

ABSTRACT

TITLE OF DISSERTATION: ENCOUNTERING FACES OF THE OTHER:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF
AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
JOURNEYING THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA

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2004

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In this phenomenological study, I explore the lived experience of American high school students encountering the Other within South Africa. My research question wonders, “While dwelling with one-an-Other, what is the experience like for my students to journey to the place of South Africa and to encounter the primary Other of the people, the Other of nature and the Other of social justice?” My exploration relies heavily upon the works of Levinas, Heidegger and Freire. As a research guide, van Manen keeps me attuned pedagogically.

Through the de-tour and the tension of the encounter experience, I follow my students’ voices. As I dig deep into their lived experience of encountering the face of the South African Other, I unearth the phenomenon’s essential structures. A preliminary study with two students reveals in the initial encounter a “starting from oneself” where they feel a captured, advertised and alienated presence. In going face-to-face and in unpacking their prejudices, they place the Other behind

an exotic mask. Considering the lived place of South Africa, these two students speak to a dwelling together and a wandering-out.

As I dig deeper, the eight students of my study lead me toward the tensions within South Africa's beautiful, poor places. In these lived places, the Other's face summons my students and guilt spreads across their being. In seeing the Other, my students begin to realize that they, too, are watched. They begin to recognize the Other in the self and the self in the Other.

Fractured by their encounter, my students step away from the ego-self. They begin to homestead and to construct an-Other-self. Standing on the frontier of transformation, my students begin to cultivate a self that crosses borders, holds an awareness of its attachment to the world and feels its unfinishedness.

Finally, I suggest that teachers and students must lend their presence to one-an-Other while re-implacing themselves out in the world of lived experience. Intervening in the world, together as teacher and students, we cultivate the pedagogical conditions for transformative, social justice education.

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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS JOURNEYING THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2004

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DEDICATION

To Dr. Leon E. Clark

For showing me that a man can live intellectually while still hiking in the woods,
traveling the world and drinking ale.

The world lost you too soon.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For teaching me, I thank Alison, Christina, David, Don, Elizabeth, Greg, James, Jessie, Joe and Steve. In the journey of this study, as my students, you provide the map. You represent my co-authors, my co-researchers and my co-travelers. Homestead well.

For being-with me, I thank Francine. In my first course on campus, I became intrigued with this “thing” called phenomenology. Four years later, I stand transformed because of it. As a pedagogue, you understand how to create the place of comfortable discomfort. Positioning yourself side-by-side and face-to-face, you offer an incredible gift to your students.

For coming-together with me, I thank Carol Anne, Francine, Hanne, Jeremy and Jim. As my advisory committee, you offer support, encouragement and direction. Above all, you have welcomed me into the world of academic dialogue and community.

For shaking a stick at me, I thank the boys diving off the rocks in Brazil. While it has taken a long time, your faces did not fade. Instead, they obligated me to do this work.

For providing a lived, human text for my students, I thank South Africa. Nowhere in the world would I rather wander-out and dwell than in your beautiful, poor places.

For teaching me to respect the Other and the self, I thank my parents. In all that I undertake, your lives inspire me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: TEACHING, TRAVELING AND ENCOUNTERING THE MANY FACES OF THE OTHER	1
Foreshadowing The Journey	1
In Those Kitchens	4
Before Those Kitchens	8
Turning To Answer My Own Call: Teacher-Traveler	12
As Traveler: Going Into The World And Seeing The People/The Primary Other	13
Running out into the world: Brazil	14
Running in place: Levinas' totality	16
Running ahead: Levinas' infinity	17
Tripped up: Hurdles remain	19
As Traveler: Going Out-Of-Doors And Communicating With The Other Of Nature	20
Sanctuary	21
Bound up in relation to the Other of nature	23
As Teacher: Establishing The Mood For Letting Go And Being With One-An-Other	25
Teaching as an offer: Friendship	26
Teaching as a welcome: Falling into conversation	29
Teaching as a stance: Side-by-side	30
As Teacher: In Search Of The Beautiful Ones/The Other Of Social Justice	33
Entering the dark	35
Crossing borders	38
Risking homelessness	39
Taking action	42
Listening to Freire	44
Standing up	46
Introducing the Other	49
As Teacher-Traveler: Holding Class Out In The World And Naming South Africa As The Curricular Destination	51
South Africa calls	53
Apartheid and the third world call	55
<i>Ubuntu</i> calls	58
One More Turning: Phenomenology Takes Hold To The Things Themselves	61
Posing The Phenomenological Question	64
Where Are We Going?	65

CHAPTER TWO: “ENCOUNTERING” ENCOUNTER WITH THE MANY FACES OF THE OTHER	67
Encounter As De-Tour	69
The Historical Common-Place Of Encounter	74
Totality, Infinity And The World’s Stage	75
“Leaping Ahead” To Set The Stage For Encounter	78
Beginning To Follow Student Voices Toward Encounter With The Other	80
Presence: “Starting From Oneself” In The Encounter With The Other	82
An absent-presence	85
A captured-presence	88
An advertised-presence	89
An alienated-presence	97
Placing The Other Behind An Exotic Mask	108
Escaping everydayness	109
Revealing exoticism	110
Masks and missing the Other	113
Masks and finding the familiar	114
Living with the “de-tour of masks”	116
Living with the “complicated”	117
The Places Of Encounter: Dwelling And Wandering-Out In South Africa	119
Cultivating a community-place	121
Dwelling together	122
Coming together	125
Coming a-part	127
Retreat toward solitude	129
Retreat toward “authority”	130
Retreat toward anonymity	132
Exile	132
Return to dwelling	135
Wandering-out	136
Wandering-out as displacement	138
Wandering-out: Up-close and from a-far	140
Wandering-out: Up-close in the out-of-doors	144
Wandering-out: Going off the map and leaving the itinerary behind	147
With Map In Hand	150

CHAPTER THREE: PHENOMENOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL ENCOUNTERS	152
Shared Intentions: Hermeneutic Phenomenology And Encountering The South African Other	153
In The World, Encountering The Other And Keeping Pedagogy In Mind	153
Critical And Ethical Calls In The Phenomenological Wild	156
De-Distancing Levinas And Heidegger: Bringing Their Language Together	160
The Historical Stage	163
Striking The Stage And Facing Forward	164
A New Script: Conversation And Reflection	165
Self And Other	166
Moral Claims	167
Reconciling With Heidegger	169
Nazism And Apartheid	171
Heidegger In “Totality”	173
Heidegger And Reconciliation	176
The Hermeneutic Phenomenological Method: Following Six Paths Toward The Meaning Of My Students’ Lived Experience	178
The First Path: Turning To A Phenomenon Which Seriously Interests Us And Commits Us To The World	179
The Second Path: Investigating Experience As We Live It Rather Than As We Conceptualize It	180
Homecoming	181
A writing place	183
A conversation place	184
A writing place re-visited	187
The Third Path: Reflecting On Essential Themes Which Characterize The Phenomenon	188
Homesteading	188
Unearthing themes	190
The Fourth Path: Describing The Phenomenon Through The Art Of Writing And Rewriting	191
The Fifth Path: Maintaining A Strong And Oriented Pedagogical Relation To The Phenomenon	193
The Sixth Path: Balancing The Research Context By Considering Parts And Whole	194

CHAPTER FOUR: ENCOUNTERING TENSIONS “IN AND AGAINST” THE MANY FACES OF THE OTHER	196
Stretching And Straining: Building Bridges Through Contested Terrain	196
Returning To Follow Student Faces Toward Encounter With The Other	200
Fronting Different Worlds: Following Students Pathways	206
Being In Beautiful, Poor Places	207
Watching The Mountains	208
Beauty’s call	208
The power of the sublime	210
Nature As Playground: Going Face-To-Face With Monkeys	211
Venturing Out And Freeing Ourselves	215
Nature As Playground: Darker Sanctuary	218
Night	219
Sanctuary	222
To Sing Of The World	224
Wonderful voices	226
Awake	228
Surrender	230
In The Face Of Poverty	231
Fear for	233
Listening for the holler	235
Making Over Poverty And Constructing Beauty	237
Beauty in poverty	239
Missing some-thing	241
Seeing the oppressors	245
Hidden Back At Home: Our Own Beautiful, Poor Places	247
Fences	248
Expanding horizons	251
Being Summoned-By Guilt And Facing Responsibility	253
Exposed	256
Ignorance revealed	257
None of you are black	258
Keeping The Change	260
Quantifying humanity	261
Dancing around for change	263
Excuses	265
Teaching Guilt: Facing My Own Shortcomings	268
Living Head And Shoulders Above	273

The Guilt Of Filth And Lice: Scolding Our Own Prejudices	276
Power-To Put Something Back	278
Gathering intellectual ammo	279
An inescapable obligation	282
Guilt As A De-Tour Of Possibility	285
Being-Seen: Initial Sightings Of Ourselves As Other	289
The Welcomed Other	290
An Aberration In The Mall: White Other	296
Beginning to notice the stares	297
Privileged Otherness	300
Having Masks Affixed: <i>American Pie</i> And <i>Varsity Blues</i>	303
Beginning To See The Self In The Other: Trying To Read The Other	306
What the Other thinks	307
De-alienation	310
Beginning To See The Self In The Other: Host As Host-ile Other	312
Mapping The Horizon Of My-Other-Self	316
CHAPTER FIVE: FRACTURING INTO MY-OTHER-SELF: TRANSFORMATIVE HOMESTEADING	318
A Final Re-Turn To Follow Student Faces: An Encounter With The Other-Self	318
Wandering-Away From The Ego-Self	319
Homesteading In A <i>Rondavel</i> : My-Other-Self	321
Border-self: Secluded in a corner	326
Aware-self: De-attachment stolen	329
Unfinished-self: Being comfortable with our discomfort	333
My-Other-Teacher-Self And Finding The Most Beautiful Thing In The World	336
Pedagogical Dancing: Encountering The Student-Other	338
Pedagogical Homesteading: Re-Implacing The Student-Other	346
Pedagogical De-Touring: Listening To The Silences Their Own Journeys Continue	349
APPENDIX: INFORMED CONSENT FORMS	355
REFERENCES	357

CHAPTER ONE:
TEACHING, TRAVELING AND ENCOUNTERING THE MANY FACES
OF THE OTHER

Foreshadowing The Journey

For thirty minutes on this dark night, she stands in her kitchen, wrapped in an old robe, and tells us her story. As a group of middle class American students with an American teacher, transported to this informal settlement on the outskirts of Port Elizabeth, South Africa, we stand squeezed together in the house. The door cannot even shut behind us. It is eight o'clock and the entire settlement is dark. Outside we hear voices, but everyone moves in the shadows. I feel embarrassed that our guide has ousted this grandmother from her bed. It is cold in the house. Yet, with no reservation at all, she tells us her story. She remembers the police. She provides us with mental images of the townships. She describes apartheid as it was lived. She gives voice to resistance. She tells us about being seventy years old and waiting in line for hours in order to cast her first vote. When we leave, she hugs everyone. In the van, we ride silently and stare out of the windows and think about this woman. Personally, on this evening, I fear saying anything because my words would sound trivial as compared to what we have just heard. As Heidegger (1927/1996) advises in *Being and Time*, I stay quiet in the interest of "let(ting) something be understood" (p. 154). I leave my students to wrestle silently with their own thoughts. Once we arrive back in the comforts of our world, in a busy beachfront hotel lobby with music playing, then

we talk. Tonight, my students and I have crossed borders and we have been touched by the Other.

Four years later, in an-Other kitchen, in an-Other informal settlement on the outskirts of Hout Bay, South Africa, an-Other group of middle class American students and I stand together listening to an-Other story. This time, a man in his late thirties reflects on his imprisonment during apartheid. He has spent the afternoon leading us through his community. We have visited the new preschool and the barbershop. We have surveyed the land to which the people wish to gain rights. As more and more people arrive on this hillside, the community needs to find home-space. Now, as we stand in the kitchen of the settlement's community center, this local leader weaves together memories of jail and hopes for the young. Then, with an unnerving matter-of-factness, he announces that his son died last week. While swimming in the river, the young boy drowned. Feeling completely inadequate to respond, I utter a soft "I'm sorry." He continues to talk. One student has turned away and she looks out of the window. She cries. Again, with my students, I stand "speech-less." This afternoon, my students and I have crossed borders and we have been touched by the Other.

Today, as my mind replays the images and the sounds from those two South African townships, the stories, faces and gestures of that grandmother and that father capture me. The surroundings capture me. Yet, as a teacher, my students also capture me. We travel across the world. Leaving our school behind, we take our learning on the road. Now, with this grandmother and this father as our guest lecturers, I watch my students' faces. I wonder how the stories being

told speak to them. They travel to the source in order to experience the legacy of apartheid and the reality of the third world. (Throughout this study, I use the term, third world, because it forces a sense of an unjust, global hierarchy “in our faces.”) As I see my students, I feel a strong desire to understand what these encounters with the Other in these two townships mean to them. This desire to understand my students’ experiences taps me on my shoulder. It pokes at me. It pushes forward against my back.

