to be disclosed, and when. If I had not anticipated all the avenues that needed exploring, I could at least rejoice in having presented a case that would introduce more candor into discussions about fieldwork and the reporting of fieldwork.

All this might well have come along at the wrong time, or at least at the wrong time in my own career. (For an unfortunate example, see Werth 2001.) In that respect, I simply was lucky: a modest bit of courage coupled with a careful reading of the times and, frankly, not much alternative. I was 60 when the Validity chapter was presented. My career was well established; my work was respected among the people I respected, in spite of my having been run over roughshod by the court. Although I am not a great believer in the idea that it is better to be spoken of badly than not to be spoken of at all, I was bolstered by a feeling that, in some eyes, at least, I had become a crusader for candor. I was willing to take the heat for other researchers not so far along in their careers or so secure in their personal lives that they were willing to divulge highly personal aspects of fieldwork.

Shortly after publication of the Validity chapter I was invited to address a conference held on a major eastern campus. A few moments before I was to

speak, a distraught conference organizer had to deliver the unsavory news that a faculty member was planning to embarrass me publicly at the conclusion of my talk, with questions about my sexual orientation and my ethics. That threat, although not carried out, had the effect of reassuring me that I had done the right thing in bringing such issues before the public.

Today, the three Brad articles are most easily accessed in my own volume of collected essays published in 1994, the volume that “created” the trilogy. If the Validity chapter is responsible for keeping the other two alive, the original issues posed by the Sneaky Kid article have not been entirely overshadowed. Through the years, usually with the blessing and encouragement of their instructors, students who have come across, or, more typically, been assigned either the Sneaky Kid chapter, that chapter coupled with the one on validity, or the entire trio, have contacted me through telephone, letter, and now, increasingly, by e-mail. They want to know if I have anything to add by way of insight or recent developments.

For instance, while writing the first draft of this chapter in July 2001, I was startled to see the name Brad pop up as a subject when I checked for e-mail messages one afternoon. The writer, a graduate student taking a summer session course in qualitative methods, wanted to know whether I had written more about the case (strange that I had been doing just that all day, and the previous weeks) or had anything else to say about it. As usual, the ethics question, prompted by the disclosure of the Validity chapter, loomed large, but it was refreshing to have the ethics issue itself posed as a question: “Is there an ethics issue here?” It was even more refreshing to know that the issue that had prompted the original account had not been lost sight of:

As a group we came up with many issues related to your research—education v. schooling, how do we deal with these fringe kids who seem to slip through the cracks and have no real advocates for themselves.

Alas! When it came time for their class presentation, the group assigned to discuss my work took the road more traveled by. They followed the usual Sneaky-Kid-then-hit-'em-with-the-Validity-chapter sequence. A lively discussion followed; it is virtually guaranteed. What happens from that point determines the depth and direction of the lesson. If the ethical question is couched as one demanding judgment, then I don't think much ever comes of the dialogue besides moralistic venting. When the questions are cast in a broader way to examine the role of intimacy in fieldwork, then each researcher must resolve for him- or herself how to go about a particular inquiry. I made that

decision for the Sneaky Kid study more than 20 years ago. I have no regrets, only a slight sense of disappointment.

Brad himself should have been my biggest disappointment in all this, but I suppose I am still in denial and like to think that the Brad who came back determined to do harm was a different Brad from the person who had lived on my property for two years, determined to survive. My biggest shock was how I was treated in court. Personally, I will hold the counsel for the defense in contempt . . . forever.

### **A Member Protests**

Along professional lines, my treatment at the hands of one of my professional organizations, the American Educational Research Association, proved a huge surprise and disappointment, making Phil Jackson's words about candor as "risky business" ring true. This particular sidelight reminds us that our studies can be turned back against not only our earlier works but also ourselves. Reba Page's article, in contrast, did no such thing—most certainly she highlighted lessons to be learned, but the treatment I received from her was coolly analytical, constructive, and aboveboard.

I have reviewed how the Validity chapter has been used to raise issues and spark much soul-searching as to what we expect in behavior and in reporting qualitative work. But I was hardly prepared for it to be held up as a reason for withdrawing support for the original Sneaky Kid piece and for condemning its author as well. If nothing else, this part of the story is a reminder that institutional support can disappear quickly in the face of controversy.

In the previous chapter I reviewed how my essay on ethnographic research, prepared for the first edition of *Complementary Methods for Research in Education*, came to be augmented by appending the Sneaky Kid article as an illustrative example. That chapter and the supplementary reading were well received, as was the volume itself. Had preparations for the revised edition proceeded as quickly as originally planned, I might have escaped the hullabaloo that surrounded the inclusion of my Sneaky Kid chapter in the revision. But there were the usual delays, new chapters to be added for more inclusive coverage, recalcitrant authors to be coaxed into completing their revisions. And during those years, the Validity chapter, published in 1990, was being read and talked about. Its original appearance in the Eisner and Peshkin book had been augmented with publication of the complete trilogy in my own *Transforming Qualitative Data* (1994), which enjoyed sales of well over 5,000 copies in its first three years.

From those two readily available sources, the Validity chapter was widely circulated among students and instructors in classes on qualitative research. Some instructors surely were dismayed by the complexities revealed about my relationship with Brad, but they talked out of my hearing. Others more audibly expressed appreciation for the opportunity to raise and examine sensitive fieldwork issues that were also addressed in such landmark books as Kulick and Willson's *Taboo: Sex, Identity and Erotic Subjectivity in Anthropological Fieldwork* (1995) and Lewin and Leap's *Out in the Field: Reflections of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists* (1996).<sup>1</sup>

But in my response to Reba Page's article, I felt it necessary to report on a disturbing set of events taking place at that very time, from January to November 1996, in connection with revising *Complementary Methods*. If things continued as they seemed then to be going, I would lack a forum for chronicling what had happened. So I made special mention of the problem I was currently facing. I wrote:

Although the Validity chapter has been in print for 6 years, newcomers continue to "discover" it. . . . Even as I write, the American Educational Research Association is seriously considering dropping the Sneaky Kid article in a revised edition of its highly successful *Complementary Methods in Educational Research* because *one member* (out of a reported 22,000!) has called my integrity into question for failing to reveal the nature of our [i.e., Brad's and my] relationship. We will know the eventual outcome of their deliberations if my contribution to that collection is missing from a second edition already long overdue.

Given such knee-jerk reaction in the educational research community, I feel I did the right thing in extending the original account and adding to its complexity by writing the Validity chapter, but it is disheartening that some readers are unable to recognize its far different purpose from the initial invitation to offer an anthropological perspective on educational adequacy. [Wolcott 1997:158-59]

That "one member" had taken it upon himself not only to set his students on a course of Right Thinking but to raise formal objection about including the Sneaky Kid piece in the revision of *Complementary Methods*. His objection started off innocently enough with a casual e-mail inquiry to editor Richard Jaeger as to whether he was "aware of the fuller story of the Sneaky Kid case" (i.e., did he know about the Validity chapter published six years prior)? And did he intend to include the Sneaky Kid chapter in the revised edition?

Editor Jaeger offered a succinct reply:

I really don't see the ethical issue here. He [Wolcott] might refer readers to the later article if they're interested in the tragedy of the finale, but the "kid" was beyond the age of consent, Wolcott's sexual preferences are irrelevant, and . . . it isn't clear that what he reports about the "kid's" views on education and schooling would be invalidated by the relationship, even if it were going on during the research study. Am I just being dense about this? What's the ethical issue here?

What's the ethical issue here? My detractor now addressed himself directly to me. "You clearly failed to live up to your own standards for conducting and reporting on ethnographic research," he wrote in a long letter. "You advise the researcher, for example, to 'let the reader "see" for themselves,' 'report fully,' and 'be candid.' In your account of the Sneaky Kid story," he continued, "you failed to practice what you preached and implicitly claimed you practiced. You omitted the significant fact of your intimate involvement with Brad. In short you have deceived me and other readers." And what to do about it? He urged not only that I withdraw my chapter from the revision of *Complementary Methods* but also that I prepare an erratum notice for publication in the *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* for my "misleading account of the sneaky kid story" published in that journal some 13 years earlier!

He looked no further than to his students and an office mate for wholehearted support of his position that decried not only the Sneaky Kid chapter but everything I had to say about ethnography, and, by extension, everything I had ever written. In seconding his reservation, his office mate wrote: "Because Wolcott was not straightforward to begin with, my class is sure he still is not being straightforward. They also doubt that he was straightforward in any of the rest of his work. . . . They do not trust a word he says. . . . I, in good conscience, cannot continue to use *Complementary Methods* as long as it contains the Wolcott material." Their letters were accompanied by two student papers in support of these views. One of them concluded, "I'm tired of Wolcott justifying the importance of his tainted research as he conveniently overlooks his responsibility for creating his own victimization."

The heat was on, turned up a few notches in the letter—which was written to me but also generously distributed. I assumed that my answer might be my only opportunity to state my case, and I took great care in its preparation. Fortunately, I was teaching a class in ethnography at the time. My students were already familiar with the Brad Trilogy. Now they got an inside view of the ethics and politics of research and publishing. Here I had the advantage of an

audience on whom I could try different versions of a written response. Initially, my class worried that my anger and frustration were getting in the way of the more reasoned response they expected and felt I needed to write. It took six drafts before we collectively felt I had expressed myself adequately.

## The Letter

I thought it especially important to defend my choice of the Sneaky Kid article as an exemplary model. My detractor was reported to be a specialist in survey research and measurement, so I pointed to some critical differences between his approach and qualitative ones. But if his righteous indignation was rooted in ethics, I pondered some issues he might want to consider for himself. Here is the letter I sent, dated May 5, 1996, quoted in its entirety. To this day, the questions I posed remain unanswered.

I have received and pondered your letter and suggestions for how to go about ordering my professional and personal life. Be assured that the purpose of this letter is not to solicit another one from you, although I would never deny your right to write to me in any capacity. Indeed, I am sorry it never occurred to you to set up a conference call while your "class" was in session, if they were as intent as you seem to have been in making ethical issues the core of a class purportedly instructing them in research design. Ethical issues have their place, but I hate to see them substituted for content in the limited exposure students have for being introduced to research.

But what students? What class? What syllabus, with what readings and exercises? How strange for you to fault me for failing to tell all of a story, yet confront me with two papers supposedly written by students from an unspecified class with an unspecified enrollment? How many students, at what level, were deeply concerned with questions you raise that look so suspiciously like your own? Where are the papers from the other students? Surely not all your students write so well or share the single view represented here. What were their opinions? It is hard to imagine that in a class of any size, someone would not have been grateful for being presented with genuine issues in research and feel some compassion for a researcher/author who is still trying to "get it right," to understand and relate in an instructive way a series of events that really, deeply matter, including how much to tell, for what purposes, at what time. It is hard for me to believe that not a single student would defend the value and integrity of the model or recognize the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of having an informant whom one *believed* would be able to talk freely about *any* aspect of his life. I hope no one in your



class has ever reported on a comment of a spouse or lover, for clearly intimate personal knowledge has no business in your conception of research.