Thus, while watching my students listen to the voices of that grandmother and that father, I hear my initial call to research my students’ experience of encounter with the South African Other. Reflecting on a third world place in which racism and oppression have distanced the people, I want to know what a coming-together with the Other might mean to my American students. Does it capture them? How do they feel in the presence of the third world, African Other? Can they open themselves up and reciprocate the Other’s welcome? What might stand in the way of their crossing over the borders between the first world and the third world? How does their historical stance as oppressor affect the way in which they offer their white hand or accept a black embrace?

Before considering these questions and “opening up” my students’ encounters with the Other, I step back. As a researcher called to hear my students’ voices, first, I must consider what they *might* experience with the Other. What might my students hear in that grandmother’s kitchen? Several years later, what might an-Other group of students in that community center’s kitchen feel when that father mourns for his son?

In Those Kitchens

In 1998 and in 2002, those two kitchens become my classrooms. On each occasion, with ten students in tow, I journey “across the world” from a well-to-do, upper middle class high school in the Washington suburbs to the margins of South African society. In both of those kitchens, my students and I stand and hear voices to which most of the world turns a deaf ear. We look into our hosts’ faces. We follow their hands as they dance about and illustrate the stories being told. We enter into the “human text” of South Africa.

In his memoir, Jason Carter (2002), grandson of former President Carter, recounts his two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in South Africa. Retelling a simple story of catching a taxi, Carter reveals the distance between white and black. Entering a taxi rank that largely catered to blacks, he realized that he was “crossing a border few others could cross” (p. 128). In South Africa, trapped by fear, whites and blacks rarely enter one-an-Other’s places. Carter writes, “As I sat in the taxi, I reflected that I must be one of the freest people in South Africa” (p. 128). As a white Peace Corps volunteer in a black village, Carter bridged the divide. Being in those two kitchens in those two settlements, my students and I had also entered an-Other’s place. In a brief and introductory encounter, we crossed the border and bridged the divide.

Michael Jackson (1995) describes the same barriers between whites and the aborigine population in Australia when he writes, “It is astonishing how whites stare past blacks, as though they did not really exist” (p. 114). In the United States, we tell the same story. Simply look at the title of Ralph Ellison’s

classic novel, *The Invisible Man* (1952), to see how one African American writer experienced a white person's ability to "stare past" the Other. Yet, for Ellison, poverty joins with racism to create a condition of being "un-seen." In a recent Washington Post article (August 25, 2002) about Argentina's poor and how they search nightly for food amidst the garbage, Santiago O'Donnell writes, "People like me are buying chicken ravioli at the neighborhood rotisserie... (when) the army of scavengers descends before our very eyes, and we don't say a word. When the desperate families hurry by, we turn away" (p. B1).

When my students and I enter South Africa's settlements, by crossing into the world of the Other, I hope my students will see the faces of the people. As a social studies teacher, I want my students to look into the eyes of that grandmother and to shake the hand of that father. I do not want my students to "turn away." As Levinas (1961/1969) suggests, in my students' lives, I want the face of the Other to open "the primordial discourse whose first word is obligation" (p. 201). Within the human text of South Africa, I want my students to begin to see, to hear and to feel the Other. I want them to develop a sense of responsibility for, and an "ability to respond" to, the Other.

What is the experience like of entering an informal settlement and beginning to see the Other? After staring past one-an-Other for so long, how does one respond? Far removed from standardized curriculum and high stakes tests, do we appreciate and respect this "human text?" Are we willing to "make room" for it in our pedagogical lives? At the same time, how do young people open themselves to being immersed in the Other's story, the Other's culture and the

Other's land? What do they seek? What do they find? What might they hide?

While seeing the Other, how do they see one-an-Other? Does such a journey offer the hope of transforming their outlook, their relations, their place and their life's course?

As I begin to ponder these questions, I pause briefly to clarify the Other-within-these-pages. In this study, I travel with a philosophical Other. For those travelers who journey more often with a sociological Other, certain baggage about power must be checked at the outset. Whether powerless or powerful, the Other represents all that is alien to me. The Other can stand as oppressor or as oppressed. Alterity is its full name.

Yet, the philosophical work of Levinas allows us to see an additional trait of the Other. Levinas examines the relationship with the Other. In that relationship, the Other has the potential to address us. The Other causes us to reflect. When we "brush up" against the Other, we feel its skin. It can startle us and make us withdraw or it can cause us to linger and to hope that our arms will touch again. For Levinas (1991/1998), "The relation to the Other is awakening and sobering up – that awakening is obligation" (p. 114). Thus, the encounter with the Other has ethical possibility.

As a teacher, I desire to accompany my students on a transformational journey to meet the Other. As a researcher, I seek a methodology that serves as a map to help me find my way toward revealing the lived meaning of that journey. Borrowing from the claim made by Simmel, Gadamer (1960/1989) describes how investigating any experience should reveal some sort of adventure. This adventure

“lets life be felt as a whole, in its breadth and in its strength” (Gadamer, 1960/1989, p. 69). As I explore my students’ experiences in South Africa, I search for the adventure. In helping me to find it, I turn to phenomenology.

Phenomenology maps out a course through lived experience and toward the hidden adventure. According to van Manen (1990), phenomenology “makes us thoughtfully aware of the consequential in the inconsequential, the significant in the taken-for-granted” (p. 8). Phenomenology takes us on an in-depth, interpretive search into the meanings of a human experience. In this study, I dive deep into my students’ encounter with the Other. I attempt to lift the rocks under which meanings hide. I seek an unearthing of the roots that ground our behaviors and actions. By examining what scurries from underneath the rocks and by revealing the roots, I seek to reach a place where I can reveal what an encounter with the Other in South Africa means for my privileged, American students. Through a phenomenological journey, I seek to discover the adventure within the encounter with the Other.

Yet, in journeying toward this place, I recognize a difficulty. Some people have trouble reading phenomenological maps. The in-depth conversations with a small number of participants, the gradual revealing of meaning, the philosophical grounding and the search for adventure in the everyday leaves them confused. It does not resemble the research with which they are familiar. After all, in the research world, phenomenology represents the Other. Far removed from the quantitative world and standing on the edges of the qualitative realm, phenomenology remains across the border from where many researchers stand.

Yet, situated across the border and seen as foreign to most methodologies, phenomenology is positioned well for a study of border crossing and Otherness. Sharing the status of Other with its subject, phenomenology stands ready to lead. I stand ready to follow. Thus, in this study of encounter with the Other, I leave the “beaten path,” and take a “road less-traveled” toward understanding.

Before Those Kitchens

At the origin of that less-traveled road, I stand with my students. Of the ten students who journeyed to South Africa in 2002, five had been enrolled in my high school world history course during the previous spring. Daily, they came to my classroom. In that place, they read Mandela’s *Long Walk To Freedom* (1994), discussed the history of South African apartheid, and listened to my personal tales of the 1998 trip in which I had taken ten students to the Rainbow Nation (Archbishop Desmond Tutu’s name for his South African homeland). In class, I told the story of my former students standing in Mrs. Majola’s kitchen on that dark night. I recounted how my former students had visited Robben Island and listened for the whispers of ghosts in Mandela’s cell. I told the story of a politician from the National Party, the architects of apartheid, and how he had answered one student’s question with a declaration that the National Party “saved the black African.” Whether consciously or not, by telling stories from the first trip, I planted the seeds for a new trek. These current students wanted to take a similar journey. They wanted to find them-selves in South Africa.

During that spring semester, in between South African stories, I led thirty students to Budapest, Vienna and Prague. Standing in front of a castle with

several students, I first mentioned the possibility of taking a second group to South Africa. At that point, with the sun high above us in a clear blue sky, deep in the countryside of the Czech Republic, five of the students who eventually would make the journey spoke with eagerness about the possibility of such a voyage. Two of the students were taking my class. One student had been in my fall course. Two other female students had never been in my class, but as they stood in Eastern Europe, they seemed to recognize the value of travel.

Upon returning to school, I told the rest of the class to consider the trip. After receiving personal invitations, two other students voiced a desire to participate. In the hallway, a female student who I knew, but with whom I had little formal interaction, approached me and asked if she could join us. Within days, the girlfriend of one of the members of the group said she wanted to be included. With four male students and five female students ready to go, I made initial contacts in South Africa. I had always considered the first student trip to South Africa to be a “once in a lifetime” experience. Now, as I began to plan for a return journey with students, I felt a re-turn to an eager-anxiety.

The following fall semester, despite no longer teaching at the students’ school, I came together with them and we made the final decision to journey to South Africa. During the summer, I had joined the administrative team at a different high school. Yet, now, I used the trip as a way to maintain some hold on my “role” as teacher. Despite parent concerns about visiting the Third World (in particular, in light of September 11th) and my own professional “re-location,” on a

November night, we stood in a parking lot on the University of Maryland campus and we told each Other that we wanted to make the trip happen.

At the university, in a crowd of thousands, we had just heard Nelson Mandela. Throughout my own education about apartheid, I have always felt inspired by Mandela's story. After spending twenty-seven years in jail, he walked out and shook his oppressor's hand. He offered forgiveness and sought reconciliation. As Desmond Tutu (1999), retired Archbishop of Cape Town and Nobel Peace Prize winner points out, "Everything had been done to break his (Mandela's) spirit and to make him hate-filled. In all this the system mercifully failed dismally" (p. 39). Since 1998, I have required that my students read Mandela's autobiography in order to encounter that spirit about which Tutu writes. In my classes, through Mandela's story, we enter South African history. If I have a "hero," Mandela is that person.

Thus, watching him walk to the podium and capture the crowd, I felt fortunate to be-present with him. I understood what the expression, "in the presence of greatness," meant. Yet, I felt preoccupied. From the man at the podium, my attention wandered. I kept looking down the row at my students' faces. I wanted to measure their responses. I wanted to see if his words spoke to them. When they leaned over to one-an-Other, I strained to hear their whispered comments. I derived my pleasure from "being-with" them and sharing the pedagogical moment. My seeing and hearing Mandela captured me less than my sharing Mandela. Albeit in a public crowd of thousands, I felt privileged to witness my students being touched by the Other through Nelson Mandela. How

could I deny my students an opportunity for more authentic, intimate encounters in Mandela's own home-land?

In late January, we began meeting weekly to prepare for our journey. A tenth student joined our ranks. I was serving as the advisor on his senior project and I wanted him to be a part of this journey. We read, watched films, visited South Africa's embassy and began to come together as a group. Finally, in April, leaving parents behind, we wandered off into an-Other world. For two weeks, we traveled from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth to Durban. Our itinerary took us to the cities, to the townships, to the schools and to the informal settlements. We met with politicians, talked with aid workers in nonprofit groups, visited classrooms, looked into Mandela's cell and lived in the homes of Indian families. We hiked, we chased lions and we settled into the out-of-doors. While we dwelled together in our own traveling, pedagogical place, we crossed borders and we "brushed up" against the Other.

"Brushing up" against the Other helps to mold the phenomenological research question that leads my quest. As I unravel the opening experiences that bring us to South Africa, I recognize the Other takes on more than one shape. We "brush up" against one-an-Other as co-travelers. After all, we journey as a community of learners. Chasing lions, we "brush up" against the Other of the out-of-doors. Living in our suburban world with malls and beltways, Africa's mountains and bush startle. We "brush up" against the Other of South Africa's people and culture. At the same time, in meeting those people and in recognizing that culture, I want my students to cross borders. I want them to encounter

poverty, injustice and racism. I seek to educate them on an ethical as well as a political level. Lacking in so much of our daily education, I want them to encounter the Other of social justice. Therefore, a phenomenological question begins to take shape that asks what encounter with multiple Others means to my students. At this stage, it asks, **What is the experience like for my students to travel to South Africa and to encounter one an-Other, the Other of nature, the Other of the people and the Other of social justice?**

Turning To Answer My Own Call: Teacher-Traveler

When I think about my students encountering the multiple faces of the Other in South Africa, I cannot help but wonder how I came to be the traveler, the teacher, the critical educator and the South African “ambassador” that brought those students to that experience. Turning to the primary task of this chapter, I now retrace my own path. Why do I lead students out into the world in all of its concrete reality and name that place my classroom? What is at the heart of the teaching and learning call to which I respond? Can I justify my critical politics and the place of praxis in which I teach and make curricular decisions? Of all of the places in our world, when being with students, why do I have such a strong desire to share South Africa? Before continuing with any exploration of the student experience in South Africa, I must address these questions. By doing so, I explore my own experiences with the Other and I offer some insight into why this phenomenon calls me. As van Manen (1990) states, “One’s own experiences are the possible experiences of others and also the experiences of others are the

possible experiences of oneself” (p. 58). Thus, to ground my research journey, I start with my own story.