You are entitled to your opinions and to express them, but I am astounded at your arrogance in presuming to speak for the entire 18,000 members of AERA [the figure was nearer 22,000, I learned later]. For all your concern with power relationships, what gives you the right to act as censor for what those members and their students can read? Your logic escapes me: you are interested in teaching about ethics; my work, with *or without subsequent developments*, raises ethical concerns; therefore my chapter should be hidden away. You seem to have lost sight of the fact that when the [first edition of the] AERA book came out, my chapter on validity hadn't even been written. The bold decision to write it took the case in a different direction from where I started. Only then did the more personal dimensions become important as I realized how little we ever understand others or even ourselves. If you were well read in qualitative research you would have had all this before you half a dozen years ago. (I trust that you were ethical in your class use of the Validity chapter as well and had students buy the book, not just xerox a single chapter.)

You have given me, as I trust you have given editor Jaeger, the best possible evidence for the power of qualitative research to bring real issues into the dialogue of educational researchers, in support of his original decision asking contributors to include illustrative cases to demonstrate methods in action. But one can't accomplish everything in a single chapter. The purpose of my chapter was to discuss ethnographic research and to demonstrate the ethnographic concern for context. Educational adequacy was the issue at hand, pursued through a brief anthropological life history. That was enough for one article. Don't confuse deception with focus.

You state as personal opinion, "It seems to me to have been highly dubious ethically for you to have undertaken a 'life history' study with a youth with whom you had been 'intimately involved.'" Did you miss the point that it was the intimacy that prompted the idea of pursuing a formal study? At the time, I was trying to figure out how to offer an anthropological perspective on learning outside school, and here was a learner in my own backyard with whom I could talk about virtually anything. Must I underscore that I don't do survey research, run "experiments" on "subjects," or conduct evaluations on programs? In the case with Brad, after he had hung around for a year and a half, I realized I was in touch with a real live dropout who would probably give me a straight story about himself and his perceptions on life. He seemed willing and interested in the idea—and a few easy bucks—so we gave it a try with a few taped interviews. His comment about

anonymity is included in the case. He was sufficiently comfortable with the idea of "informed consent" that he tore up a form I prepared and wrote out his own consent in longhand instead.

"Assaying ethical matters in particular cases of research often remains a matter of personal judgment," you observe, but apparently only your own judgment matters, for you state, "In short, you have deceived me and other readers." Have I really? There's more to every story, of course, but that brings me around to trying to figure out yours. What are you really up to here? For instructional purposes, the importance of the Sneaky Kid article is to show how qualitative research is designed in the making and how much we can learn even from an N of 1. From my perspective, it would have been "highly dubious ethically" to have presented a case study of this sort without having a sense of intimate personal knowledge of my informant. What has been changing recently is that researchers—in the social sciences, at least—are becoming more up front about the nexus between their professional roles and personal lives. You provide good evidence of the uphill battle this will be in educational research.

"This doesn't help me one jot in learning how to conduct educational ethnography," writes one of your "students." In spite of his angry jottings in three tightly written pages, I'll hazard that he has learned plenty! Without the typical educator preoccupation with method, the Sneaky Kid chapter is an excellent model for getting and organizing information presented primarily through interviewing. Some kind of relationship has to develop to get such information. You survey research types with your hit and run tactics never really get at the heart of matters, but to pass that off for ethics is to divert attention from the fact that you substitute breadth for depth. In this case, a personal relationship that evolved over a year and a half paved the way for exploring still another relationship in which even Brad thought his story might help someone. That in itself was a pretty big breakthrough for him.

I had no idea of the magnitude the problem of homeless youth would present for us in the decade ahead, but that was the problem focus in the initial writing. The account remains an excellent illustration of and model for taking the in-depth alternative to the psychometric approaches dominant in educational research. The model exemplifies Karl Popper's caution: Observation is always selective. It needs a chosen object, a definite task, an interest, a point of view, a problem. Instead of beating my article and me to death, did it occur to you and your students to ask, What can we learn from this? Did you really try to assess risks and benefits, the power of the Sneaky Kid article as it stands, to provide some insight into all those we do *not* reach

through our ceaseless efforts to school them? And thinking for a moment about the researcher himself, did you seriously take into account that the case was written in 1981, only six years after American psychiatrists reluctantly relinquished a huge source of income by declaring that homosexuality was not a mental illness? How about tempering your classroom discussions of ethics with a bit of compassion?

Now some advice for you, if you take it as well as give it. I urge you to communicate once more with editor Jaeger. By all means, reaffirm your position—I'm sure I have not changed it—but do allow that you speak for yourself, without insisting that what looks suspiciously like personal indignation should determine the organizational or editorial policy for 17,999 others. And tell him enough about the mystery class to assure him that the two letters were freely volunteered (rather than, say, a class assignment in which you displayed some power of your own), and [confirm] the extent to which they represent class consensus. I think it would also be a courtesy for you to let him off the hook by not holding him personally responsible for the works of his contributors, as apparently you do. With others, both of us have been working at this project for years with not so much as a thank you. If you don't like the book, use another. If righteous indignation about researchers who behave like people is a source of energy for your teaching, you and your students ought to have a field day with Kulick and Willson's new *Taboo* (1995) from Routledge.

As long as I remain an invited contributor to the volume, the Sneaky Kid piece will remain and I will point to it as a model. To date most readers have been able to make a distinction between research and researcher that apparently you cannot make: "Your 'sneaky kid' account is, in my view, simply not worthy of being held out as a model of such research." So be it; that's why they make chocolate and vanilla ice cream.

And how did AERA reward my forthrightness? The editor buckled. He wrote that he remained in "personal support" but was unwilling to claim he could act on behalf of the entire organization, in spite of the fact that he had been shepherding this project from taped lectures to a printed edition to an almost second edition for the previous 20 years. No sooner had I received a copy of the correspondence detailing the complaint than I received a phone call asking if I had a different piece I could substitute in place of Sneaky Kid. The second edition was ready to go to press. Did I have something less controversial that I could use as my illustrative piece?

Those were fighting words. My answer was a decisive "No." To expedite publication, I offered to withdraw my entire submission; just leave ethnography

out of the second edition entirely. But I noted that my contribution would remain available if there were a subsequent decision to accept the material as originally submitted—essentially an updated version of what, by that time, had been in circulation for nearly a decade.

The editor wrote personally: "I'm as fed up with this flap as you are! I hope it soon is resolved, but I have no choice but to follow through as the Professional Development and Training Committee has directed. It is a very unfortunate delay in what is already an unconscionably long publication process."

After much hemming and hawing, it was decided that the case would be submitted to a panel of judges selected from within the organization. Three AERA "ethicists," as they were referred to, would advise on the acceptability of what I had submitted. Before that internal review got under way, all parties gave permission to circulate what they had written. For my part, that included my proposed submission for the second edition, complete with the Sneaky Kid article, plus the Validity chapter and my letter quoted above, which was my formal response to the critique. For his part, my detractor included permissions to circulate what he had written, the echo by his office mate, and statements written by two students. I was fascinated by the correspondence from one of the students. She gave permission but noted that what had been submitted was part of a midterm exam that she never imagined would be so widely read. She underscored her concerns and objections about using the Sneaky Kid piece as an exemplar of ethnographic research, but emphasized that her essay was written to address an exam question and thus represented a more "bookish" writing style than she normally used.

Except for correspondence I had already seen, none of this matter was made public. I was never told who the judges were. To my surprise, I learned that I squeaked by with a two-out-of-three endorsement, when I expected (well, hoped, in any case) every one of the other 21,999 members to be in wholehearted support. The delay used up another year. The second edition of *Complementary Methods* was in production as long as the first, a half dozen years in all.

The editor still felt he was walking a fine line by including the Sneaky Kid piece. He wrote that he had received further inquiry from my detractor: "From his response, it seems likely that I've not heard the end of it. I let him know that I considered the decision firm and hoped he would not pursue it further. We'll see."

For the moment, at least, the matter was dropped. But, in my opinion, so was the ball. As long as there are vigilantes ready to pounce on researchers to stifle efforts at candor, or to censor the kinds of studies and problems

brought before students, then the safest route, especially for neophyte researchers, will be to follow a maxim that keeps such matters off the table entirely. Don't ask, don't tell.

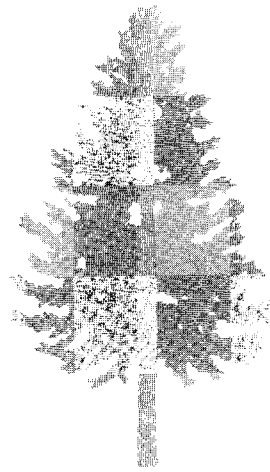
Or else, remain fully cognizant of the risks, and never assume that candor comes without cost. Joan Didion is reported to have warned, "I am so small, so neurotic, and so inoffensive that people invariably forget an important point: the writer will *do you in*" (attributed in Miles and Huberman 1994:287). As a researcher, you also need to watch out for your colleagues. If you don't do or present research as our self-appointed standard-bearers feel it should be done or presented, they may try to do *you in*. It is always safer to fault research reported by others than to present your own.

## Notes

1. Kulick and Willson's collection deals with sexual issues surrounding fieldworkers. Lewin and Leap deal specifically with lesbian and gay issues during fieldwork and writing. Since publication of those two works, there have been several books and collections on related topics. See, for example, Grinker 2000; Markowitz and Ashkenazi 1999.

## Chapter Eight

# Drawing Lessons



Only connect.

—E. M. Forster (*Howard's End*)

IN each generation, it becomes fashionable in the social sciences to include certain names among one's citations and to somehow try to weave one's interpretive framework around a cogent quotation from at least one of them. In recent years, such names as Pierre Bourdieu, Jacques Derrida, Wilhelm Dilthey, Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jacques Lacan, and Herbert Marcuse spring to mind. At the mere mention of them, the reader is presumed to recognize that an author travels (or travails) in good company.

Cynics have observed how curious it is that we go far afield literally and figuratively to find our philosophers and theorists. I take some comfort in that observation because it supports my bias that the study of human social behavior is not well served by taking how theory works in the natural sciences as our model. We catch ourselves trying to validate our interpretations by looking for pithy observations selected from an approved list of intellectuals. The roster keeps changing, so while it is hard to keep up with everything that is going on, one can give an appearance of doing so. But flat-footed ethnographers like myself tend to be so firmly rooted in the idiosyncratic nature of everyday occurrence that we are loath to make any generalizations at all, and are especially reluctant to nest our modest observations in lofty theories.