As Traveler: Going Into The World And Seeing The People/The Primary

Other

“You know,” he began, scanning the hundred black faces fixed onto his face, “I really didn’t come here to make a speech. ‘Hokey-Pokey’ – that’s about the wisest thing I can come up with today. But still, I just wanted to say how honored I am to be here, how grateful and humbled. I’m an old man – I guess that’s no secret – and I never thought I’d live to experience a day like this, ever get to meet such nice folks as all you. Your little country, it sure keeps coming up with new surprises for me.” (Toner, 2001, p. 193)

In Jim Toner’s memoir of his father’s visit to Sri Lanka, he attests to the power of travel to take us out and to introduce us to the Other. Initially, his father, a seventy-four year old retired judge from Cleveland, resists the calls of the people and of the experiences. Shortly after arriving, while driving with his son, “he tightened his grip on his rosary and looked down at his feet, and continued to look down even when I pointed out a monkey swinging from tree to tree in front of the president’s palace” (p. 21). Shocked by difference, his father looks away and seeks shelter in the familiarity of his rosary and of a car’s interior. Yet, over a period of weeks, the author drags his father out of that car to go face-to-face with the poor in a small community. In that place, the Other honors, humbles and surprises the old man. The Other leaves him feeling alive after experiencing a day unlike any he had witnessed before. As a reader, I turn the pages and witness this man’s transformation. Closing the book, I only regret that he did not feel the appeal of the Other earlier in his life.

Running out into the world: Brazil. At seventeen, corrugated metal and scrap wood houses first holler out at me. As an exchange student, I leave Vermont and spend the fall semester of my senior year of high school in Brazil. Staying in the city of Niteroi, across the bay from Rio de Janeiro, at first, I try to ignore the calls from the *favelas*. Yet, these hillside slums that surround the cities do not “let up.” Eventually, voyeuristically from a far, I stare into these communities of poverty and crime. Yet, in my three months in the third world, I never get too close. I maintain distance.

On one overcast afternoon, I remember my “drive by” photo shoot. My Brazilian host mother navigates frantically up the hill along the edges of the *favelas*. I remember the crucifix swinging back and forth below the rearview mirror. When we come within range of some truly destitute-looking young boy or girl, she hits the brakes and I lean out of the window and snap a photograph. Before their eyes can even respond to the flash, the car races off toward the next target. Looking back on this intrusive behavior, shame rushes over me. With my students in South Africa, when entering a township or settlement, we talk explicitly about asking for permission before taking a photograph of someone. If only those students knew of my own behavior and my own “zoo-like” treatment of the Other.

In Brazil, several times a week, I jog along the beach. Even here, the *favelas* always creep up on me. They litter the hills and surround the city centers. Near the turning point in my run, where the sand trails off and the people who have the time to come to the beach for leisure disappear, black rocks jut up from

the ocean and pile up against the wall buttressing the roadway. Along this stretch, where the sound of cars and the smell of their exhaust take over, where the water becomes rough, I see young boys from the *favelas* diving and swimming off the rocks. In this place, poverty shakes a stick at me. In this place, I slow down, watch the boys yell to one-an-Other, and I feel anxious. I turn and run back toward the beach and away from the Other. At seventeen, I am unaware of Heidegger's (1927/1996) advice that we should turn toward our anxiety and allow it to open up the possibility of an authentic moment.

Despite the distance that I maintain with the Other and with my own anxiety about the Other, I return home to the United States as a different person. I have tried to look away, but I have seen poverty and I have been hollered at by it. I cannot resist an expanding awareness of the world's reality and a sense of my privileged place in that unjust world. As a seventeen-year-old student, the experience of travel in Brazil has taken me by the shoulders and given me a strong shake. Alphonso Lingis, in his book, *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing In Common* (1994), speaks to my experience in Brazil:

This is why it can happen that with the least glimpse at the other – the momentary glimpse at the slum child in the street as my car drives by, the momentary dull glint of the beggar's eyes in the dark as I head for the restaurant - I can feel arrested in my own intentions, contested. (p. 28)

For Lingis, a brief glimpse of the Other can pull back the curtain and reveal an unjust world. Having seen behind the curtain, the Other “appeals to my welcome, to my resources, and to my response and responsibility” (Lingis, 1994, p. 33).

After returning from Brazil, in Lingis' words, I find myself “afflicted” by the Other. Back home, surrounded by familiar comforts, my eyes feel less

threatened and they open slowly to see oppression and poverty. Back from Brazil, I now meet South Africa. Driving just across the river from my home, in the small town of Hanover, New Hampshire, I watch the well-to-do at Dartmouth build shanty towns on campus and yell for divestment. At eighteen, preparing to leave for college in Washington, D.C., I witness these students decorate the Dartmouth Green with their own *favelas*. They construct an artificial Otherness with those shacks and I desire to learn more about the third world, poverty and the system called “apartheid.”

Running in place: Levinas’ totality. In *Totality and Infinity* (1961/1969), Emmanuel Levinas describes the desire that I feel to reach beyond my at-home, comfortable, self-centeredness. I want to transcend my egoist stance because I have seen the Other in Brazil. Unlike Jackson’s (1995) description of whites staring past blacks, I have been captured by the Other’s face. As Levinas (1961/1969) writes, “The nakedness of the face is destituteness. To recognize the Other is to recognize a hunger. To recognize the Other is to give” (p. 75). Injustice, poverty and inhumanity reveal themselves. In response, Levinas claims, “The Other who dominates me in his transcendence is thus the stranger, the widow, and the orphan, to whom I am obligated” (p. 215).

Yet, as history confirms, everyone does not feel this obligation. If they did, we could hardly imagine genocide and apartheid. In Brazil, on that beach, I turned and jogged away from that obligation. Levinas describes how we all come from a place, a home, in which we focus on our interiority and our egoist “being with self.” From this place, when looking at the Other, we see only an extension

of ourselves. Levinas (1947/1987) explains the limitation of this perspective because the “Other as Other is not only an alter-ego: the Other is what I myself am not” (p. 83). Yet, for those of us who fall short of this realization and remain trapped in the place where we believe a mirror adequately captures the Other, we seek to assimilate and to control. In this place, the Other is like me. Thus, I can assume that the Other thinks as I think. I can assume that the Other acts as I act. I can assume that the Other responds as I respond. In this place, I can accept if the Other disappears because I remain. The world suffers a minimal loss. Therefore, we shackle and we oppress the Other. Levinas names this condition “totality” and it represents the stage upon which much of our world’s history has been played out. On this stage, war, slavery, colonialism, genocide and apartheid represent the plot.

Running ahead: Levinas’ infinity. Yet, totality does not have to be the world’s fate. Levinas speaks of “infinity” as an alternative. In this place, I do not form assumptions about the Other being as I am. I do not try to impose my experiences upon the Other’s experiences. I do not assume that the Other thinks, acts or responds as I think, act and respond. Captured by this new condition, we are seen by the Other’s eye, touched by the Other’s hand and called by the Other’s voice. When we turn and run away, we cannot help but glance back over our shoulder.

(T)he epiphany of the face qua face opens humanity. The face in its nakedness as a face presents to me the destitution of the poor one and the stranger; but this poverty and exile which appeal to my powers, address me, do not deliver themselves over to these powers as givens, remain the expression of the face. The poor one, the stranger, presents himself as an equal... He comes to join me. (Levinas, 1961/1969, p. 213)

Once face-to-face with the Other, we eventually open up and enter into discourse. Lingis (1994), a contemporary philosopher well versed in the work of Levinas, describes the power of conversation. He writes, “To enter into conversation with another is to lay down one’s arms and one’s defenses; to throw open the gates of one’s positions; to expose oneself to the other” (p. 87). In speaking with, and listening to, the Other, I become responsible, that is, able to respond. Levinas (1961/1969) writes, “In discourse, I expose myself to the questioning of the Other, and this urgency of the response – acuteness of the present – engenders me for responsibility” (p. 178). In his own work, Lingis (1994) reflects this idea: “They ask for a response that will be responsible” (p. 131). I can no longer turn away. I must react. I must offer my hand. Responsibility leads me to serve the Other (Levinas, 1961/1969). Thus, with the look into the eyes of the Other, we forge an ethical relationship which asks for compassion, human agency and moral responsibility.

In Levinas’ ideas, I recognize the potential transformative power of travel as a way of meeting the Other. Levinas provides the rationale for my decision to make the concrete reality of the world my classroom. As a teacher, I want to introduce my students to the Other. I want to take my students to the places where they can build an ethical relationship and develop a sense of justice. I want my students’ being-with-Others in the world to be guided by “concern” (Heidegger, 1927/1996).

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/2000), Paulo Freire names what I hope to do when traveling with students:

In cultural synthesis, the actors who come from “another world” to the world of the people do so not as invaders. They do not come to ‘teach’ or to ‘transmit’ or to ‘give’ anything, but rather to learn, with the people, about the people’s world. (p. 180)

As traveling-teacher and traveling-students, we go out into the world in order to learn. We go in order to observe, to listen, to participate, to question, to discuss and to laugh. In the world of the Other, we restrain our tendencies to preach, to instruct and to suggest. I want my students to “fall into” genuine conversation with the people. I want my students to go face-to-face with the Other.

Tripped up: Hurdles remain. Yet, in my own past, I also see how a person can “look away” and avoid eye contact with the Other. You can turn in the middle of a jog and snap photographs from the safety of a moving vehicle. We can go miles and miles from home and try to avoid authentic contact with the Other. Fear blocks one from “letting something-come-toward-oneself” (Heidegger, 1927/1996, p. 313). Jim Toner (2001) suggests his father traveled half way around the world shackled by this fear:

This is what he wants. For seven hundred hours he wants Scotch and TV and light talk so we can continue doing what we’ve done our whole lives: amuse ourselves to death. This trip to Sri Lanka, then, could be as jolly as a day at Disneyland. (p. 34)

The Westernization and standardization of the globe does not help. Westernization colludes with our own inner fears of difference in creating masks behind which we can place the Other. On my initial trip to South Africa, on a Fulbright-Hayes Award, I remember the first week. We stayed in a four star hotel in the wealthy Rosebank suburb of Johannesburg. In the hotel restaurants, we strolled up and down “all-you-can-eat” breakfast and lunch buffets. In the hotel

conference rooms, we learned of the poverty and the challenges facing this nation while settling back in cushioned chairs and drinking from carafes of iced water and pots of steaming coffee and tea. Walking around the hotel, I could have been in London, Paris, Washington or Los Angeles. If I had not taken a daily jog out-of-doors, leaving behind the insulated lobby full of business-attired crowds and English-speaking bellmen, I could have forgotten easily that an-Other world existed. Even out in the world of the Other, Michael Jackson (1995) describes how tourists avoid going face-to-face:

Tourists want Dreamtime artifacts but no contact with the people who make them. Culture has become synonymous with coffee table books, red beads, and decorated boards, a far cry from the ongoing practical activity of the lived world. (p. 114)

Therefore, when traveling, how do I enter into the practical activity of the lived world? Can I make it beyond Disneyland and beyond the lobby? What is it like for my students to face the Other? How do we make genuine contact with the people? Why might we “turn away” from what their faces suggest? Why would we possibly deny the “opening up” of our own eyes to a broader – albeit darker – reality? Of what are we afraid? After being summoned by the Other’s face, what does the discourse sound like? Does it reach beyond Heidegger’s “idle talk?” What does the handshake feel like? Are we able to respond or does irresponsibility linger?

As Traveler: Going Out-Of-Doors And Communicating With The Other Of Nature

Back to the Earth I screamed and no one listened to me. Back to the Earth I Lived and they all followed. (Buynak, Glabicki & Wertz, 1994, track 13)

In the above lyrics, Rusted Root, a contemporary rock group, echoes a growing distrust and unease among some Americans about technology, pavement, suburban homes and strip malls. In a spiritual, primal chant, the song testifies to the power of an actual “re-turn” to the rugged mountains, cold streams and rolling hills. As we go back to the earth, living in nature serves as a summons for Others to join us.

Sanctuary. From my time in Brazil, I hold a vivid memory of a “re-turn” to nature. During a weekend escape to a mountain hotel, on a Saturday morning, just as my host family begins to wake up, I slip out of the front of the hotel and follow the road up into the cool mist and low, thin clouds. Small drops of water gather on my jacket. A thick, dense, dark green carpet of trees stretches out on both sides of me. Leaning into the mountain, I climb higher. I walk alone. A few birds call, but for the most part, I hear only the slightest of breezes. Even though the hotel sits less than a mile below and I walk on a road, I feel far removed. I stop. Turning in place, I absorb the beauty, solitude and comfort of this place. This morning, in order to communicate, I do not have to wrestle with my Portuguese. Instead, my communing-with nature comes effortlessly. In many ways, the place reminds me of the mountains at home in Vermont. In his book, *Eternal Echoes: Celtic Reflections On Our Yearning To Belong*, O’Donohue (1999) informs us, “When you find a place in Nature where the mind and heart find rest, then you have discovered a sanctuary for your soul” (p. 15).