Yet I must concede that the language of our appointed theorists of the day is rich with insight and fresh perspective, especially when we bring our cases to them for examination in their light, rather than setting out with their ideas and endeavoring to prove them right. And so I go the next step, to borrow an idea that lends a fresh perspective to the account I have been developing and, especially, to the coherency I have imposed on it.

The late Pierre Bourdieu is the source for the insight and caution to which I point here, an observation he has termed the "biographical illusion"

(Bourdieu 1986). Bourdieu's notion—paraphrased for you just as it was for me when I came across it (in Järvinen 2000:372)—stems from his critique of traditional life history research that “forces the lived life's chaos into a straightforward, one-dimensional logic.”

Bourdieu argues that the life history is a social construction, an artifact that is a consequence of our insistence on, and pursuit of, order. The life history organizes and reports the events of someone's life as internally consistent, reciprocally meaningful units. They are presented as functional parts of a larger whole because it is in the interest of both the narrator and the listener, or author and reader, that the story assumes a logical and clear-cut pattern. This sense of logic and order is accomplished “by linking together life episodes into long, causal sequences and singling out certain events as especially significant.” Human life itself, Bourdieu argues, is incoherent, consisting of “elements standing alongside each other or following each other, without necessarily being related. It consists of confusion, contradictions, and ironies, and of indecisiveness, repetition, and reversion” (Järvinen 2000:372).

I have been guilty of creating this very kind of biographical illusion. I have created order out of chaos to make this account, just as I created order out of chaos to present Brad's original story. Even without the mental-health aspect, there had been plenty of chaos in Brad's life, and he most certainly added chaos to mine. I read Bourdieu's concern as a caution, but only that. It is something to be aware of, but something I am not able to do much about.

I created this biographical illusion for both personal and professional reasons. As the report it was intended to be, the original piece—even without the appended snappy subtitle “The Life History of a Sneaky Kid”—seemed intrinsically interesting because it opened the door on a life to which academics like myself are not ordinarily privy. That project, I remind you, was completed before there was any hint of what lay ahead. The journey into schizophrenia opened another door. Whether or not Brad is “over it” (the prognosis is not very good, and there is no way I intend to disturb him to find out), I opened that door in recognition of the fact that the mentally ill are around us, and we must take responsibility for them. The court case was another eye-opener, as you may someday experience if you ever find yourself in court with neither side on your side and nothing to win, no matter what the outcome. Still, the lasting power of the Brad story is a phenomenon to behold, for now both printed and performance versions are with us today, some 20 years after the fact.

### **Considering Consequences**

What lessons can we draw from examining this case? What general advice can I pass on to others wondering about the fate of their studies? What safeguards

should they observe? I hope it is clear that there is no way one can ever anticipate every possible place a study might turn up, or what its effect might be. I was tempted to write, "how it might be used or misused," but that would add a moral dimension, suggesting that there are right and wrong messages to be derived. On that, I think we have to take our chances. We may have our hopes and preferences, but the uses to which our studies may be put are totally beyond our control once we make them available. Note only that they are created without malice; perhaps that is the quality that was missed in the courtroom.

We can make some effort to control circulation, but such efforts may draw attention as well as divert it. We can change names or locations in an effort to restrict the number of people in the know, but that tactic can backfire if those in the know take delight in letting outsiders know just who is who. There are other ways we try to protect our informants. I think it incumbent on every researcher to review how important it may be to honor tenets of confidentiality and anonymity, as well as to inform those among whom we conduct research that there are no absolute safeguards. Nor can we assume that confidentiality itself is necessarily desirable. In Brad's case, it was my concern for confidentiality, not his, that resulted in his pseudonym. As he aptly observed—aptly at the time, at least—"No one knows who I am anyhow."

Thinking now of the original Sneaky Kid piece as having started it all, the case illustrates the need to be accurate and compassionate in reporting, and modest in claims of what we have accomplished and what we understand. I was tempted to fall back on the old saw "First do no harm," but that would be a cop-out, for I do not believe one can do this kind of research at all without there being risk, if only by having attended to some things and ignored others. Even studies intended to paint a glowing picture can inadvertently produce stress among other groups equally deserving but not chosen.

I think the realistic approach is a risk/benefit analysis, a weighing of possible risks and negative consequences against whatever is to be gained. In this, I would give the edge to satisfying our basic curiosity about how other people identify the problems they must solve and how they go about solving them. A clear sense of purpose is the best overall guide, with details assessed on a case-by-case basis.

As much as I agonized over the fact that the Sneaky Kid piece was introduced in court, I do not think it harmed Brad, any more than it enhanced my esteem in the eyes of jurors. The psychiatrists discounted it as secondhand and claimed to have based their assessment of Brad as anti-social on the basis of earlier reports and Brad's own statements during interviews. I had wondered whether Brad would find his own misdeeds a bit brazen when he first read about them in my report, but they seemed to give him no pause. Although his peers, too, were essentially illusory, he had them in mind as he looked for



anything that might create a poor impression. I have noted my tendency to keep the same thing from happening to me, particularly in the play.

There is little we can do to keep our studies from falling into the wrong hands or being used in ways we never could have predicted. But I think we can be more proactive in trying to reach audiences we *do* want to reach. I stand by the Sneaky Kid story as a good model. If my position is not yet clear, I personally regard the account as remarkably insightful from Brad's perspective and superbly crafted from my own. I felt it was much too good to be buried and forgotten in an obscure government publication.

Therefore I took, or, more accurately, made, an opportunity to publish it in the *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* when I assumed editorship of that journal, thereby ensuring that it would reach my closest professional associates. When I was asked to select an illustrative case to accompany my article on ethnographic research in a publication of the American Educational Research Association, I immodestly chose it once again, this time placing it in the hands of hundreds and hundreds of graduate students learning about qualitative research. Certainly not every author has such access at just the right time, but I helped to create those opportunities. It wasn't just luck! When I was able to convince publisher Mitch Allen to let me put together a book of readings of a number of my shorter pieces, there was the Sneaky Kid article again, this time joined by two subsequent articles, together forming the Brad Trilogy.

I did something else to promote the case, something I have consciously tried to do since first setting out on an academic career: I mentioned and cited these articles in my subsequent writing. I kept circling back to incorporate them in my thinking and writing, writing about research and about culture and about cultural acquisition. I never left my studies to flounder for themselves. I drew lessons from them, used them as examples, and reflected on their insights for new situations I faced.

I cannot say I have confronted and contained the idea of a biographical illusion; rather, I have endeavored to create that illusion. Looking back with a post hoc analysis, I can make sense of my career and what I know of Brad's career as well, placing odd bits and pieces into a mosaic that gives the appearance of order and logic. You expect to find such order in the careers of others, even though you know it isn't happening exactly that way in your own!

I turn now to some specific points I want to underscore. I begin with a discussion about ethics.

## **On Ethics**

Blow all the blue smoke you wish about research ethics, but please, leave my work out of the discussions. Ethics as an abstract phenomenon seems a wholly

desirable quality, a goal toward which—supposedly, at least—we all strive. In practice, ethics seems not to be something we attain but something we do not want others to find absent from our work. It is a quality noted in the breach.

I do not want my work challenged—and thus faulted—on ethical grounds. As far as I am concerned, one can be ethical or one can conduct social research, but one cannot be both ethical and a researcher in such settings.<sup>1</sup> I'll opt for the label of researcher. I'm prepared to take my lumps.

Matter of fact, I have been taking my lumps on ethical issues for years. I have grown weary of being confused for being ethical, or attacked for being unethical, when it is not a claim I wish to make or a standard against which I wish to be judged. I am more in tune with the declaration made some 20 years ago by Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman, that “fundamentally, field research is an act of betrayal, no matter how well intentioned or well integrated the researcher” (1984:233). Bless their hearts, they didn't back off from that stance when they revised their popular *Qualitative Data Analysis* a decade later:

Field research can, at bottom, be considered as an act of betrayal, no matter how well intentioned or well integrated the researcher. You make the private public and leave the locals to take the consequences. [1994:265]

In my heart and soul, I like to think that I am as ethical as I can be and still do the research I have done. But I am finding it difficult to defend the claim and wearisome to argue it. It seems to get in the way, rather than open the way, to helping others understand what I do and how (and why) I go about it. What I hope to accomplish here is to invite—or dare—you to join me in rejecting ethics, to refuse to allow yourself to be boxed in by pretending to be something you cannot possibly be if you are active in field research.

Alternatively, if my position is anathema to you, I would like to back *you* into a corner where you can be not only ethical but *superethical*. The only condition I impose on you is that you never ever claim, or pretend, to conduct qualitatively oriented research into human social behavior. Management guru Peter Drucker once observed that people can either meet or work, but they cannot do both at the same time. I suggest a parallel in social inquiry: You can be ethical or you can conduct social research. You cannot do both. The reaction of that small but vocal minority voicing their objections to the production of *Finding My Place: The Brad Trilogy* at the Edmonton conference finally drove me to the position I take here. Forced to make a choice, I will side with the researchers.

I have been writing, and writing about, qualitative research for years. Since publication of my first book in 1967, there have always been at least a few ready to step forward and take issue with what I have written. Most often this has been collegial, constructive, and well intended. Taking a long view, I can even

situate myself in what has been called the “age of ethics” in the kind of field research in which I engage. This was an age in which the ways and motives of the fieldworkers who were my models for research came under close scrutiny as we sought to reposition ourselves vis-à-vis those among whom we studied.

But since the publication of my *Validity* article in 1990, my detractors have included a different type of critic: one who sits in moral judgment of *me*. If you regard sexual behavior between same-sex, consenting adults, or the attraction of an older person for a younger one, as perforce unethical, unnatural, perverse, and so on—in other words, if your personal moral standards dominate your ethical ones, and they are so universal that you feel privileged to impose them on the world around you—then I doubt you can hear me even if you pretend to be listening.

But the problem for at least some readers was that I did not make clear enough, or forcefully enough, the order in which things happened. To misconstrue that order put me in a less-than-flattering light as a social scientist who abused his role by seducing his (somehow the term *powerless* always seems to creep in here) powerless young informant.

Or was it just that readers and listeners hear what they want to hear? For those who held me responsible for a seduction, rather than recognizing that I had made an informant of someone with whom I was having sex, judgments crept in before there was any opportunity, even any need, to hear the full story. The same is true for those who failed to recognize the relationship as a consenting one.

Books and articles go on to have lives of their own. There was no way I could add an explanatory footnote to the third piece in the Brad Trilogy once it was in print. From the moment I first presented the material, during the invitational symposium at Stanford, there were voices of criticism. There were voices of encouragement as well. I embraced them all, rather than feeling I ought to be, or needed to be, on the defensive.

The trilogy itself did not exist until the three pieces that comprise it were published under one cover in *Transforming Qualitative Data*. In that writing, I introduced each of the three pieces with a brief new discussion. Unfortunately, I paid too little heed to the fact that among a growing number of readers there were also a growing number of vocal critics offended by the relationship between Brad and me. They wanted to know why I failed to mention the nature of our personal relationship in the *original* life history, written almost a decade earlier.

In 1981, Brad’s sexual behavior could be dismissed socially as “hustling,” a behavior among younger men in dire straits that allowed such acts to be viewed as an economic necessity, and therefore forgivable. Brad certainly wasn’t hustling me, but he had a ready alibi and he allowed it to be played heavily in the

eventual trial. Although by then I had lived with my partner Norman for almost 15 years (and still live with him today, after almost 35), we were both teachers, and we had no desire to see how far we could push the boundaries at the time. Honoring diversity is easier said than done. We live in a seemingly enlightened era, but under the specter of fundamental (and the reality of fundamentalist) disapproval.

Controversy doesn't hurt book sales. Boldly stated fieldwork issues offer real cases that are valuable for seminar discussions, and the tenets of fieldwork as intimate, long-term acquaintance are indeed an invitation to moral disaster. I have encouraged and appreciated instructors who used the articles in *Transforming Qualitative Data*, especially the trilogy included in it, to raise such issues.

If anything, my effort to encourage more candor in reporting may have taught just the opposite, that efforts to be candid are likely to be costly. There was no consideration of whether these things can and do happen in fieldwork. For me, the lesson is that ethics and research are ill suited to each other. It appears safer to take the moral high ground than to allow oneself to become a truly human instrument.

There is safety in numbers. My counsel for those who want to take the ethical high road is to stick with numbers. Make your samples so large that no one runs any risk in gathering or examining the data. Of course, one can put entire populations at risk that way, but as long as the numbers are large enough, you are more likely to be applauded for what you uncover than for any discomfort you cause.

## **Protection of Human Subjects Versus Institutionalization of the Protection of Human Subjects**

I am not opposed to keeping confidences and respecting the rights and privacy of those whose lives we invade, but I do not think such declarations can be made in absolute terms. Casting this process in words suggesting that those among whom we study need to be protected from us also gets us off to a poor start. These days, it is often researchers who need to be protected: from their human subjects, from those who assume responsibility for protecting those subjects, and from those who use their authority to silence unwelcome findings or to purchase the results they desire.

I am dead set against the end result of the collective concern for human subjects that has resulted in the procedures formally designed to confer that protection through Institutional Review Boards (IRBs). Most certainly there have been circumstances where harm—psychological, and sometimes even physical—has come to people being researched. But the machinery that has

evolved to protect them is a boondoggle that has turned human research into a bureaucratic nightmare, a series of steps and procedures designed ultimately to protect only the institutions themselves. They also provide busywork for a largely self-selected coterie of research monitors.

I came of age in research before such policies were institutionalized. By remaining calculatedly uninformed, I have generally managed to escape them. The best advice I can offer to researchers confronting formal review procedures—and these days this includes virtually all researchers—is to treat the bureaucratic process with about as much reverence as you would in renewing your driver's license. Do what you have to do, tell them what you need to tell them (i.e., what they need to hear), and get on with it. Ethics are not housed in such procedures.

Some awfully petty personnel find comfort in enforcing some awfully petty rules, which takes up the valuable time of others trying to keep them from completely closing down the discovery-oriented approaches qualitative researchers follow. An example is the notion of obtaining written consent, so easily insisted on by an IRB, so impossible in some situations and impractical in others. Today, one is expected at least to speak to the issue of informed consent in most research. If nothing more, it is another box to be checked in the inventory of deeds and possible misdeeds.

I once had a person in authority tell a doctoral student planning to do research in a village that she would need a signed permission slip from everyone in the village before she could even begin her study. Another student returning to her native country to conduct research was told that she would have to get a signed consent form from every villager she intended to interview that explained that their names would not be used! And, in the spirit of retroactive protection, the editor of a scholarly journal inquired whether I had on file a permission slip from everyone who attended a potlatch event about which I wrote, an audience numbering in the hundreds.

The only time I ever requested formal consent in any study I have ever done was from Brad himself. I did it as much to inform him how research was conducted as to ratify his permission to use what he had volunteered. I prepared a brief form on letterhead stationery for his signature. He read it. Then, in his customary impatient style, he tore it up, informing me that he would write his own release. He did it with a simple sentence or two. Far more important to him, as he came to realize but could not anticipate, was my assurance that I would turn off the tape recorder any time he wanted to go off the record, and that he could read and critique what I had drafted. He was willing to give my completed draft one reading. He was not even particularly interested in doing that until I told him I would pay him for his reading time as well as his interview time.

## Ethics in the Brad Story

Please be aware of my intent. Although confession may be good for the soul, I have not undertaken this examination of the Brad saga to unburden myself. My purpose is to serve reminder that qualitative research is laden with such problems. If you are going to pursue qualitative work, your agony will not so much be about the violations themselves as whether or not, or to what extent, you will choose to disclose them. The yet-to-be-discovered secret is why the topic has not been addressed more candidly and more often, for these are realities in fieldwork.<sup>2</sup>

Ethically, I do not find as much to fault with the Brad study as have my critics. Brad himself was satisfied with the initial account as drafted. Certain of his exploits that I thought he might wish deleted or at least muted (breaking into houses, stealing bicycles, a failed attempt at robbery) gave him no pause. His concern seemed to be for an imagined audience of peers who might fault some of his word choices. He even expressed the wish that his story might help people to “understand,” although exactly what he meant was never clear.

I doubt that either of Brad’s parents held me in high esteem, but ethics do not reside in the esteem people have for one another. In their view, I assume that I am seen as the one responsible for his landing in prison. I don’t hold them in high esteem, either, in a general sense for throwing him out so early and so often (though, admittedly, he was a handful), and in a particular sense for failing to warn me that he had returned to Oregon with the stated intent to do harm. With fair warning, they easily might have prevented all this; they chose to look the other way. I will always wonder whether they intentionally chose the option that allowed Brad both to wreak his revenge *and* to be locked away.

During the trial, Brad’s mother was overheard remarking, “I suppose Harry will get another book out of this.” True, but the book has been a long time coming, and the story has not produced a fortune. Did the Brad story bring fame and notoriety? Perhaps the answer is yes, especially if the terms are taken literally. Did the story make my career as a researcher? The order in which I conducted my research studies should dispel that notion: The Brad sequence was the last of my fieldwork ventures, not the first. My more recent writing has focused on issues of method. I wondered at the time of the trial whether the account might bring my entire professional career to a halt, which it did not. But, most certainly, neither did it launch it.

What dismayed me at the time of the trial was that my case study—Brad’s account of his life as volunteered in his own words—was introduced as evidence *against him* in the trial proceedings. Not much was actually made of the article, but the jury had it as an exhibit, and under the circumstances it

hardly offered testimony to his stalwart nature. I cannot imagine a worse professional nightmare than having a life story collected for research purposes being introduced as evidence against the person who gave it.

In a deep and personal way, Brad's own ethics disappointed me. He turned the nature of our relationship around to make me out to be the bad guy in what I would wager were the best years of his life. But I understood where he was coming from. Once he had committed the assault and arson, the only thing he could do was make me appear culpable. He managed to do that with both a literal and figurative vengeance. Know this: Were similar circumstances to occur today, knowing what I now know of the risks involved, I would probably let another Brad take refuge on my place. I have never been sorry for letting him stay or for becoming involved with him. I have been deeply grieved at how it all turned out, and deeply sorry if there was something I might have done that would have helped. My sorrow does not reach the depths of remorse, just a wish that it all might have turned out differently.

Over the course of the past 40 years, I have made some good ethical decisions and some not-so-good ones. I have made no decisions that I deeply regret. Sometimes I have been ethical where I did not need to be, in the sense that what I regarded as ethical did not matter to someone else, and what they regarded as ethical did not look that way to me. But my ethics in the Brad case are intact. You can find more serious breaches in my other studies, if you really need to. But if you do, you are heading away from doing your own research and into looking at the research of those about you. That is the only way you can be superethical.

### **Finding "Typical" Cases**

Watching helplessly as Brad seemed to drift away from reality in his last weeks at the cabin, I could not believe that under my very eyes I was seeing someone slip into mental illness (or mental illness slip into him). At the time, I felt one could read the signs either way, that it was a passing phase of depression that Brad might have been playing up, or a sign of something deeper, to which he was unwittingly surrendering. For Brad, those days were both the best of times and the worst of times. His sometime job as a landscape-gardener's helper resulted in the unusual event of an occasional payday. He purchased (purchased!) a few things that made life at the cabin pleasanter, including a fancy two-burner campstove.

But by the final week preceding his departure (several weeks after that purchase), nothing seemed to be going right. Brad had explored the possibility of joining the armed services, and, at my gentle but persistent urging, he

had been to the county mental-health clinic. Now he delivered the final ultimatum: He was leaving. Yet he seemed to have no idea where he would go, or what he was hoping to find there.

It seemed unlikely that introducing a world of uncertainties would stabilize him, and once he departed, there was no way I could learn of his fate unless he contacted me. Telephoning his mother was not a consideration; he had been adamant about not returning there. I felt that a call to her would only introduce needless worry if she felt any concern for him at all, and at that point I doubted she did. Brad had made it quite clear that he would not be welcome in his stepfather's house. To my surprise, it was Brad's mother's call to me, weeks after Brad left the cabin, that brought word of his travels and troubled state of mind, which by then had become acute.

I began thinking and writing about the different set of options that Brad had considered in his final weeks at the cabin, but it was clear that the one that had become a reality was the mental-health issue. If his mother had overstated the case by describing him as "insane," it was nevertheless apparent that his behavior was anything but normal. What I had observed just prior to his departure were the early signs of a full-blown psychosis. Helplessly watching that happen to a young and otherwise healthy person who desperately needed to keep his wits about him was to experience tragedy in the making. I had watched from the first undetected moments as the tragedy began to unfold, and Brad went from OK to not OK, from normal to not normal. To this day, I find the memory of those circumstances sad and depressing: a physically capable and healthy young body deprived of its complement in a mentally capable and healthy mind. Rose-colored glasses? Perhaps. But I never embraced the idea of Brad as hopelessly anti-social, only as someone who had taken a long way to come around.

Initially, I was sorry to see the mental-health issue elevated to the position of a major player in the continuing Brad saga. But never for a minute have I felt any remorse about having sex with him, and/or subsequently doing a life story with him. Had he not returned as he did, the personal aspect of our relationship need never have been made public. It was strictly a private matter until he chose to make it otherwise.

In that, the mental illness played a major role. Once I learned that he had not miraculously snapped out of it, that his mental condition had worsened into something serious, I wondered what effect his present mental condition had on the veracity of the Sneaky Kid account. In the original interviews, as well as in all but the last few months of his two years at the cabin, Brad had expressed and demonstrated an idea of who he was and what he was up to. That was what made his story compelling. Looking back on the account now as the ramblings of a madman, might everything be reinterpreted as signs of



impending mental illness waiting patiently in the wings? After all, don't crazy people do crazy things?