In 1997, when I first journey to South Africa as a teacher on a Fulbright award, I discover a similar sanctuary. On one evening, as the sun sinks low, I

unexpectedly find myself in a township outside of Blomfontein. After spending the day with a provincial education official, I accept his invitation for dinner. First, he has to teach a night class and so he asks me to wait. Outside of the small school, I lean against his car. In an attempt to brush off the cold air, I wrap my arms tightly and shiver. Dusk settles and I smell fires burning. Walking home from work, laborers move in and out of the shadows. I hardly can see people as they pass me. I push off from the car and walk out toward the road. My heart beats quickly, and I inhale and exhale deeply through my nose. I smell smoke everywhere. My hands and the tip of my nose are freezing. I did not expect Africa to feel like New England in late October.

On the edge of the street, I wonder if I stand out. After all, you do not see too many white people in the townships. Especially in Blomfontein, known for its conservative white population, I doubt many blacks have seen a white man taking in the night sky from inside “their” township. I wonder if I am safe. Anxiety stands with me. Yet, I find the sky arresting. I have never seen so many stars. On many occasions, I have heard about the expanse of the African sky. Yet, now I witness it for myself. It inspires. It comforts. Despite some fear about the Other passing me by on the street, I feel an amazing peacefulness with the Other in the sky. With hands shoved in my pockets, I stand and stare upwards. If only for a few authentic moments, gazing up at the Other of nature, the alienation of our “paved-over” Western world fades away.

In *The Spell of the Sensuous*, Abram (1996) discusses his first encounter with “the intelligence that lurks in nonhuman nature” and “shatters habitual ways

of seeing and feeling, leaving one open to a world all alive, awake and aware” (p. 19). As I walk back to the car and the school that night, I feel “left open” to the Other of nature. For while I have talked about the Other as persons, such as those boys diving from the rocks in Brazil or the grandmother in her kitchen, I also recognize a communion with the Other of the out-of-doors. Nature presents its own face.

Bound up in relation to the Other of nature. Growing up, I spend a lot of time in the woods. Whether tracking deer in the fall, snowshoeing in the winter or hiking in the spring and summer, I lose myself in the trees and on the mountains (on occasion, literally). Today, when time gives me permission, I flee to the Appalachian Trail for a day of hiking. During a break from school, the out-of-doors always calls me. The woods relax me. Whenever I arrive, they borrow my concerns and rarely give them back. Thus, when Abram (1996) talks about the “crackling sounds made by the new ice on the lakes” as being an “earthly utterance” (p. 153), I return to a pause taken while hiking in Yosemite. Sitting next to a small, snow covered lake, I listen to the ice call out. When he writes about animals “singing through” humans (p. 146), I am back in a canoe at dusk on Scraggly Lake in Maine listening to the loons. In these places, I go face-to-face with the Other of nature. In the Other’s solitude, I find comfort.

Yet, in the West, we assault nature. With our bulldozers and steamrollers, we “pave it over.” Revealing our ignorance, as Abram (1996) notes, we conference “to solve global environmental problems while oblivious to the moon rising over the rooftops” (p. 265). In this Western world, I seek to introduce my

students to the Other of nature. Living in the suburbs outside of Washington, D.C., I wish to take them to the places where they can walk among, rub up against, and face the Other of nature. I hope that such a coming-to-nature can foster a “caring” within my students for the earth and for all that it seeks to preserve. As Heidegger (1927/1996) suggests, our being-in-the-world-with things should be directed by our “taking care” of those things (p. 180).

In his classic text, *I and Thou* (1923/2000), Martin Buber discusses our relationship with the Other. He addresses three types of Other: humans, spiritual beings and nature. With all three, we should seek to establish a relation. Yet, society’s tendency to objectify nature threatens this particular Other.

But whenever the sentence ‘I see the tree’ is so uttered that it no longer tells of a relation between the man – I – and the tree – Thou -, but establishes the perception of the tree as object to human consciousness, the barrier between subject and object has been set up. (Buber, 1923/2000, p. 35)

Fortunately, as Buber describes, hope exists. “It can, however, also come about, if I have both will and grace, that in considering the tree I become bound up in relation to it. The tree is now no longer It” (p. 23).

With a desire to introduce students to the Other of nature, to allow them to begin to “become bound up in relation to it,” I take my class hiking over Old South Mountain in western Maryland. Every spring, we set up camp in an open field on the Appalachian Trail. My students and I enjoy the fact that it is 7:30 p.m. and the sun has not set. Summer is coming and school is going. On an open fire, we grill burgers. Tents encircle us. After dinner, we talk and the fire, the woods and the darkness provide the backdrop for our stories. On occasion, I find myself

staring into the fire. Looking up, the shadows of the flames dance on the overhanging trees. A few stars look down.

As midnight passes, the cold air presses in on our backs while the fire keeps our faces warm. The fire also struggles to illumine our faces. At times, we strain to see who addresses us through the flames. As midnight passes, students excuse themselves and retreat to their tents. I wait. With only a few of us remaining, the fire dips low. Do my students also find this place to be a sanctuary? With few opportunities to spend time in nature, will they “turn away” from the Other of nature and seek the material comforts of home? What is the experience like of going out-of-doors and encountering the beauty and the solitude? Turning to a place such as South Africa, how do we react to the natural beauty of a country that has fewer scars from industrialization and urbanization than our own homes? How do we respond to the dialogue in which nature engages us? In South Africa, what does it mean to appreciate this beauty when human poverty surrounds it? What do we feel when we view animals from open land rovers and people from closed vans?

As Teacher: Establishing The Mood For Letting Go And Being With One-

An-Other

Mr. G: I don't want to sound all emotional, but u really made WJ so much better for me. Having a teacher who is also a friend is and was wonderful. Anyway, enough mushy stuff, I have to conquer a government and latin midterm. (J.K., personal correspondence, October, 1999)

In *Anam Cara: A Book Of Celtic Wisdom* (1997), John O'Donohue writes, “Friendship is always an act of recognition” (p. 22). As a teacher, I wish to recognize my students and to offer them my friendship. I look for the opportunity

to engage in dialogue, to inquire about a personal triumph or to listen to a personal tragedy. I seek a personal bond that will allow me to serve. I know that personal connections will bring us closer. In recognizing my students, I foster a relationship, a friendship, which allows me to challenge them, to question them, to take them into a place of acceptable dis-comfort. In that pedagogical place, I can help them grow. I must recognize them as persons in order to reach this place. Otherwise, my questions risk embarrassing the student or harming his confidence. As Parker Palmer (1998) suggests, I must ask myself if “I have the kind of relationship that would keep him from being wounded” (p. 82).

Teaching as an offer: Friendship. To talk of the teacher-student relationship as one rooted in friendship can raise eyebrows. I often feel a bodily dis-comfort when a student describes me as a friend. I question what the public reaction will be to a student naming me as his or her friend. Will colleagues see me as failing to maintain the “proper distance” from my students? How can a teacher maintain the required “objectivity” with a friend?

At the same time, I find the description to be complimentary. I shake my head at my own reluctance to pursue this type of lived relationship with students who I know will benefit from our mutual ability to enter into genuine conversation and learning. In *Tuesdays with Morrie* (1997), Mitch Albom pays tribute to his college teacher and to the lived relationship the two of them had as student and teacher and as friends. Early in the memoir, Mitch describes his first meeting with his soon-to-be mentor. In reading about that initial meeting, I am envious of the ease with which the teacher offers his friendship.

Only a dozen or so students are there, fumbling with notebooks and syllabi... I tell myself it will not be easy to cut a class this small. Maybe I shouldn't take it.

"Mitchell?" Morrie says, reading from the attendance list.

I raise a hand.

"Do you prefer Mitch? Or is Mitchell better?"

I have never been asked this by a teacher. I do a double take at this guy in his yellow turtleneck and green corduroy pants, the silver hair falling on his forehead. He is smiling.

Mitch, I say. Mitch is what my friends called me.

"Well, Mitch it is then," Morrie says, as if closing a deal. "And, Mitch?"

Yes?

"I hope that one day you will think of me as your friend." (Albom, 1997, p. 24)

While many characterize teaching as a method, as a skill and as a technical process, I maintain that teaching grounds itself in recognizing your students, and thus, as Morrie did so graciously, in offering your friendship. Teaching is a human endeavor. In describing the Celtic concept of the "soul friend," or *anam cara*, O'Donohue (1997) writes, "In the early Celtic church, a person who acted as teacher, companion, or spiritual guide was called an *anam cara*... With the *anam cara* you could share your inner-most self, your mind and your heart" (p. 13). Today, far from a "soul friend," teachers receive advice warning them to avoid smiling and becoming too close with students. Society recommends distance and remoteness. Prodded by high stakes tests and lengthy lists of standards, teachers ignore personal connections with students. Instead, they

deliver a “standardized” product and prepare to squeeze students with all of their unique qualities through the same hole cut by the same “standardized” exam.

Still, some teachers follow a different path. They choose to make a difference in the lives of young people. They remind us about the teacher’s true role. In *Crossing The Water: Eighteen Months On An Island Working With Troubled Boys – A Teacher’s Memoir* (2001), Daniel Robb describes his experience teaching juvenile offenders on a small island off of Cape Cod. After several months, he comes to the following realization:

I am beginning to see what much of this teaching is about: It is about sitting with the child, lending him my presence, giving him witness, and caring for his soul, even if it’s only for the few days that he’s on the island. It is this constancy that lends me credence, that establishes trust, that gives power to my ministrations, such as they are. Clever words, theories, texts don’t cut it. Time spent listening does, with these guys.
(p. 216)

Robb captures the work of teaching: to sit with, to lend presence, to give witness and to care for an-Other’s soul. He also identifies the importance of constancy and continuity as a part of a teacher’s offering. When you offer your friendship and your recognition, you cannot withdraw. After a class or semester ends, you remain obligated to your students. If called, you must continue to recognize them.

Yet, in describing an offer of friendship to my students, I do not want to misconstrue the relationship. I do not seek a companion with whom to spend my free time or a person with whom to share more intimate reflections. In offering my recognition of the student’s person-hood, I do not withdraw all traditional conventions. For example, I have never allowed a student to call me by my first name. As the teacher, I hold the primary responsibility for establishing the lines

across which teacher and student do not cross. Over the years, I have used mutual respect as the marker to draw that line. While students have respected my wish that they use my last name, their respectful search for a more informal title has always been present. For example, I accept the dropping of “Mr.” from my name. Thus, for some of my students, I become “Garran.” By dropping the title, students re-cast my last name as something more closely resembling a first name. In this transformation of last name into first name, a student attempts to “personalize” the relationship.

Teaching as a welcome: Falling into conversation When students enter into a more informal relationship, a trust can develop. Once a student and I feel comfortable with one-an-Other, then I stand in a position from which I can challenge that student and make that student feel dis-comfort. In the end, as a teacher, this position represents the reason for my offer of recognition. From this place, I can serve my students better. I can ask the difficult questions. I can take a student to a place where she does not know the answer, but where she will be willing to dwell for a while amidst her dis-comfort at not-knowing.

In this place of not-knowing, we can encounter ideas that might threaten what we currently hold to be true. We can find ourselves questioning our beliefs, our values and our assumptions. In this place, we go beyond what Heidegger (1927/1996) calls “idle talk.” Idle talk “holds any new questioning and discussion at a distance because it presumes it has understood and in a peculiar way it suppresses them and holds them back” (Heidegger 1927/1996, p. 158). Instead, inside this “classroom,” as Gadamer describes, we can “fall into conversation.”

Conversation is a process of coming to an understanding. Thus it belongs to every true conversation that each person opens himself to the other, truly accepts his point of view as valid and transposes himself into the other to such an extent that he understands not the particular individual but what he says. (Gadamer, 1960/1989, p. 385)

In order to “fall into” conversation, teacher and students must trust one-an-Other. Again, as Palmer states, a teacher must be in a position with a student where the teacher’s questions will do no harm. Otherwise, as Heidegger warns, a student “takes flight.” At the same time, a teacher must trust his/her students. After all, teachers “turn away” too. “Falling into a conversation” means letting go. As Gadamer (1960/1989) describes, “The partners conversing are far less the leaders of it than the led. No one knows in advance what will ‘come out’ of a conversation” (p. 383). For this to happen, as Michie (1999) describes in his memoir of teaching in inner city Chicago, “The teacher should tell the kids, ‘You can learn from me, but I can learn from you too’” (p. 89).

How does a teacher and his students become comfortable enough to “let go” and to “fall into” what might be an uncomfortable conversation? Why do so few teachers and students reach beyond “idle talk?” What does it look like when a teacher offers recognition and friendship? What actions prove to students that a teacher has faith in his ability to learn from his students? How does a teacher, possibly trained to ‘control’ and to ‘manage’ her students, reach a position from where she can open her hands, release her grip and let go?

Teaching as a stance: Side-by-side. In the late morning, on a leadership retreat, they stand blindfolded and attempt to make a square out of a circle of rope. I laugh as my students pull forward, lean backwards and slowly come to

listen to one-an-Other's voices. Later, I laugh as one student stands back and stares at the spider web of string stretched between the trees. With a slight smile sneaking across her face, she shakes her head. Her peers offer competing solutions as they hoist one-an-Other into the air and pass each Other through the web. When her turn comes, she redirects their momentum and they see a better solution. As the afternoon heat and humidity settle in, we take shelter under the forest's canopy. From tree stumps to rock faces, pitted against one-an-Other and the clock, teams learn to maneuver through the woods. With map and compass in hand, they discover a hidden path to their destination.

As evening arrives, we solve problems. We brainstorm. We plan. We throw water balloons and we capture the flag. With the darkness, we climb up into the tree house and they talk about the day. In the shadows, I sit back and "let go." With midnight approaching, they take over and they share in a genuine conversation. In the middle of the summer, when teacher and students are not supposed to see each Other, we come together. In my own way, I offer my friendship and I try to take them to a place of trust. By offering recognition, by opening myself to friendship, by "letting go" and by establishing a place where we can "fall into" conversation, I am able to be-with my students. I stand by their side. I do not stand above them. I do not stand beyond them. I stand with them and I teach them.

I stand side-by-side with my students in an attempt to establish the mood and to build a place from which, and in which, we can "let go" and engage with multiple Others. Yet, teachers must recognize the Otherness of their own students

and students must recognize the Otherness of their teacher and their fellow students. We might go out and seek the Other of the people of South Africa or the Other of nature, but we do so ourselves as a community of Others. We share similarities, but we also remain unique. Thus, as a teacher, I attempt to build a pedagogical place where students come together to be-with-one-an-Other. Following the ideal set out for us by Heidegger (1927/1996), as teacher and students, we “turn toward” a being-with-one-an-Other defined by concern for-one-an-Other. Yet, as Heidegger (1927/1996) warns, obstacles exist in our coming-together:

The other is initially “there” in terms of what they have heard about him, what they say and know about him. Idle talk initially intrudes itself into the midst of primordial being-with-one-another. Everyone keeps track of the other, initially and first of all, watching how he will behave, what he will say to something. Being-with-one-another in the they is not at all a self-contained, indifferent side-by-sideness, but a tense, ambiguous keeping track of each other, a secretive, reciprocal listening-in. Under the mask of the for-one-another, the against-one-another is at play. (p. 163)

As a teacher, I wrestle with the “against-one-another” in education. I wish to establish a place where students can come together, take risks, listen, share and engage multiple Others while being “for-one-another.” Yet, schooling encourages a competition that can cripple this spirit. Education spawns mistrust. We pit students against one-an-Other in a frantic pursuit of transcripts “scribbled” over with high grades and resumes “padded” with extracurricular activity after extracurricular activity. We measure a young person’s service to his/her community in terms of hours required for graduation. Learning translates into “A’s,” “B’s” and “C’s.” Claiming higher standards, colleges and universities take pride in their ability to close their doors to students. Knowing their chance of

making it through those doors slips away daily, students resort to cheating, lying and stealing. Under the false impression that they help them to survive, states examine and prod students in order to determine the fittest test-takers.

Into this average, everydayness of school, I seek to create a pedagogical place from which my students can cross borders and meet multiple Others while being-with-one-an-Other and being-for-one-an-Other. In this place, I seek to introduce an anxiety that turns my students' stomachs and a call that confronts their ethical conscience. I want us to "let go," face one-an-Other and face the difficult questions and feelings evoked by the multiple Others that we "brush up" against. I also want my students to be captured by the Other's face and to begin to "turn toward," as compared to "turning away" from, the obligation to social justice inherent in that face.

As Teacher: In Search Of The Beautiful Ones/The Other Of Social Justice

I used to see a lot of hope. I saw men tear down the veils behind which the truth had been hidden. But then the same men, when they have power in their hands at last, began to find the veils useful. They made many more. Life has not changed... After a youth spent fighting the white man, why should not the president discover as he grows older that his real desire has been to be like the white governor himself, to live above all blackness in the big old slave castle? And the men around him, why not? What stops them sending their loved children to kindergartens in Europe? (Armah, 1968, p. 92)

As a teacher of world history, I often come back to Ayi Kwei Armah's novel, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. My students read about men cloaking themselves behind the same veils that they tore away from their oppressors. They read this Ghanaian author's charge that his African brothers and sisters have "fallen prey" to the ways of the oppressor. My students ask one-an-

Other why a person who has felt the straps of domination on his/her back would so easily turn around and whip an-Other. My students struggle with the concept that the oppressed become the oppressors. They question why humanity uses race, gender, ethnicity and income to persecute. Together, as teacher and students, rather than “bubbling in” multiple choice questions on standardized state assessments, we “test” the historical cycle of oppression, resistance to oppression and subsequent oppression.

In class, we explore forms of resistance and types of oppression. We set out on a journey in search of the “beautiful ones” that Armah laments have not yet been born. In exposing my students to the stories of tyranny and resistance, I weave together an historical pattern of despair, followed by hope, followed by despair. Yet, the possibility of an-Other way (an alternative thread that could break the pattern) represents an idea to which my students and I continuously return. We keep looking in the corners and behind the door for the Other of social justice.

The expression, “the beautiful ones are not yet born,” has become a permanent passage in my own curricular transcript. The phrase guides my curricular choices and orientation. It offers a direction and an overarching “presence” to my courses. It settles me in a critical pedagogical place. From this place, I can ask questions that force my students to reconsider assumptions. I can select powerful and empowering text. As Heidegger (1927/1996) suggests, I can encourage reflection and “letting learn.” As Levinas (1961/1969) suggests, I can

invite controversial comment and break “the closed circle of totality” (p. 171). I can ask my students to pause and to consider an-Other way.

Entering the dark. In my classroom, seeking the Other of social justice takes us to many dark destinations. We learn about the Japanese occupation of Korea by reading about a young Korean boy losing his name. By reading Richard Kim’s *Lost Names: Scenes From A Korean Boyhood* (1988/1998), my students cross-cultures to see what oppression looks like. We listen to Peter Maas, a journalist and war correspondent, and read from his book, *Love Thy Neighbor: A Story Of War* (1996), about the horrors of modern war in the Balkans. We enter into the text of Nien Cheng’s *Life And Death In Shanghai* (1986) and come out to meet her in person and to hear about her daughter’s death and her own imprisonment. While we drive home from our annual visit to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., my students ask why they do not learn about the Cambodian genocide or the Rwandan genocide in school. Several months later, we read and question why so many scholars and politicians hesitate to call the mass killings in non-Western areas such as Cambodia by the name of “genocide.” We study the religious conflict of the European Protestant Reformation by examining its deadly impact on the native Americans in Brazil and Paraguay. We investigate the European Industrial Revolution of the 1800’s by exposing the role of multinational corporations in fostering today’s child labor. From the dark places of yesterday and today, in text and film, injustice rushes out of the shadows and bares its teeth at us.

Yet, without considering first how the oppressed respond, we rarely leave these dark places. I refuse to cast the victim in a passive role. In *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (1990), Scott opens his exploration of the public and private transcripts of the oppressor and the oppressed with an Ethiopian proverb that speaks to the ever-present nature of resistance. The proverb illustrates the fact that resistance does not require armed revolution. I want my students to understand that quiet, behind-the-scenes acts of resistance surround us. Even in the simplest of ways, people stand-up for themselves and their families. Thus, as a discussion opener, I place the Ethiopian proverb on the board: “When the great lord passes the wise peasant bows deeply and silently farts.”

In *Lost Names*, Richard Kim (1988/1998) recounts multiple ways in which he and his family resisted their Japanese “masters.” In listening to Nien Cheng’s story, we sit amazed as she describes how she withheld the “confession” demanded by her jailers. Despite hearing all of the promises about freedom, she refused to confess to something that she had not done. In exploring the killing fields in Cambodia, we read personal accounts of those persons who survived. Similarly, despite our study of the horrors of the American decision to drop the Atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima, we spend time reading about young survivors. With child labor, we discuss our own complicity through the purchases that we make. Yet, we also meet individuals who challenge this practice. While I take my students to some of history’s darkest places, I try to reveal that, even in these places, hope exists.

In the places where I bring my students, I seek to arouse certain feelings. I want the injustice that bares its teeth at my students to make them afraid and angry. I want my students' stomachs to turn when they consider the way in which we have chosen to live in our world. I want my students' heads to spin when they consider the never-ending-ness of oppression's ability to rear its ugly head. I want my students' legs to weaken beneath them when they see the faces of the enslaved, the colonized, the raped and the murdered.

At the same time, I want my students to find comfort in the stories of those who resist and of those who seek an alternative path. I do not want to demoralize or to dishearten them. I do not intend to leave them trapped in a place of hopelessness. In one chapter of Ayers, Hunt and Quinn's *Teaching for Social Justice* (1998), Bill Bigelow describes one student's reaction to his unit on the global sweatshop. Her words capture my own fear of where I do not want my students to end up. I might have to take them to this dark place, but when the course ends, I do not want to leave them there.

During the class evaluation, Amy, who plans on becoming a teacher so she can "help change the world," sat quietly and didn't volunteer her feelings about the class. After everyone else shared, I asked her what she'd thought of this course. She offered one of the strongest critiques. "You need to include some more positive aspects. We can't live in a world where it's all negative. I became overwhelmed and angry. I felt like I couldn't take it." (Bigelow, 1998, p. 46)

In an evaluation of my own class, one student responded in a similar manner. His words stay with me: "What I got from this class was the world sucks more than I already knew." As a teacher committed to social justice, I struggle with balance. How do I bring my students into the dark places without leaving them there

feeling overwhelmed and angry? How do we address the assertion that the “world sucks” from a place of hope as compared to despair?

Crossing borders. I attempt to convince my students that despite humanity’s poor record, we can move toward a more just society. Heeding Giroux’s (1992) advice, I avoid an “exclusive emphasis on power as oppressive (which) always runs the risk of developing as its political equivalent a version of radical cynicism and antiutopianism” (p. 66). I must address my students using a language of possibility. After all, personally, I look at the world with a tremendous sense of hope. I want my students to share a similar optimism. Yet, as a teacher of older teenagers, I refuse to hide the depths of injustice in order to create false hope. I owe my students “honest hope” and it only comes after my “students become border crossers in order to understand otherness in its own terms” (Giroux, 1992, p. 28). In talking about border crossers, I rely upon Giroux’s concept of border pedagogy. By this term, Giroux means pedagogy that challenges and redefines the borders established by domination and oppression. By engaging the Other of social justice, we seek to cross borders.

What is the experience like of “crossing over” the border? What does one leave behind? Once one crosses, can one go back to the original side? How does our physical movement across borders coincide with the moving of our social consciousness and spirit? What elements of the crossing “push” us to question and possibly to challenge the political, economic and social realities of our bordered lives?

In our upper-middle class community, I warn my students that the Other of social justice finds itself endangered. People do not want to face it because it evokes fear and anxiety. Social justice threatens the world of the middle class. It calls us to see ourselves as benefiting from a system that hurts Others. We do not want to lose our own comforts. We do not want to share. We do not wish to cross the border. Most challenging, if we do turn towards the Other of social justice and allow its call to capture us, then we find ourselves moving away from those with whom we have been walking. Our questions begin to bother our old companions. Our comments place us in opposition to what our old companions believe. Crossing the border creates anxiety. A sense of alienation and homelessness can overtake us. In this new place, we try to abandon the difficult questions. We seek a way back. We try to ignore what we have seen. We pull the blankets up around ourselves, close our eyes and try to dismiss the Other. We try to go back home.

Risking homelessness. In turning toward our anxiety, Heidegger describes a need on our part to accept an uncanny feeling of “not being at home” (1927/1996, p. 177). As teacher and students, we must swallow deeply and go there. Similarly, Levinas says we must leave “the being at home with oneself where everything is given to me” and go out to find the Other (1961/1969, p. 76). In Other words, both thinkers lead us away from home toward homelessness. We must accept homelessness as the passage-way through which we leave one world for an-Other. Homelessness accompanies border crossing. Eventually, we can reach a new home defined by Heidegger’s authenticity, Levinas’ infinity and a more socially just world. Yet, to reach this dwelling place, we must first abandon

the inauthentic, self-centered and unjust homes in which we currently reside. Thus, at least temporarily, as we move from one world to the Other, we are not at-home. Leading students toward social justice and toward the questions that accompany genuine, authentic engagement with the Other brings them into a passage-way in which confusion, anxiety and a sense of alienation exist. As a teacher, should I seek to make my students homeless?

In making students homeless, in taking them to a place of not-knowing, I have a responsibility to offer my concern and my care. If I ask them to trust me and to enter a place where they will question their middle class life and all of its gifts, then I must be for-them and with-them. I must recognize that students will recoil from the alienation and homelessness of the passage-way to the Other of social justice. In Brazil, I turned and ran away from the Other of poverty and injustice. I went home. Yet, if we have truly gone face-to-face with the Other, we cannot help but peek out from underneath those blankets and realize that we have changed. Back home, we no longer feel completely at-home. Social justice resonates with us. We cannot hide from its call because it speaks from within us. As a teacher, I want students to look inward and feel social justice. Yet, I recognize how disconcerting that can be.