I realized that what I wanted was to normalize Brad, to make him appear as typical as possible, in order to lend credibility to the case study. I wanted the case to be generalizable. Every qualitative researcher faces dilemmas like this, anxious to be acknowledged for recognizing what is unique to an individual case, but equally anxious to have the case recognized for its broader implications. Here is one place where research ethics really reside, cautioning against making more or less of certain aspects of an investigation, so as to present the case in its best light.

I decided early on to bite the bullet, to raise the question (or specter) of the mental-health issue, without letting it overwhelm the case. In the "Cultural Alternatives to Career Alternatives" piece drafted soon after I heard from his mother, I wrote:

If the case [i.e., the previously published Sneaky Kid account] is diminished because its young protagonist crossed a psychological threshold and lost some touch with reality, there is still something to be learned.

As noted, being a paid and full-time crazy person is becoming an "occupation" for a discernible portion of our population, a social group whose distinguishing economic characteristic is that they are remunerated on the basis of their incompetence rather than their competence. Further, no one is crazy all the time. Even during the moments when they do act crazily, the cultural repertoire from which so-called crazy people draw remains essentially the same as for those around them. Even inappropriateness must be exercised in culturally appropriate ways. In his paranoia, Brad did not bury his fingernail clippings, cast a magic spell over his cabin and belongings, stick pins in voodoo dolls, or run amok. Rather, he hitchhiked a thousand miles, cast about for several weeks, and then suddenly began making collect telephone calls to his mother from freeway points conveniently accessible from her home, insisting that he was broke, hungry, and lost. [Wolcott 1987:323-24]

I was tempted to make Brad seem as normal as possible so that I could counter the inevitable challenge, "But is this case really typical?" We are bedeviled by the idea, and ideal, of randomness, as though it is somehow sinful to select the cases we study. Students being introduced to research are enjoined to employ the model of our quantitatively oriented associates and let some external system choose our subjects for us. When that seemingly desirable procedure is impossible or impractical (as is usually the case in qualitative study), then we strive to identify cases that are "typical," and thus at least somewhat representative of the phenomenon under study.

That is an unfortunate misreading of research. First, a caution about the merits of random sampling. I take my maxim from something I learned from sociologist Robert Dubin, that we only randomize when we don't know what we are doing—that is, when we don't have any idea of the population from which our cases are drawn. If you want to study shopping behavior at a Saturday market, you don't randomize the days of the week, you observe on days when you expect something to happen. You make the most informed selection you can according to the purposes of your study.

True, in the selection of informants or cases or villages, we may have little or no choice. Pure randomization is usually out of the question. You hope that you can find one of a kind where there is any possibility of doing research at all. Margaret Mead wrote to this issue years ago in what she described as the problem of “anthropological sampling” (Mead 1953:654). I find her answer instructive and reassuring. I pass her advice along even though she is no longer in the quoting circle of the current generation of fieldworkers. You may wish to take her answer for your own in responding to the objection that our cases are not, and can never be, selected at random:

*It is simply a different kind of sampling, in which the validity of the sample depends not so much upon the number of cases as upon the proper specification of the informant, so that he or she can be accurately placed, in terms of a very large number of variables. . . . Each informant is studied as a perfect example, an organic representation of his complete cultural experience.* [Mead 1953:654–55]

Seasoned fieldworkers are all too aware that the individuals most willing to talk to us are often marginal to their own group, or at least are not typical of other insiders. But that observation can be turned around to ask just who is ever typical or representative. Instead of trying to inventory the features that would make an individual average, and then hoping to identify and enlist such an individual, Mead points a way that allows us to work with whoever is willing to work with us. Or, as in Brad's case, whoever happens along.

With no exact idea of how to proceed, I had been looking for a learner. But for months after Brad happened along, it still had not occurred to me that here was a perfect example of a learner, and right in my backyard. From an anthropological perspective, I knew only that I did not want to focus on school learning. I wanted to look at education in its broadest sense.

Brad was a learner. That's all I needed. He could be accurately placed within a wider community of learners. Qualitative sampling cannot answer questions of frequency or distribution—those questions must be researched in

other ways. There are other Brads out there—that was enough to satisfy my purposes. And if Brad headed into mental problems, that, too, could be specified. If one were to count him among the homeless—living in a crude shelter without amenities or address—then the fact of mental illness actually served to make him more, rather than less, typical. I did not seek Brad out, nor did he seek me. When our paths crossed and I eventually invited him to be my informant for a brief life story, I did not concern myself with his typicality.

I can attest to the fact that there never was and never will be anyone quite like Brad. But according to syndicated columnist Bob Herbert, who is published in my daily newspaper, there are now “nearly 5 million people aged 16 to 24 who are both out of school and out of work.” The article continues:

These youngsters live their troubled lives beneath the radar of most public-policy planners. They are jobless, but most of them are not even counted as unemployed. To be officially “unemployed” you have to be actively looking for work.<sup>3</sup>

For purposes of a case study, I did not need a random sample drawn from a population of 5 million. I had only to identify the characteristics that help to specify where Brad fit into a larger picture. In this case, the picture was of a white middle-class homeless suburban youth. Mead categorized her subjects with a number of such characteristics (“variables,” as she referred to them): “age, sex, order of birth, family background, life-experience, temperamental tendencies (such as optimism, habit of exaggeration, etc.), political and religious position, exact situational relationship to the investigator, configurational relationship to every other informant, and so forth” (1953:655). Such a list of properties could be expanded indefinitely. Mead wanted only to suggest some ways that an individual can be placed in a broader context and still be a perfect example.

The purposes of the research help determine the relevant characteristics to be identified. As to the “exact situational relationship to the investigator,” I think she would have been satisfied with what I reported, not condemned me for what I did not disclose. Writing in the 1950s as she was, anthropologists were still having to be encouraged to put themselves into the settings they were describing! Give me credit for doing that!

I could have done without the mental-health issue. I could have done nicely without the violence, and without the agonizing trial and subsequent prison sentence. I would just as soon have continued to look through rose-colored glasses, if that is what I was doing. But these elements became part of the case. My initial reaction to each untoward event was a lament that it made the case

less typical. On reflection, they all may have contributed to making it more timely, more in tune with the reality of everyday life. Anthropologist Arthur Kleinman has written:

I would hazard the suggestion . . . that the search for social theories of the human misery of violence, poverty, and oppression will preoccupy the next generation of ethnographers. [1995:241]

Voilà! Brad has dragged me (battered and bruised rather than kicking and screaming, I'm afraid) into the concerns of the next generation of ethnographers. I would rather not be here. But here I am.

### **On Serendipity**

Which brings us to a consideration of serendipity in research. Pursuing the case study led in directions I would never have anticipated. The beauty of a discovery approach is that one is free to follow leads suggested by the case itself. From the very first, Brad's life and explanations led to circumstances I might never have faced or understood.

Without the strictures of hypotheses carefully formulated in advance, fieldwork reaches its apex as an act of discovery, not through earth-shaking revelations but in discerning patterns of behavior and our human capacity for both creating and coping with problems. There are always choices to be made in pursuing a course of research—one cannot venture down every path and make any headway toward a destination. But if one can maintain an openness to inquiry without losing focus, our studies can be as unpredictable for us as are the uses that others may make of them.

The Brad story serves as case in point, looking back over its impact on my thinking and subsequent experience. I'd read a lot about alienated youth, I'd just never met any. Nor was I particularly conscious of the fact that the term itself is no longer in fashion. The labels keep changing; the problems seem to remain. In classes and seminars, I often included books and articles dealing with the topic of alienation. My experience as a teacher in an Indian village on the west coast of Canada put me somewhat at the forefront in discussing problems of cultural diversity in the schools. An early and frequently reprinted article from that experience, "The Teacher as an Enemy" (Wolcott 1974), helped establish that my experience with such students was firsthand and insightful. It was also quite limited.

My experience of dropouts, delinquents, the homeless, and the unemployed was of the same order: I was familiar with the literature, read reports

and statistics, and served on doctoral committees dealing with the topic. I'd just never met any. My firsthand experience with these social categories remains about the same today. Living in a medium-size community in the Pacific Northwest, on the outskirts of a city where it is still possible to have a 20-acre plot and live within five miles of a large university, I remain buffered from the realities of urban blight and people who live unusually hard lives. Realistically speaking, if I was ever to have informal contact with these problems—that is, contact outside of my role as professor or researcher—they would have to come to me.

In the form of Brad, they did: alienated youth, dropout, delinquent, homeless, unemployed, all rolled up into one 19-year-old. Who stayed. I try to avoid categorizing people, but, in any case, the negative categories are not the ones that would have come to mind except that I had never known anyone on food stamps. It had not occurred to me that a physically able youth would be a recipient of, and dependent on, them. But I also saw a more admirable set of characteristics: rugged individualism, resourcefulness, bravado, daring, and craftiness (in both a good and less-good sense). He was a keep-to-yourself kind of person, not a type you necessarily would associate with in social circles, but a person you would be glad to have as an ally in the face of adversity. I could not help but be curious as to how he survived, which, in his own terms, was what he was doing. How did he go about it, what were his days like, his thoughts for the future, his worries?

I gained some insight into most aspects of his life, but it was slow work. We did not see much of each other for the first several months he was on the place, although there were occasional jobs on which I needed help, and I recognized his need for cash. I realized that his attitude toward other people's property probably included our property as well, but living at the edge of town, and being away weekdays, we had always been careful about locking things up, house and tools especially.

I found his arguments convincing for living the way he was living. I recognized that his choice of a spot on which to build his cabin did put him at a disadvantage for taking a job in town, even if he had been able to find one. The cabin site was about 700 feet above the floor of the valley. Getting back to it after a trip to town meant a steep climb, the final portion on an often-muddy trail. My delinquent, dropout, homeless, unemployed homesteader became instead a woodsman-survivalist, his choice of options nicely rationalized.

I found myself wondering how society could help him do what he had set out to do. I was surprised to discover how little it helped, how much it threatened. In society's terms, he was still a delinquent, dropout, homeless, unemployed youth.

## **Trial by Trial**

Second only to the shock of finding Brad inside my house, intent on doing harm, was the shock of the trial as case and case study of the American justice system. Serendipity found me there, and an anthropological perspective helped me get through it, but I am saddened by the experience. As with my vague notion of what psychologists and psychiatrists do and how they go about making their judgments, my expectations for the courts were based on idealized notions of how things should work, not how they actually do. I wonder if that has not been my lifelong engagement with anthropology: studying how social systems really work, as contrasted with how I have been led to believe they should work.

I have described what I perceive as a paradox in how this trial proceeded, that under the guise of gathering as much evidence as possible, the mechanisms for introducing evidence worked instead to restrict information and to bundle as much information as possible into either/or issues often irrelevant to the case. Two attorneys conducted the trial; theirs were the only questions to be answered. Objections raised to questions or answers served constantly to interrupt the train of thought. The defense attorney grasped at straws to delve into irrelevant aspects of a case of assault and arson.