How do we name this fear of the Other of social justice? What does our anxiety about the Other of social justice say about us? Can we find comfort in the face of the Other of social justice, or does it always bring alienation? In pedagogical places, as teachers, how can we care for those to whom we introduce the Other of social justice? Should teachers have the “authority” to bring students

to the darkest places of history and to suggest an alternative path out of these caves? Can bringing students to these places be considered irresponsible?

As a college student, when I was brought to the darker places, I had already faced the Other in Brazil. I had “turned away,” but I had jogged along the border. As I began my study of international affairs, several professors cast out a net that pulled me toward Marx, political economy and the issues confronting the developing world. In particular, a professor of international development and West African political economy challenged me to question the world in which I lived. He taught me a new language with which to address the poor and the powerless. Latin American dependency theory and a core-periphery model of power distribution provided me with the concepts to help “peel back” the layers of what I had experienced in Brazil. Meanwhile, in economic history courses, leaving the master narratives behind, two professors revisited history as told by marginalized voices. I began to write papers critical of American policy. My essays spoke about resistance to Western-imposed economic solutions. I built arguments challenging “hegemonic world systems” and seeking “liberatory, self-sustaining development programs.”

Yet, in the beginning, I felt uncomfortable with these ideas. They spoke to what I had seen in Brazil. Yet, they also spoke to my own life, to my possessions, to my dreams and to my material desires. Poverty surrounds us, but we “turn a blind eye.” War kills “over-there.” We remain deaf to the voices of the colonized. Yet, in college, when I tried to “turn away,” my professors snapped their fingers and reminded me where I stood. One foot at a time, I crossed over the border.

Border crossing involves alienation. In the language of Levinas (1961/1969), I leave behind the comforts of a home “where everything is given to me” (p. 76). In Brazil and in college, for the most part, solitude accompanied me on that walk. Three professors showed me that the material comforts our society praises are reserved for a few. For that “revealing,” I thank them. Yet, I regret the lack of community inside the classrooms in which these teachers shared their border pedagogy. Giroux (1992) stresses the importance of that community when he writes, “Equally important is the need to provide safe spaces for students to critically engage teachers, other students, as well as the limits of their own positions” (p. 33). As a student, the places in which I experienced the Other provided little opportunity to be-with and be-for one-an-Other. We arrived in class, spent an hour together and then departed. Driven by research projects, professors shared little of themselves. As a teacher, I try to offer more. I want to provide a pedagogical place where students can feel safe and can feel a sense of belonging while encountering the Other.

Taking action In engaging the Other of social justice, I also feel the “pull” of service-oriented action. Social justice education walks hand-in-hand with praxis. As a teacher with my students, we spend a morning sorting cans of food, moving boxes and trying to keep our hands warm. In the DC Food Shelf’s warehouse, we place vegetables in this box and cereal in that box. Along the Potomac, we pick up trash, sort recyclable containers and enjoy the out-of-doors. In a woman’s shelter, we paint walls, clean the basement and prepare a meal. On

these various Saturdays, we give back while hopefully seeing the connection between what we study and what we do.

As a college student, at the same time that my professors introduced the Other of social justice on campus, I began tutoring at a junior high school on 16th street in Washington, DC. Each week, I took students to a room across the hall from their math class and we tackled fractions and decimals. During that fall semester, serving as a math tutor did not represent my ideal notion of how I wanted to spend each Wednesday. Financial aid drove me to Lincoln Junior High School. In exchange for a certain amount of tuition remission, I explained why we like common denominators. As the semester came to a close, I welcomed my returning freedom to spend Wednesdays as I wished. On campus, I enjoyed writing about the need for empowerment in the distant, developing world. Yet, in the concrete reality of the world, I was blind to those similar needs on 16th Street. I remained talented at “turning away.”

In mid-December, as my final day with the students came to a close, I offered my thanks, possibly genuine, to the teacher and to the class. On command from their teacher, they applauded. In response, I offered them a lie. I said, “Well, I’ll be back. I’ll stop by next semester.” Yet, I had no intention of coming back. I had served my time and earned my tuition. I could re-claim Wednesday mornings. Yet, one young student did not allow that lie. From his corner of the room, he announced that the students would not see me again. I would not be back.

I felt betrayed. Of all of the students, I had spent the most time with this young man. Back in October, when my university’s alumni magazine wrote an

article on the tutoring program, he and I had been showcased. How dare he reveal my lie? The teacher offered a soft reprimand to the young boy. I looked down and shuffled my feet. Later, as I walked away from the school, I kept looking back. For some reason, his words had captured me.

Van Manen (1990) writes, “True introspection is impossible. A person cannot reflect on lived experience while living through the experience... reflection on lived experience is always recollective” (p. 10). At the time, I could not possibly know the significance of that boy’s challenge. After all, on that morning, I had no intention of becoming a teacher. Prior to that sixth grader’s “push,” I had not “given in” to the call to teach. Yet, I now look back on that boy and recognize what he gave me. During the next semester, each Wednesday, I returned to Lincoln. With the financial aid gone, I now drove myself to Lincoln. Over the next few years, I entered a Master’s Degree program in education. I student taught. I became a teacher with my own students and I found a place and a position from which to enact my commitment to social justice. I owe a lot to that boy and to my own inability to withstand his sixth grade peer pressure.

Listening to Freire. In my position as teacher, I have found a place from which to carry out my commitment to social justice. In his foreword to *Teaching for Social Justice* (1998), William Ayers describes this place:

Teaching for social justice demands a dialectical stance: one eye firmly fixed on the students – Who are they? What are their hopes, dreams, and aspirations? Their passions and commitments? What skills, abilities, and capacities does each one bring to the classroom? - and the other eye looking unblinkingly at the concentric circles of context – historical flow, cultural surround, economic reality. Teaching for social justice is teaching that arouses students, engages them in a quest to identify obstacles to their

full humanity, to their freedom, and then to drive, to move against those obstacles. (p. xvii)

No one has helped me to understand better the role of the teacher in arousing students to move against the obstacles blocking a more just world than Paulo Freire. I first encountered Freire as a graduate student. His classic text, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, cleared a path between my undergraduate study of oppressive economic and political systems and my new position as teacher. After encountering Freire's "banking concept" of education, I stepped back and took a critical look at the traditional ways in which we teach history. For Freire, traditional education "becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor" (1970/2000, p. 72). This system suggests that the teacher is all-knowing and that the students should passively and uncritically accept the information given to them. This process of education indoctrinates students into a passive "way of being." In contrast, Freire offers a vision of education in which teachers and students construct knowledge. He calls for a critical re-examination of the world in which we live. He charges us to take our students to the dark places. By going there, we make liberation possible.

I feel obliged to thank Freire for my pedagogical grounding. After catching an early glimpse of the Other as a student in Brazil, I find it appropriate that my practice takes root in the ideas of a Brazilian educator, activist and writer. In *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy and Civic Courage* (1998), published a few months after his death in 1997, Freire speaks to what I attempt to do with my students. He reinforces my teaching and curricular decisions. With my students, whether in the text that I select, in the discussions that I enter or on the

journeys that I take out into the concrete reality of the world, I find Freire guiding me.

The fact that I perceive myself to be in the world, with the world, with others, brings with it a sense of “being with” constitutive of who I am that makes my relationship to the world essential to who I am. In other words, my presence in the world is not so much of someone who is merely adapting to something “external,” but of someone who is inserted as if belonging essentially to it. It’s the position of one who struggles to become the subject and maker of history and not simply a passive, disconnected object. (Freire, 1998, p. 55)

I want my students to engage with the Other and to recognize the social justice within themselves so that they feel their “essential belonging” to our humanity.

As I already have mentioned, teaching for social justice can create feelings of alienation and homelessness. Engaging the Other can cause dis-comfort. Reaching the place from where we see our “essential belonging” to humanity remains the destination of my pedagogy. Yet, I must recognize the political nature of this journey. I ask students to reexamine critically the world, the state and the community in which they live. I expose them to the primary Other of distant peoples and their culture, to the Other of nature, to the Other of one-an-Other and to the Other of social justice. By doing so, I hope they hear an ethical call that forces them to act.

Standing up. Yet, this ethical call to act might lead students to challenge the state and the community for which I work. As a public school educator, I have been charged to maintain a politically neutral stance. I have been instructed to cloak my lessons in objectivity. I am paid to prepare a future workforce. I have signed a contract to teach a state and/or county mandated curriculum. I am instructed to hide my politics. As a social justice educator, I am told to be quiet.

Thus, I face my own internal conflict. As Michael Apple (1995) describes, I join a group of “democratic educators (who) live with the constant tension of seeking a more significant education for young people while still attending to the knowledge and skills expected by powerful educational forces whose interests are anything but democratic” (p. 17).

As humans, teachers cannot divest themselves of their politics. As Freire (1997) asserts, “My very presence in the school as a teacher is intrinsically a political presence, something that students cannot possibly ignore” (p. 90).

Against those who attempt to cast educators as neutral, Freire (1997) declares his democratic intentions:

I am a teacher who stands up for what is right against what is indecent, who is in favor of freedom against authoritarianism, who is a supporter of authority against freedom with no limits, and who is a defender of democracy against the dictatorship of right or left. I am a teacher who favors the permanent struggle against every form of bigotry and against the economic domination of individuals and social classes. (p. 94)

In this declaration, I join Freire. Political neutrality cannot exist. “I cannot be a teacher and be in favor of everyone and everything” (Freire, 1997, p. 93). Yet, our schools and educational systems ask us to mask our opinions. How can we expect genuine learning to occur when the teacher is forced to wear a mask? Why do we attempt to promote the myth of objectivity in teaching? What benefit exists by hiding ideas and silencing voices?

Whether adopting a traditional or democratic curriculum, we invoke politics. Master narratives speak with just as much political voice as do marginalized accounts. Yet, by the nature of their long-standing position as “truth,” master narratives appear legitimate among those in power. As a political

teacher and a democratic educator, I want my students to hear alternative versions of that suspected “truth.” Yet, Michael Apple warns us that a democratic approach often causes fear in our communities. Multiple voices might say something that those in positions of power and control do not want our children to hear.

The possibility of hearing a wide range of views and voices is often seen as a threat to the dominant culture, especially since some of those voices offer interpretations of issues and events quite different from those traditionally taught in schools. Worse yet, encouraging young people to critically analyze issues and events raises the possibility that they might call dominant interpretations (and teachings) into question. (Apple, 1995, p. 17)

Hearing a wide range of views means hearing the Other. Encouraging students to analyze issues critically means asking students to examine the way in which we live with, or against, the Other. In reaction, we can expect opposition.

The Other frightens us because he/she/it forces us to reflect critically upon the homes in which we dwell. If we go face-to-face, the primary Other of the world’s people challenges us to act ethically. The Other of nature asks that we re-examine the way in which we “pave over” our world. The Other of social justice demands that we respond to the outstretched hand. Some people never allow themselves truly to see the Other. For many, they “turn away” and live a less genuine, but more comfortable, life. For these people, euphemisms, censorship and demands of political neutrality provide ways of trying to keep the Other at bay.

At the end of my first year of teaching, I began what would become an annual tradition of hiking and camping with my students. I also met some of those forces that feel the Other should remain excluded from the public schools.

Because we were finishing a unit on Chinese history, we called our hiking and camping trip a reenactment of Mao's Long March. It sounded appropriate. Of course, while Mao's one-year trek covered six thousand miles, crossed over twenty rivers and eighteen mountain ranges and involved the occupation of over sixty cities and towns, our overnight journey would cover seven miles, cross one brook and one small mountain and occupy nothing but an open field. Primarily, I wanted to take my students out to engage with the Other of nature. Yet, simply by naming the trek a reenactment of the Long March, I woke the opposition.

One parent wrote, "Any celebration of the blood-soaked tyranny of Maoist totalitarianism of which the Long March is a part is morally squalid" (J.H., personal correspondence, June 16, 1993). Later, I received a copy of a conservative newspaper from Kansas City, Missouri. Under a section of brief stories about supposedly horrendous abuses by the Left, a headline, entitled "Mao Maoing the Innocent," caught my eye. The article scolded me for not taking "the students through a killing field, where the students could have reflected on the 50 million people whom Mao murdered" (ArchRival, November 1993). Where did a conservative newspaper in Kansas City hear about our trip? The article cited a California publication as the source. If only these writers knew that we had spent our time innocently cooking hot dogs and talking about summer plans, they could have redirected their attack at some Other threat. Yet, even the appearance of teaching the Other's story had triggered a response.

Introducing the Other. As a teacher committed to social justice, I resist the dominant ideology's "insidious capacity for spreading the idea that it is

possible for education to be neutral” (Freire, 1997, p. 90). As a democratic educator, despite my own association with one voice over an-Other, I guard against any biases. I do not exclude traditional and master narratives. Instead, I attempt to welcome into a dialogue those often-forgotten voices. If a student accepts the master narrative, after hearing multiple voices, then I support such a stance. They have that right and that responsibility. As a teacher, I am called to expose my students to the Other. I am not called to impose the Other upon them and to insist that they accept the Other’s perspective. When my students go face-to-face, the ethical call will capture them. Until that time, I seek to bring them out to meet the Other and I hope that these meetings will cause an eventual “turning toward” as compared to a “turning away.”

Early in my teaching experiences, after a discussion of the Arab-Israeli conflict in which I presented Israel’s legitimate concerns along with the reasons why the Palestinians resist their displacement, I asked my students to consider the role of oppression in the historical and contemporary Middle East crisis. One student submitted a paper in which she named the Palestinians as the sole terrorists and sole oppressors. I remember an initial disappointment. Had I failed to let the Palestinian voices be heard? How could she reach such a one-sided conclusion? Yet, the paper wove together persuasive arguments. She presented criticisms of Israel, but then countered each one. She considered multiple voices and then reached a different conclusion than I had. My initial disappointment gave way to a feeling of pride that she had constructed such a strong case.

As a teacher, my politics lead me to offer multiple perspectives. Yet, my political commitment to democracy disallows me from requiring that students adopt any one perspective. I hope my own biases will never prevent a free exchange of ideas. Everyone should feel comfortable in voicing his/her opinions. At the end of the year, I received a letter from the student who had written the paper in support of Israel. She wrote, “As a teacher, you encouraged me to question everything and to look at all of the information before forming an opinion” (A.M., personal correspondence, June 1995). As a teacher concerned with democratic education, I can ask for no higher compliment.

As Teacher-Traveler: Holding Class Out In The World And Naming South Africa As The Curricular Destination

My teaching path and my travel path both lead toward the Other. Following these two roads, I have often found they converge. On Easter eve in Paris, four students and I bolt up the stairs of the Eiffel Tower. Outside of Salzburg, we explore the salt mines and pelt one-an-Other with snowballs. At a German rest area, I track a student who has decided to leave the group and head for the woods. In Turkey, we race for the Greek border in order to allay our parents’ fears of the non-Western world. Standing in the icy rain in Berlin, we silently study remaining pieces of the Wall. In Prague, with increasing frustration, we search for three students who have “lost track of time.” In Vienna, after a night of student revelry, I lecture about expectations and share my disappointment. In Athens, I accompany one student to photograph the crowds destroying the American flag. In Sachsenhausen and in Terezin, I watch my

students as they quietly move through the concentration camp. One student videotapes the experience. He is a Palestinian and he wants to make a film that compares what happened in these places to what is happening in his homeland. Without desks, blackboard or lectern in sight, out in the concrete reality of the world, my students and I cross borders and we witness the Other.

During the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II, I first held class out in the world. For two weeks, forty students, five colleagues and I journeyed from Normandy to Berlin. On that first morning in France, from behind my students, I watched them stumble and step back in the face of the white American headstones that stretch down toward the Atlantic. As they walked out among the graves, surrounded on all sides, they found it difficult to “turn away” from the casualties of war. In that moment, overpowered by the place in which I stood, I felt proud. With my hands in my pockets, a student with my students, I discovered a position from which I could teach.

Introducing students to the Other does not require going out into the world. Literature, film and conversation guide us toward the Other. Yet, in its ability to surround us, the world can consume our attention and our spirit. Going out into the lived world can shake us up and push us forward. The world has tremendous potential to be “in your face.” In that world, certain places offer special gifts. Just as teachers select certain pieces of text, certain clips from films and certain topics for conversation, I make a curricular decision on which geographical borders to cross. I ask myself across which borders we will find the best opportunities to face the primary Other of the people of the world, the Other

of nature and the Other of social justice. As we cross those borders, I wonder how we will dwell with one-an-Other.

South Africa calls. In the summer of 1997, I stand inside the prison on Robben Island. With freedom on my side, I press my face up against the bars and I gaze into a cell no larger than a closet. Today, inhabited only by a cot low to the floor, a metal pail resting in the corner and a small, barred window staring out into a courtyard, this place has released its prisoner. I scan the walls and the floor for any evidence of Mandela's twenty years' stay. I search for a chipped piece of stone near the window or a scratching on the wall. I look at the corners near the ceiling. I seek a message left behind. It would announce that he actually had been here. Finding no physical sign of his presence, I still feel the powerful presence of the man – a present absence. While written text and museums can offer glimpses of the Other, traveling to the places themselves bring us into a more “felt remembering.”

As I walk outside, Robben Island bathes in the African sun. From across the surrounding ocean, a strong gust funnels through the prison yard. Penguins march at the brush line. In a small bus, we ride along the ocean and I imagine prisoners gathering seaweed on the beach. We pass the lime quarry where Mandela crushed stone. At lunch, we witness former prisoners and guards sit side-by-side, break bread and tell their stories. Once enemies, they now serve together as hosts to the island's visitors.

Riding the ferry away from the island, my colleagues and I watch Cape Town approach. Officially teachers, during this summer, we re-turn to student-

hood. For five weeks, as a small community of fifteen Fulbright-Hayes Award recipients, we travel through South Africa. On this day, we visit one of the world's most famous prisons. Now, crossing the water on our return to this city on the southern edge of the African continent, I look above Cape Town. Under a cloth of clouds, Table Mountain stands tall. Have I ever seen such a beautiful place? With the sun on my face, I imagine bringing students here and sharing this place. To walk through the prison of apartheid and then to gaze upward at such natural wonder, where else can we engage the Other in such an over-powering place? At the time, despite the desire to share this nation, I do not see fully the possibility. I daydream. I remember the voices that told me I could not take students to Europe. How would they react to this idea of taking students to the tip of Africa? Afraid of my idea being called "far-fetched," would I even dare to suggest such a journey? Yet, nine months later, ten students sit with me on that ferry, cross that water, return to that island and dwell with one-an-Other in the shadow of Table Mountain.

In bringing my students to Robben Island and to South Africa, I have come quite a distance. After my return from Brazil, driving around the Dartmouth Green, I curiously gaze at the student-built shantytowns and listen to the students yell for South African divestment. At American University in Washington, DC, as a freshman, I write one of my first college papers criticizing the American policy of constructive engagement in South Africa. In my dorm room, I relax to Paul Simon's musical testament to South Africa, *Graceland* (1986), and discover Ladysmith Black Mambazo and Joseph Shabalala. At a showing of the film, *Cry*

Freedom, my mouth hangs open as I watch the re-enactment of the massacre of schoolchildren in Soweto. Continually, throughout the late 1980's, South Africa taps me on the shoulder. How can racism place such a "choke-hold" on a nation? Within the contemporary global community, why do we sit back so easily in our living rooms and dismiss such injustice? As Americans, have we forgotten our own history? How dare we "turn a blind eye?"

Apartheid and the third world call. Reading South African history, I often feel like I have stumbled upon some twisted, dark crossroad between the world of Germany's Nazi policies and America's Jim Crow laws. As did the Germans with Nazism and the Americans with Jim Crow, South African whites with apartheid attempted to strip the Other of her humanity. Between apartheid's birth in 1948 and its death in 1994, segregation chained South Africa's black, Coloured (mixed) and Indian populations to inferior work, property and prospect. With the Population Registration Act, South African whites classified all blacks, Coloureds and Indians by race. The Group Areas Act ordered that all race groups know their "place" and live only in that "place." Pass laws attempted to transform a person into an identity number, an employment status and a set of fingerprints. Discovered without a pass, blacks were subject to immediate arrest. Banning laws allowed the police to restrict a person to his/her home and to limit a person's company to no more than two people at any given time. Refusing to even stay out of the bedroom, the Immorality Act prohibited sex between whites and blacks.

Yet, the true immorality in South Africa manifested itself in the laws that separated the races. In his 1963 *Letter From Birmingham Jail*, Martin Luther King, Jr. makes the case against segregation as an immoral act:

Any law that degrades human personality is unjust. All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority. To use the words of Martin Buber, the great Jewish philosopher, segregation substitutes an “I-it” relationship for the “I-thou” relationship, and ends up relegating persons to the status of things. So segregation is not only politically, economically and sociologically unsound, but it is morally wrong and sinful. (as cited in Kessler, 1992, p. 149)

While apartheid built walls to exclude the Other, as Martin Luther King, Jr. suggests, it also attempted to reduce the Other to an object. Apartheid aimed to dehumanize.

During apartheid, where laws did not satisfy the oppressor, they called upon violence. In Sharpeville, they massacred. In Pondoland, they massacred. In Soweto, turning on the children, they massacred. In the laboratories and in the military installations, purportedly, they used science in the worst possible ways.

There were revelations of research into a race-specific bacterial weapon; a project to find ways to sterilize the country’s black population; discussion of deliberate spreading of cholera through the water supply; large-scale production of dangerous drugs; the fatal poisoning of anti-apartheid leaders, captured guerrillas, and suspected security risks; even a plot to slip thallium, a toxic heavy metal that can permanently impair brain function, into Nelson Mandela’s medication before his release from prison in 1990. (Finnegan, 2001, p. 58)

In Sophiatown, Martindale and Newclare, they removed the people and bulldozed their homes. In the courtrooms, they laughed at justice. On Robben Island, they imprisoned the leadership. In the jails, they murdered Biko. In the driveways, they murdered Hani.

Apartheid simply means “apartness.” Under this banner, the Nationalist Party committed itself to “separating” each race from the Other. The white Nationalists also “separated” individuals from their homes, from their languages, from their jobs, from their schooling, from their pride, from their freedom and from their humanity. Inside a nation that denied its people free movement and travel, my students and I journey. Inside a nation that denied its people education, my students and I learn. Inside a nation that denied its people community, my students and I come together with one-an-Other. Inside a nation that denied its people a home-place, my students and I risk temporary “homelessness” in the pursuit of a more just, authentic home. Inside a nation that denied its people access to the Other, my students and I “face forward” and seek to cross borders in order to find the Other.

The atrocities of the recent past contribute to my selection of South Africa as a curricular destination. I bring students into a society where the ghosts of apartheid still roam freely. Barely dead, in conversations, I have witnessed the resurrection of the racism and the prejudice that apartheid bred. In South Africa, even if not grounded in racism, I am aware always of my white-ness. In his Peace Corps memoir, Jason Carter (2002) describes a similar feeling. He writes, “Everywhere I went, race dominated everyday life in South Africa to an extent that I had never experienced. I was, for the first time, a member of a minority and was constantly conscious of my race” (p. 26). I want my students to be the minority. I want my students to be surrounded by the poverty, the shacks, the educational inequities, and the lack of basic services. I want them to go from the

beach communities to the informal settlements and I want them to say, “It’s not right.” After seeing the economic and social conditions in South Africa, I also hope they return to America better able to see our own nation’s afflictions.

Ubuntu calls. Yet, beyond its “attraction” as a recent pariah state and a current developing nation, South Africa offers a unique gift. Each time that I have been there, I have experienced this gift. I find it present in those two kitchens. With that grandmother describing the casting of her first ballot and that father discussing his dead son, the gift appears. Wrapped in tradition and culture, the gift of *ubuntu* reveals itself as a powerful presence. *Ubuntu* provides the South African extension of Levinas’ moral claim of the face. *Ubuntu* provides the South African extension of Heidegger’s concerned being-with Others and concerned being-for Others. *Ubuntu* provides the South African extension of Freire’s hope and faith in humanity.

Ubuntu is very difficult to render into a Western language. It speaks of the very essence of being human... It is to say, “My humanity is caught up, inextricably bound up, in yours.” We belong in a bundle of life. We say, “A person is a person through other persons.” It is not, “I think therefore I am.” It says rather: “I am human because I belong. I participate. I share.” A person with *ubuntu* is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are. (Tutu, 1999, p. 31)

Desmond Tutu’s explanation of the concept of *ubuntu* resonates with me. It helps to clarify from where South Africans draw their spiritual strength. In a nation where apartheid destroyed so many lives, I have questioned how the oppressed have been able to step forward and offer their hand to their former

oppressors. On the day of his release, after a quarter of a century in prison, Nelson Mandela referred to President F. W. DeKlerk as a “man of integrity” (Mandela, 1994, p. 566). From where do you find the inner grace to characterize your oppressor as having integrity? A few days after his release, Mandela declared, “Whites are fellow South Africans and we want them to feel safe and to know that we appreciate the contribution that they have made toward the development of this country” (1994, p. 568). Why does he not threaten the whites who have separated, murdered and dehumanized his people? Where is his rage at being unjustly imprisoned for so many years?

Many people view Mandela as god-like. He transcends expectations for how humans engage one-an-Other. In the closing of his autobiography, he writes, “When I walked out of prison, that was my mission, to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor both” (1994, p. 624). His forgiveness and his decision to look forward shocks. Yet, in South Africa, I have found a similar grace, a similar forgiveness and a similar willingness to go forward among the people. Mandela does not hold exclusive rights to *ubuntu*. Instead, *ubuntu*'s presence surrounds and embraces. I find it in the hopeful conversations and the generous actions of the Other. Amidst staggering poverty and continuing racism, the people smile, they laugh and they dream. They see a better day. They feel frustration, but they speak with the hope of survivors.