The question before the jury was whether Brad could “conform” his behavior and pursue his anti-social acts, or whether he was driven by mental forces that overrode his ability to control himself. As it was fairly clear that he remained essentially in control, having waited two and a half years before returning, one would have been hard-pressed to insist that he could exert no control, although I will forever wonder how, or even whether, he was able to control himself at the height of the skirmish. He did, after all, douse me with gasoline. He did not know whether or not I was in the house when he set it afire. It was interesting that the judge hearing the case harbored reservations about Brad’s sanity. Although he followed the jury’s instructions, he took care to see that Brad received psychological counseling and that he be placed in a special program in prison.

But I found the proceedings themselves, although giving an appearance of exceptional civility, to be exceedingly rude. The lines of questioning were allowed to go far astray. The time spent on everything except the disagreement among the two psychiatrists was irrelevant. The whole trial was a waste of money: six months after Brad confessed to the crimes, the jury discovered that, yes, he did it. Summoning people to testify and then working to discredit everything they said, and asking questions in such a way that they could not be answered, were both counterproductive and demeaning.

Sensing how often the defense counsel was asking convoluted, nonsensical questions, at one point I made an effort to let him swing in the breeze, at

least for a while. I insisted he repeat one of his badly phrased questions. He stumbled in doing so, and I asked the court recorder to read the question back because I still could not discern a question in his rambling. The court recorder read back from the stenographer's tape as well as she could, until she had to confess, "I didn't get it." I got my two cents in by adding, "Welcome to the club" (which she did get). But I had long grown impatient with the way I was being treated—bullied, really—and my regard for the court is a consequence of the regard I felt the court had for me.

To be there because of Brad was the last thing I wanted, and to be his adversary was unthinkable. It was not a trial in which justice eventually triumphed, but in which everyone lost everything, dignity included. Somehow I anticipated that when it was all over, everyone would feel OK about it, that at least there had been a fair hearing of relevant issues. When the trial did finally end and the verdict was announced, Brad reportedly snapped his fingers and shrugged his shoulders, in a manner suggesting, "That's the way it goes." An unannounced verdict was that Brad's court-appointed defense attorney was the worst thing that could have happened to him.

Several weeks went by before Brad's sentencing, so the suspense was not over for him. Norman and I were glad to be leaving town and heading out of the country for a year, where we would no longer wonder what the local paper had to say about us or the trial.

Where do our studies go, and what do they do there? The Sneaky Kid, both as article and as the real thing, went to trial, and that part of the story would seem to have ended there. I did not know that the verdict had been appealed about a month after sentencing. As might have been expected, the point of appeal was as irrelevant as most of the trial to the issue of Brad's sanity. It dealt with whether the judge's ruling about the nature of any other of the *victim's* (i.e., my) prior homosexual relationships was germane to the case. Might the existence of any such relationships have been of consequence in the determination of this one? Based upon another ponderous 15-page legal document, the (public) attorneys for Brad, now referred to as "the defendant-appellant," respectfully requested that the conviction be reversed.

You may make what you want of the appeal court's reply affirming the judgment of the circuit court in disallowing such testimony. I see it as a reprimand, and a severe one, of the defense counsel. Not really worth my waiting 15 years for, but I had no idea that an appeal had been filed or acted upon. Here is the summary statement:

The fatal flaw in defendant's argument, which was never addressed below or on appeal, is the complete lack of relevancy of the victim's prior homosexual

activity to defendant's alleged mental disease or defect. Defendant's motive for introducing this evidence is clear; he sought to prejudice the jury about the victim's lifestyle rather than establish any evidence of his alleged mental disease. However, the victim's character was not at issue. Defendant's conduct and his responsibility for this conduct was the issue. The trial court did not err in excluding this totally irrelevant and unduly prejudicial testimony.

That statement, though unlikely to see the light of day or ever come to my knowledge, was signed by the then-attorney general of the state, who later became president at my university. Why none of this was ever made known to me, the victim, tends further to diminish whatever feelings I might have had that ultimately justice will prevail. They are compounded by my bitterness that the man who so ineptly presented Brad's case and so thoroughly disparaged me was subsequently appointed to a judgeship. Judge not.

The fact of the appeal has one further consequence for the Brad saga. Whether or not an appeal is successful, a judicial review elevates a circuit court trial to the status of law. Future cases can be argued on the basis of the findings of this one. So in the annals of Oregon state law, there will exist forever a case to which I here give a pseudonym: *State of Oregon v. Brad*. With court costs, prosecutor and public defender costs, psychiatric examinations, and years of institutionalization, that was one expensive addition to the law library!

## On Intimacy

I could not possibly identify all the places where our studies might turn up. But surely this inquiry into where one study went suggests how far afield they can go. At that, I seriously doubt that I have identified all the places where the Brad Trilogy made an appearance, or all the uses to which it may have been put. Even estimating readership is impossible, for the original Sneaky Kid account first appeared in a journal that is sent to many academic libraries. It may have been read, or copied, in uncounted numbers. Not even publishers can be relied on for accurate records of book sales, especially when the current owner is not the original publisher.

At the same time, I hope I have not made a bigger issue out of the case than is warranted, or given it a more prominent role in the annals of qualitative research than it deserves. What I have intended to underscore is that we never know how our studies will be used or where they will go. Nor is there any way to guarantee that they will go anywhere at all.

If you would like to help your studies attain wider attention than they might otherwise enjoy, you will have to stump on their behalf, as I did with the



original Sneaky Kid article, and as I have done now with the entire trilogy. Most certainly I suggest that you draw on your earlier studies in analyzing and interpreting subsequent ones, constantly circling back for deeper insights and a broader perspective. In that way you not only make fuller use of your own work but provide a model for less experienced scholars who may think it in vogue to deny their earlier research so as to appear more mature and sophisticated.

From the experience reported here, it is probably safe to say that another way to gain notoriety—a surefire way, it would seem—is to include an element of scandal or sex in the account. “Only recently,” writes anthropologist Sally Cole, “have some anthropologists begun to be frank about having acted as sexual selves in the field—and not always to the critical acclaim of colleagues” (Cole 1995:178). That “safe sex” warning cautions you to restrict your observations to reporting on the activities of others—what they do or are reported doing with each other—rather than on your own involvement. Even reporting on the intimate relationships of others, especially if you have not made it clear to your subjects that you intended to make that an aspect of the research, can lead to a sense of betrayal that puts future fieldwork, particularly your own, in jeopardy.

I should not pass up the opportunity to underscore that in this case it was Brad’s betrayal of our relationship that precipitated the problems that developed. I attribute that betrayal to a mind beset by illusion that I simply got mixed up in. It was not that we did not have sex. We did. We enjoyed it at the time. There should have been no regrets afterward. When Brad started enjoying it less and became distracted with other thoughts, we stopped.

Perish the thought of another confrontation, but if Brad has regained or ever will regain his wits, I doubt that he would be able to offer what I could accept as a satisfactory explanation for what happened, or why I became the fall guy for his troubles and troubled mind. I think we would argue endlessly over who started it. I can live with his observation that I was “more consenting” than he was. I took the lead; he followed. I would remind him that he knew Norman and I were in a longtime relationship. An attractive young man like him does not take down his pants to ask if his penis “looks all right” with no thought as to what may follow. Rather than bear the wrath of his mother for his hustling activities after he left the cabin, it was easier for him to put the blame, now encased in guilt, on me. He had convinced me of his amoral nature; now he needed to rediscover his moral one to get back into his mother’s good graces as he once again became dependent on her. That’s what I think happened. It just happened to be with someone who cared about him—perhaps, like poor Othello, not wisely but too well.

But there is opportunity lost if the case is not probed further for a critical issue it raises about the role of intimacy in fieldwork. Most of my detractors’

energies have gone into examining issues of *my* behavior, or condemnation of *my* actions as a researcher, rather than looking at the broader question of intimacy itself. Intimacy is an issue of degree. How intimate is intimate, and how much intimacy is allowed, condoned, even essential in fieldwork? What does it mean to describe fieldwork, at least the ethnographically oriented approach that many of us pursue, as “intimate, long-term acquaintance”?

I did not invite Brad to do the life story project on the basis of our sexual intimacy. I did assume our intimacy to be a clear advantage, because I believed that it would allow us to discuss virtually any aspect of his life. That he remained guarded in his revelations surprised me; nonetheless, I felt I knew him better than anyone I had ever worked with in a formal research capacity, and at least as well as those with whom I interact informally. Age and circumstances separated us—formidable barriers, but not impossible ones.

I daresay this is not the first time a researcher has become sexually involved with someone in the group under study—nor will it be the last. Unfortunately, what has happened as a consequence of such cases means that it is probably less likely that we will see an outpouring of such revelations in the near future. Granted, there have always been a few brave souls willing to tell more than expected. But what can we offer by way of guidelines or advice to future fieldworkers?

An easy cop-out is to suggest the same guideline that helps with the issue of level of detail: Delve as deeply as necessary to answer the research question. That ought to keep instructors in safe territory when discussing a dicey topic in class. But intimacy is also a matter of the heart, of emotions, of physiological response as well as intellectual response. And it has a negative side as well. How do we cope with individuals whom we despise, those who stir no feelings or stir strong antipathy in us? Do we pretend to hide such emotions from ourselves, to claim an objectivity we know we do not have?

Viewed in terms of risks and benefits, the issue of intimacy is an aspect of fieldwork that warrants deliberation. What we need, however, is not resolution but a heightened sensitivity toward the problem. It is up to the individual fieldworker to map the course for each situation. Platitudes are an easy starting place, but it is important for each fieldworker to recognize the distinction between real and ideal behavior. It is crucial to be honest in such matters. The degree of candor appropriate for one’s various audiences will always vary with the circumstances and, especially, with the times.

Our attention should be directed to one’s comportment *during* fieldwork, rather than how revealing one intends to be about it afterward. A number-one rule should be to not be dishonest about anything one says, which is not to say that one is therefore advised to reveal everything. Whoever said that discretion

is the better part of valor coined a good aphorism for fieldworkers. I think fieldworkers are better prepared when sent into the field alert to the *issue* of intimacy than armed with a set of rules to follow. Neophytes caught between Human Subject Review Boards on the one hand and their moralizing mentors on the other—faculty teaching about research but not doing it—may more often need encouragement about how to achieve sufficient intimacy than warned against its obvious excesses. I find it easier to look for what constitutes too little intimacy for authentic fieldwork than to come up with platitudes for guarding against excess.

A good starting place is to be more revealing about ourselves. In our sometimes grim determination to learn all we can about the individuals with whom we conduct research, we forget that others can be quite curious about us, including why we are curious about them. One can marvel at how much fieldworkers have been able to learn and report about the lives of others. On reflection, I think one can also marvel at how incomplete is our knowledge, even of those close to us.

### **Muddy Waters**

The problem of intimacy, as it unfolded in the Brad Trilogy and was discussed in *The Art of Fieldwork* (Wolcott 1995), became the basis for an ongoing discussion among a group of six researchers at the University of Vermont. They labeled their group “Muddy Waters,” aptly describing the difficult issues they were tackling. The group jointly authored one of the rejoinders to Reba Page’s article “Teaching About Validity” that appeared in *Qualitative Studies in Education* and was discussed in chapter 6 here. As they reported in their response:

Our dialogue gradually evolved . . . into a deep, reflective conversation about the complexity and power of intimate human relationships generally, and in research, specifically. We began to consider and acknowledge intimacy as a unique medium for learning. In juxtaposing our perspectives on learning-through-intimacy to the Brad Trilogy, our central question surfaced: If intimacy is a route to understanding, what should we, as researchers, consider as we engage intimately in relationships as part of our research? [Busier, Clark, Esch, Glesne, Pigeon, and Tarule 1997:165]

The Brad Trilogy did, indeed, muddy the waters. It presented their group with a complex case in which their professional sympathies lay with the researcher role, but their concerns were for the researched, interpreted through a feminist perspective as an imbalance of power. And power, they cautioned, can-

not be ignored in intimate relationships: "A certain discomfort remains around using data obtained through intimate relationships or, at least, from relationships that breach celibacy, that are viewed as too intimate" (1997:165–66).

Yet they also recognized, following feminist researcher Patricia Maguire, that "without close, empathetic, interpersonal interchange and relationships, researchers will find it impossible to gain meaningful insights into human interaction or to understand the meaning people give to their own behavior" (Maguire 1987:20–21). They were left with questions that I relay to you: How can we achieve "a comfortable balance between revealing too much or not enough about our intimate relationships in our attempts to enable readers to understand our work and to share in our discovery" (Busier, et al. 1997:167)? And, can one ever retell *all* the understanding that emerges from an intimate relationship (p. 168)? For, as they note, the only thing as challenging as getting tangled in the "underbrush of relationships" is trying to write about them.

As the Muddy Waters group speculated about what they called the "Brad/Harry connection," they found themselves disclosing more and more personal information about and among themselves. They began struggling with how to connect their personal lives with their professional ones. The Brad saga was a catalyst for introspection into their own roles—both as researchers and as women.

Where do our studies go? Sometimes they seem to get to just the right place, and to do something worthwhile there. My own foibles, although duly inventoried in the group's brief response, appeared to be forgiven as they realized that fieldworker relationships with those they study are the critical issue. They concluded:

We are grateful for the way that Wolcott's willingness to take risks in the research community has provoked such conversations as the Muddy Waters one. We may have gotten here without the Brad Trilogy, but we doubt we would have done so as quickly or as passionately. [p. 169]

In their response, the Muddy Waters group commented, "In recent years, a few researchers have been forthcoming about intimate relationships which resulted from fieldwork experiences" (p. 166). From the citations they included, I would say the number of researchers has been few indeed. They identified only two (Cesara 1982; Cole 1995), and, of course, added the Brad Trilogy to the list for readers unfamiliar with it. However, as the group noted, an intimate relationship may or may not involve a sexual one, and a physical relationship does not automatically make a relationship intimate (p. 165).

Perhaps I have been presumptuous in implying that Brad's and my relationship was intimate. What I said in the Validity chapter was that our relationship became physical, which leaves the question open to speculation, my own included. I am not sure that Brad had an intimate side. Turning again to the psychological problems to which he eventually succumbed, intimacy may have been one of the experiences denied him. The physical sex may only have been practice for one of the roles he was prepared to assume. The hugs may have been far more important. The sex was satisfying at the time and became invaluable as a rationalization for his later behavior. He never voiced any objection to the hugs. Ever!

The important thing for fieldworkers is the nature of intimacy in an activity defined as "intimate, long-term acquaintance." What we have in the literature are mostly platitudes and cautions. The experiences I have reported with Brad and the Brad Trilogy are not likely to encourage fieldworkers to be more forthcoming. But if you can't take "heady candor" as a personal mantra, you can at least come to grips with the question—and your own resolution—of how intimate you want, intend, and need to be in order to achieve the level of understanding you seek. This will necessitate a careful delineation of exactly what you mean by intimacy. The questions may best be served by using other, less ambiguous terms than intimacy itself.

Among the different disciplines that pursue qualitative approaches, intimacy has a wide range of interpretations. And I am sure that male and female notions can be far, far apart, even among close colleagues. If the Brad story offers a way to raise questions of fieldwork practice to a new level, I would say it has performed a good service. I hope I have not inadvertently raised such concern to a new level of caution. To assuage doubt, let me leave you with a question that the account raises for me: Can one ever be intimate enough in learning about the life of another?

### **Only Connect**

It all began with a rather straightforward idea: to write a brief life story of an out-of-school youth and to examine the influences on his life. This has been the story of what happened as a result. More than 20 years later, the story is still unfolding. It amply demonstrates how we can keep some stories alive at least partially through our own efforts. But it certainly is true that not all the things that happen are what one hopes or intends. I counsel you to make your stories as accurate and as complete as you intend when you release them. While you may exercise some control over some of the places they go, you cannot possibly imagine all the places they may go or what they might do there.

Brad is not the only person in my life or the only thought in my head. In these same 20 years, I have taught a lot, learned a lot more, and generally done a heap of living. But I admit to having made Brad something of a preoccupation. That is because he kept recurring in my own life story. I have chosen to link these themes rather than treat them as isolated events. Brad's physical presence is limited to the two years when he lived here, a period ending shortly after his 21st birthday, now 20-plus years ago. Since then, I have been the one to weave activities into the sequence you have here. Were Norman writing this, Brad's entry into our lives would have been brief and unremarked. As for Brad himself—were he inclined toward such endeavors—anything to do with me might disappear altogether.

I have tried to show how the Brad story touched many facets of research, finally settling most resolutely in discussions of ethics and intimacy. That is not because those are key facets of his being here, but because they are key facets that interest us today in research. I would like to think that I have had some influence on your thinking about the role of the mentally ill as well. I am convinced that we already see more of such folk around and increasingly will be expected to cope with them on a daily basis rather than simply wish them away.

I have never been sorry for allowing Brad to stay, for taking the trouble to get to know him, or, for a while, for knowing him in the biblical sense as well.

Years ago, Norman Cousins offered some advice along these lines in the now-defunct *Saturday Review of Literature*. I must have followed his advice without ever realizing that my "man" would come in such conventional clothing, be as young as Brad, or actually live on my property for two years. Still, the words haunt me, and I have never regretted recognizing Brad as the stranger in my life:

Compassion is not quantitative. Certainly it is true that behind every man whose entire being cries out for help there may be a million or more equally entitled to attention. But this is the poorest of all reasons for not helping a single man. Where, then, does one begin or stop?

You begin with the first man who puts his life in your hands and you continue so long as you are able to continue, so long as you are capable of personal mobilization.

How to choose? How to determine which one of a million men surrounding you is more deserving than the rest? Do not concern yourself in such speculations. You will never know; you will never need to know. Reach out and take hold of the one who happens to be nearest. If you are never able to help or save another, at least you will have saved one. Many people stroll through an entire lifetime without doing even this. To help put meaning into

a single life may not produce universal regeneration, but it happens to represent the basic form of energy in a society. It also is the best of individual responsibility.<sup>4</sup> [Cousins 1961]

What for me seemed at the time the best of individual responsibility has become, for at least a few others, the worst form of the abuse of power. Certainly I did not “save” Brad. I did help him, as even those who insist that I was only helping myself must admit. So be it—we focus on different parts of the act, we derive our satisfactions and self-worth accordingly.

I wish we had Brad’s views: Brad’s views now, after the same 20 years; Brad’s views without his mother, or the courts, or two disagreeing psychiatrists, all whispering in his ear. I am not so sure this was all that important to him except as a means to what he wanted. And what he wanted to do was to survive. Which, I guess, is exactly what he is doing.

## Notes

1. Hear Jason Ditton on this topic: “Participant observation is inevitably unethical by virtue of being interactionally deceitful. It does not become ethical merely because this deceit is openly practiced. It only becomes inefficient” (Ditton 1970:10, quoted in Hobbs 2001:212). Or Ken Plummer: “All life story collection involves ethical troubles and no life story-telling in social science is ethically neutral” (Plummer 2001:403).

2. Nor has it been totally ignored. For recent examples, see de Laine (2000), or entries in the *Handbook of Ethnography* (Atkinson et al. 2001).

3 Bob Herbert, “Out of work, out of school, out of mind.” [Eugene, Oregon] *Register-Guard*, September 5, 2001. Used by permission of Bob Herbert.

4 Used by permission of *The Saturday Review*.

I just wish that it all might have turned out differently.

*(SLIDE: Meaning)*

What is this *really* a study of? The meaning of the story isn't precisely clear because meanings themselves aren't all that apparent or clear. We don't have neat findings, tidy hypotheses, conclusions that can be summarized or reduced to tables and charts. There are no guarantees, no umbrellas or safety nets, no fool-proof scientific method to follow.

*(SLIDE: Validity)*

Fieldwork consists of more than collecting data, something that catapults it beyond simply being there. And whatever constitutes that elusive "more" makes all the difference. Regardless of outcome, I think the critical test is how deeply you've felt involved and affected personally. *Provocative*, not *persuasive*.

*(SLIDE: Understanding)*

*(HARRY is close to tears)*

After years of attending so singularly to the sanctity of methods, I finally realize that only *understanding* matters. We must not only transform our data, we must *transcend* them. *Insight* is our forte! The whole purpose of the enterprise is *revelation*! When you emphasize description, you want your audience to see what you saw. When you emphasize analysis, you want your audience to know what you know. When you emphasize interpretation, you want your audience to . . . understand what you think you yourself have understood.

*(pause)*

*(SLIDE: Last Words)*

*(he walks to the projection screen)*

In the end, we only abandon our studies; we never really complete them. The human condition doesn't remain static long enough for the work to be completed, even for an instant. You need to recognize when to keep reaching, when to focus, and when to stop.

*(SLIDE: {face shot of BRAD})*

So. How do you "conclude" a qualitative study?

*(music up: "Father Figure" by George Michael; HARRY looks at slide of BRAD)*

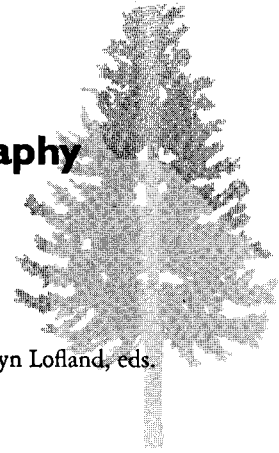
You don't.

*(lights fade to black; SLIDE of BRAD fades to black as music rises)*

*(CURTAIN CALL: HARRY and BRAD in tableau, both staring intensely at each other; SLIDE: {the woods}; lights out; both men exit as music continues and house lights rise)*



## References and Select Bibliography



Atkinson, Paul, Amanda Coffey, Sara Delamont, John Lofland, and Lyn Lofland, eds.  
2001 *Handbook of Ethnography*. London: Sage.

Barone, Thomas

2002 *From Genre Blurring to Audience Blending: Thoughts Inspired by the Ethnodrama, "Finding My Place: The Brad Trilogy."* *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 33(2).

Bernard, H. Russell

1988 *Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Bourdieu, Pierre

1986 *L'illusion Biographique*. *Actes de la Recherches en Sciences Sociales* 62/63 (translated as *The Biographical Illusion*. *Working Papers and Proceedings of the Center for Psychosocial Studies* 14, 1987).

Brandes, Stanley

1982 *Ethnographic Autobiographies in American Anthropology*. *In Crisis in Anthropology: View from Spring Hill, 1980*. E. A. Hoebel, R. Currier, and S. Kaiser, eds. Pp. 187–202. New York: Garland Publishing Company.

Brettell, Caroline B., ed.

1993 *When They Read What We Write: The Politics of Ethnography*. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.

Busier, Holly-Lynn, Kelly Clark, Rebecca Esch, Corrine Glesne, Yvette Pigeon, and Jill Tarule

1997 *Intimacy in Research*. *Qualitative Studies in Education* 10(2):165–70.

Cesara, Manda [Karla Poewe]

1982 *Reflections of a Woman Anthropologist: No Hiding Place*. New York: Academic Press.

Coffey, Amanda

1999 *The Ethnographic Self: Fieldwork and the Representation of Identity*. London: Sage.

Cole, Ardra L., and J. Gary Knowles, eds.

2001 *Lives in Context: The Art of Life History Research*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Cole, Sally Cooper

- 1995 Ruth Landes and the Early Ethnography of Race and Gender. *In* *Women Writing Culture*. Ruth Behar and Deborah A. Gordon, eds. Pp. 166–85. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cousins, Norman

- 1961 Confrontation. *Saturday Review of Literature*, March 25.

de Laine, Marlene

- 2000 *Fieldwork, Participation and Practice: Ethics and Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

Denzin, Norman K.

- 1997 *Interpretive Ethnography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ditton, Jason

- 1977 *Part Time Crime*. London: Macmillan.

Edgerton, Robert

- 1978 The Study of Deviance—Marginal Man or Everyman? *In* *The Making of Psychological Anthropology*. G. D. Spindler, ed. Pp. 442–76. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Edson, C. H.

- 1982 Schooling for Work and Working at School. Perspectives on Immigrant and Working-class Education in Urban America, 1880–1920. *In* *The Public School Monopoly*. Robert B. Everhart, ed. Pp. 145–87. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.

Eisner, Elliot W., and Alan Peshkin, eds.

- 1990 *Qualitative Inquiry in Education: The Continuing Debate*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Estroff, Sue E.

- 1981 *Making It Crazy: An Ethnography of Psychiatric Clients in an American Community*. Berkeley: University of California Press. [Reissued in paperback 1985 with a new epilogue.]

Fortes, Meyer

- 1938 Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland. Supplement to *Africa* 11(4):1–64.

Geertz, Clifford

- 1973 *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Ginzberg, Eli

- 1980 *The School/Work Nexus: Transition of Youth from School to Work*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

Grinker, Richard Roy

- 2000 *In the Arms of Africa: The Life of Colin M. Turnbull*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

- Herskovits, Melville J.  
1948 *Man and His Works: The Science of Cultural Anthropology*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Hobbs, Dick  
2001 *Ethnography and the Study of Deviance*. In *Handbook of Ethnography*. Paul Atkinson, et al., eds. Pp. 201–19. London: Sage.
- Jaeger, Richard M., ed.  
1988 *Complementary Methods for Research in Education*. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.  
1997 *Complementary Methods for Research in Education*. 2nd edition. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Järvinen, Margaretha  
2000 *The Biographical Illusion: Constructing Meaning in Qualitative Interviews*. *Qualitative Inquiry* 6(3):370–91.
- Kirk, Stuart A., and Herb Kutchings  
1992 *The Selling of DSM: The Rhetoric of Science in Psychiatry*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Kleinman, Arthur  
1995 *Writing at the Margins: Discourse between Anthropology and Medicine*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kulick, Don, and Margaret Willson, eds.  
1995 *Taboo: Sex, Identity and Erotic Subjectivity in Anthropological Fieldwork*. New York: Routledge.
- Levin, Henry M.  
1982 *Education and Work*. Program Report No. 82-B8. Palo Alto, CA: Institute for Research on Educational Finance and Governance, Stanford University.  
1983 *Youth Unemployment and its Educational Consequences*. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 5(2):231–47.
- Lewin, Ellen, and William L. Leap, eds.  
1996 *Out in the Field: Reflections of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Lewis, Oscar  
1961 *Children of Sanchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family*. New York: Random House.
- Luhrmann, Tanya M.  
2000 *Of Two Minds: An Anthropologist Looks at American Psychiatry*. New York: Random House.
- MacNeil, Ian., and G. Glover, producers  
1959 *Four Families*. Film narrated by Ian MacNeil and Margaret Mead. National Film Board of Canada.

Maguire, Patricia

1987 *Doing Participatory Research: A Feminist Approach*. Amherst: Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts.

Mailer, Norman

1979 *The Executioner's Song*. New York: Warner Books.

Mann, Dale

1982 *Chasing the American Dream: Jobs, Schools, and Employment Training Programs in New York State*. *Teachers College Record* 83(3):341–76.

Markowitz, Fran, and Michael Ashkenazi, eds.

1999 *Sex, Sexuality and the Anthropologist*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Mead, Margaret

1953 *National Character*. In *Anthropology Today*. A. L. Kroeber, ed. Pp. 642–67. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Miles, Matthew B., and A. Michael Huberman

1984 *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

1994 *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

National Commission on Excellence in Education

1983 *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. Washington, DC: Department of Education.

Noblit, George W., and William T. Pink, eds.

1987 *Schooling in Social Context: Qualitative Studies*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Company.

Oregon Department of Education

1980 *Oregon Early School Leavers Study*. Salem: Oregon Department of Education.

Page, Reba

1997 *Teaching About Validity*. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 10(2):145–55.

Peacock, James L., and Dorothy C. Holland

1993 *The Narrated Self: Life Stories in Process*. *Ethos* 21(4):367–83.

Plummer, Ken

2001 *The Call of Life Stories in Ethnographic Research*. In *Handbook of Ethnography*. Paul Atkinson, et al., eds. Pp. 395–406. London: Sage.

Punch, Maurice

1986 *The Politics and Ethics of Fieldwork*. Sage University Paper on Qualitative Research Methods, Volume 3. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Reed-Danahay, Deborah

- 2001 *Autobiography, Intimacy and Ethnography*. In *Handbook of Ethnography*. Paul Atkinson, et al., eds. Pp. 407–25. London: Sage.

Saldaña, Johnny

- 1998a Ethical Issues in an Ethnographic Performance Text: The “Dramatic Impact” of “Juicy Stuff.” *Research in Drama Education* 3(2):181–96.  
 1998b “Maybe Someday, If I’m Famous . . .”: An Ethnographic Performance Text. In *Drama and Theatre in Education*. Juliana Saxton and Carole Miller, eds. Pp. 89–109. Brisbane, Australia: IDEA Publishers.  
 1999 *Playwriting with Data: Ethnographic Performance Texts*. *Youth Theatre Journal* 13:60–71.

Shaw, Clifford R.

- 1930 *The Jack-Roller: A Delinquent Boy’s Own Story*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Simmons, Leo, ed.

- 1942 *Sun Chief: The Autobiography of a Hopi Indian*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Singleton, John

- 1983 *On Editorial Succession and Academic Orthodoxy*. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 14(1):2.

Snodgrass, Jon, ed.

- 1982 *The Jack-Roller at Seventy: A Fifty-Year Follow-Up*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath & Company.

Tengström, Anders, Sheilagh Hodgins, and Gunnar Kullgren

- 2001 *Men with Schizophrenia Who Behave Violently: The Usefulness of an Early-Versus-Late-Start Offender Typology*. *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 27(2):205–18.

Tron, Esther, ed.

- 1982 *Adequate Education: Issues in Its Definition and Implementation*. School Finance Project, Working Papers. Washington, DC: Department of Education, National Institute of Education.

Wallace, A. F. C.

- 1961a *The Psychic Unity of Human Groups*. In *Studying Personality Cross-culturally*. Bert Kaplan, ed. Evanston, IL: Row Peterson and Company.  
 1961b *Schools in Revolutionary and Conservative Societies*. In *Anthropology and Education*. F. C. Gruber, ed. Pp. 25–54. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Werth, Barry

- 2001 *The Scarlet Professor: Newton Arvin: A Literary Life Shattered by Scandal*. New York: Doubleday/Random House.

Willis, Paul H.

- 1977 *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*. Hampshire, England: Gower Publishing Co.

Wolcott, Harry F.

- 1964 *A Kwakiutl Village and Its School*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stanford University.
- 1967 *A Kwakiutl Village and School*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. [Reissued 1989 by Waveland Press with a new afterword.]
- 1973 *The Man in the Principal's Office: An Ethnography*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. [Reissued 1984 by Waveland Press with a new introduction.]
- 1974 *The Teacher as an Enemy*. In *Education and Cultural Process: Toward an Anthropology of Education*. George D. Spindler, ed. Pp. 411–25. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. [Reissued 1987, 1997 by Waveland Press.]
- 1982 *The Anthropology of Learning*. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 13(2):83–108.
- 1983 *Adequate Schools and Inadequate Education: The Life History of a Sneaky Kid*. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 14(1):3–32. (Reprinted in Wolcott 1994.)
- 1987 *Life's Not Working: Cultural Alternatives to Career Alternatives*. In *Schooling in Social Context: Qualitative Studies*. George W. Noblit and William T. Pink, eds. Pp. 303–24. Norwood, NJ: Ablex. (Reprinted in Wolcott 1994.)
- 1990a *On Seeking—and Rejecting—Validity in Qualitative Research*. In *Qualitative Inquiry in Education: The Continuing Debate*. Elliot Eisner and Alan Peshkin, eds. Pp. 121–52. New York: Teachers College Press. (Reprinted in Wolcott 1994.)
- 1990b *Writing Up Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- 1994 *Transforming Qualitative Data: Description, Analysis, and Interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 1995 *The Art of Fieldwork*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- 1997 Validating Reba: A Commentary on “Teaching About Validity.” *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 10(2):157–59.
- 1999 *Ethnography: A Way of Seeing*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- 2001 *Writing Up Qualitative Research*. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.