In my classes, I have shared the video, *Long Night's Journey Into Day: South Africa's Search For Truth And Reconciliation* (2000). As the Sundance Film Festival's winner of the 2000 Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary, the

film captures the spirit of *ubuntu*. Following four cases that came before the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the film tells the story of healing. Offered as an alternative to retribution, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission demands an honest re-telling of the crimes of apartheid so that families can move forward. Mothers want to know where their sons are buried. Perpetrators of political violence on all sides exchange their “truth-telling” for amnesty. In some cases, they also receive forgiveness. In the film, one of the most inspiring moments occurs when a mother, Cynthia Ngewu, looks into the face of her son’s murderer and says, “It is as if you are my son – you are the same age as my son.” She welcomes him back from the dark places. Wrapped in *ubuntu*, she offers us all hope.

In his reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Desmond Tutu (1999) describes how such a process works:

In a real sense we might add that even the supporters of apartheid were victims of the vicious system which they implemented and which they supported so enthusiastically. This is not an example for the morally earnest of ethical indifferentism. No, it flows from our fundamental concept of *ubuntu*. Our humanity was intertwined. The humanity of the perpetrator of apartheid’s atrocities was caught up and bound up in that of his victim whether he liked it or not. In the process of dehumanizing another, in inflicting untold harm and suffering, inexorably the perpetrator was being dehumanized as well. (p. 103)

For the chance of seeing, hearing or feeling *ubuntu*, I bring my students to South Africa. After all, this spirit has the potential to spread beyond South African borders. During the South African freedom struggle, an American Fulbright student named Amy Biehl joined the movement. Despite her support for the freedom struggle, her murderers mistook her for an-Other. Simply based on her

white-ness, with stones and knives, they killed her. Years later, through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, her parents “reached out” to her killer’s family. They offered their hand. In their daughter’s memory, they have since built a foundation in South Africa that works for economic, educational and social improvements in South Africa’s townships. They, too, understand *ubuntu*.

Thus, I hold class in South Africa because it offers the challenges of a third world, developing nation and a recent history of horrendous oppression. Yet, at the same time, I hold class there because South Africa presents *ubuntu*. The place speaks to the darkness of injustice and the hope of a better day. It throws poverty at you, but it does so in a natural world that lifts you up. In a place that so recently denied the Other, I bring students in search of the Other. I cannot imagine a better place to potentially go face-to-face with the primary Other of the people of a different culture and history, to wander out into the Other of nature, to confront the Other of social justice and to come together with one-an-Other as students and teacher.

One More Turning: Phenomenology Takes-Hold

My decision to hold class out in the world and to bring students in search of the Other roots itself in my commitment to “dig deep” beneath the curricular surface. Far too often, volumes of standards drive curriculum writers and teachers in an endless pursuit of an all-encompassing curriculum that leaves most subjects barely unturned. In world history, we find ourselves whipped around the globe. We follow a calendar that requires our presence in the texts of Africa on Monday, Asia on Tuesday and Latin America on Wednesday. The itinerary leaves us

exhausted and holding little depth of understanding. Skating along the surface of content, we do not recognize the larger concepts and ideas that connect and divide the world.

In opposition to staying on the surface, whether I am holding class inside a school or out in Africa, I narrow the width of my curricular focus. I sacrifice coverage in the name of deeper understanding. In my search for a research path, I follow a similar guide. In pursuing deeper understanding, I embrace a qualitative journey. While I recognize value in quantitative and positivistic research, I believe the human experience dwells in a more qualitative place.

In the qualitative world, I select a trail that leads to a methodology in which I feel at-home. Just as I take students out into the lived, concrete world, I search for the methodology that grounds itself in the lived, concrete world. Just as I seek depth of understanding in my curriculum, I pursue a research approach that burrows deep. Just as I work to build a pedagogical community in which my students can give voice to their concerns, I reach for a type of inquiry through which I can herald my students' voices. Just as I seek to explore the Other, I call upon the Other of research methodologies. In this search, I "come-upon" phenomenology, which shares my pedagogic interest.

To The Things Themselves

Heidegger (1927/1996) defines phenomenology as a self-showing, an uncovering, a making manifest and a turning "to the things themselves" (p. 24). As a research methodology, phenomenology concerns itself with lived experiences. It searches for meaning out in the practical, lived world. It positions

itself upon a philosophical trunk from which it hopes to branch out and reach the essential understandings of the lifeworld. It gives voice to its participants while listening carefully with a hermeneutic ear. As van Manen (1990) explains, phenomenology “is a ministering of thoughtfulness” (p. 12). Into an experience, it digs deep, spends time and reveals the adventure.

In digging, phenomenology hopes to “transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence – in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful” (van Manen, 1990, p. 36). Phenomenology listens carefully to in-depth, lived descriptions and then enters into those descriptions in order to make interpretations and to make meaning of the experience. A phenomenological revealing connects with those who have shared the experience. It reminds. It also goes beyond a “re-living” and tries to “open up” the nature of the phenomenon. Yet, phenomenology’s digging remains directed by the researcher in whose hands the phenomenon rests. While phenomenology explores the essence of an experience, it does not offer absolutes. Van Manen (1990) dispels the myth of phenomenology as being able to leap tall buildings in a single bound and reach some transcendent, Platonic essence of an experience:

(P)henomenological research does not start or proceed in a disembodied fashion. It is always a project of someone: a real person, who, in the context of particular individual, social, and historical life circumstances, sets out to make sense of a certain aspect of human existence. But while this recognition does not negate the plausibility of the insights gained from a specific piece of phenomenological work, it does reveal the scope and nature of the phenomenological project itself. A phenomenological description is always *one* interpretation, and no single interpretation of human experience will ever exhaust the possibility of another complementary, or even *richer* or *deeper* description. (p. 31)

Phenomenology reaches out and grasps hold of the subjective skin in which human experience lives. By doing so, it “takes-hold of” me too. I am drawn to the qualitative world’s emphasis on the personal, historical and cultural baggage that we carry to our research. In research, subjectivity deserves its place. It speaks honestly and avoids the myth of objectivity.

While phenomenology does not wave any one political banner, as a methodology, it lends itself to my own stance as a social justice educator. Phenomenology takes us to praxis.

And so to become more thoughtfully or attentively aware of aspects of human life which hitherto were merely glossed over or taken-for-granted will more likely bring us to the edge of speaking up, speaking out, or decisively acting in social situations that ask for such action. (van Manen, 1990, p. 154)

Thus, in exploring my students’ journey to South Africa and to the Other of social justice, I turn toward a methodology that can support my political orientation. In a place where research and praxis can connect, I feel at-home.

Posing The Phenomenological Question

In reflecting upon my own beliefs and experiences as a teacher and traveler, I am led to a phenomenological place from which I can “dig into” my students’ experience in South Africa. I feel a deep concern for understanding how my students encounter the multiple faces of the Other. I care about the pedagogical implications that grow out of such an understanding. As a researcher, I wish to dwell in a phenomenological exploration of my students’ experience in South Africa. I feel capable of reaching that research-place in which van Manen (1990) demands we reside:

To truly question something is to interrogate something from the heart of our existence, from the center of our being. Even minor phenomenological research projects require that we not simply raise a question and possibly soon drop it again, but rather we “live” this question, that we “become” this question. (p. 43)

By re-entering my students’ experiences, I seek to “live” and to “become” my question. Thus, I offer the fully shaped phenomenological question with which this study wrestles. **While dwelling with one-an-Other, what is the experience like for my students to journey to the place of South Africa and to encounter the primary Other of the people, the Other of nature and the Other of social justice?**

Where Are We Going?

With the question posed, I step beyond my own story. In chapter two, from an historical stance, I begin to explore the roots of encounter. Next, guided by two of my students, I turn to multiple voices in order to “open up” the experience of the Other in South Africa. In 1998, for the first time with students, I journeyed out to South Africa. Greg and Jessie stood with me. I examine their descriptions of our encounter with the Other in South Africa. While I use their words in order to “open up” the phenomenon, I “dig deeper” into the experience by sharing insights gained from multiple textual sources, various philosophical stances and certain etymological roots.

In chapter three, before introducing the core group of students upon whom this study focuses, I explore my reasons for turning to phenomenological research as a way to “open up” my students’ encounter with the Other in South Africa. In an attempt to see the philosophical foundation from where this questioning of the

experience of the Other comes, I dialogue with Levinas and Heidegger. Using Casey's (1993) metaphors of homecoming and homesteading, I also describe my research plan.

Reaching the heart of the paper, in chapter four, I introduce some of the students with whom I traveled to South Africa in 2001. From their written stories and from their conversations, I re-turn to their dwelling together and to their wandering-out to encounter the Other of South Africa. I include their words and allow their voices to be heard. In chapter four and in chapter five, I hermeneutically search for themes that lend themselves to a re-vealing of the meaning of their experience in South Africa. Lived experience, textual sources and etymological roots converse in order to interpret and name better the encounter with the multiple Others of South Africa.

Throughout this conversation, I suggest that the meanings re-vealed hold pedagogical implications. Far too often, we fail to make the connection between research and pedagogy. As van Manen (1990) warns, "Educational theorists (of various cloth) may have become unresponsive to their pedagogic responsibility to their readers and to the children with respect to whom their theories are constructed in the first place" (p. 138). In trying to be responsive, throughout these pages, I attempt to speak pedagogically. Yet, from the re-vealed meaning of the experience, in chapter five, I also conclude this study by offering explicit implications for our pedagogy and for our praxis.

CHAPTER TWO:
“ENCOUNTERING” ENCOUNTER WITH THE MANY FACES OF
THE OTHER

My brethren and fellow countrymen, at this moment we stand before the holy God of heaven and earth, to make a promise, if He will be with us and protect us and deliver the enemy into our hands so that we may triumph over him, that we shall observe the day and the date as an anniversary in each year and a day of thanksgiving like the Sabbath, in His honour; and that we shall enjoin our children that they must take part with us in this, for a remembrance even for our posterity; and if anyone sees a difficulty in this, let him return from this place. For the honour of His name shall be joyfully exalted, and to Him the fame and the honour of the victory must be given. (Cilliers, as translated by Nathan and cited in Heymans, 1986, p. 4)

On the evening of December 15, 1838, much like he had done for the last several nights, Sarel Cilliers led the Afrikaaner *Voortrekkers* in a vow to God. In that vow, he asked God to deliver a victory to his people over the South African “barbarians” that they would encounter. On December 16, 1838, the Afrikaaners engaged the Zulus at the Ncome River (later known as the Blood River). Similar to the European American encounter with the Native American population, a sense of “manifest destiny” drove the Afrikaaners in their violent interaction with the Zulus. Playing well the role of hypocrites, the *Voortrekkers*, victims themselves of British land seizures, used God’s will as a justification for their own seizure of Zulu land. With wagons drawn together in a circle, in a formation known as a *laager*, the Voortrekkers fired murderous shot after murderous shot into the Zulu troops advancing toward them.

In Afrikaaner history, the Battle of Blood River represents an essential victory in accomplishing their mission of bringing “civilisation to the interior” of

South Africa (Heymans, 1986, p. 6). For the black population of South Africa, in hindsight, the battle provided a dark foreshadowing of the “things to come.” As the Zulus came over the hills and saw the Voortrekkers with their wagons drawn into a circle, how could they have known the symbolism of that constructed fortress? How could they have predicted that those wagons were just the first of many “walls” that the Afrikaaners would build to keep the African out?

Today, throughout the world, humans continue to build “walls” in order to limit encounter. We can look at the Middle East, the Korean peninsula and the American gated community in order to find literal walls. We can consider the distance between first world and third world, between white and black and between rich and poor in order to find more figurative walls. Yet, when my students and I journey to South Africa, we seek to go-around these walls.

In this chapter, for an opening exploration of my phenomenon, I listen to historical whisperings, to the voices of two of my students who previously journeyed to South Africa with me and to the literary and philosophical stories of many Others. Exploring these collective stories, I begin to “open up” the experience of encounter with the Other. In sifting through the language surrounding encounter, I notice how walls and obstacles “jut up” often in the path of encounter with the Other. Whether self-imposed, historically-imposed, culturally-imposed or Other-imposed, walls and distance keep “us” and “them” apart. An apartheid, or “apartness,” limits encounter. Therefore, encounter with the Other involves de-tour. Confronted by “apartness,” we “turn back” and we try different approaches.

Encounter As Detour

De-tour serves as a useful metaphorical map for navigating through the journey of encounter. In this chapter, I begin to “dig” into the experience of encountering the Other. First, from an historical stance, I unearth the tradition of encounter. Second, guided by Jessie, Greg and a host of Others, I begin to clear a path through the experience of encountering the South African Other. In both of these pursuits, I recognize that obstacles stand in the way of going “face to face” with the Other. In considering the historical common-place of encounter and in hearing Others’ words about encounter, my mind takes me back to Brazil. Running along the beach and encountering the boys from the *favelas* swimming off the rocks, I “turn around.” When poverty confronts me, I de-tour.

Many of us “turn away” from the third world Other, from the homelessness that accompanies a genuine engagement with the Other of social justice and from the wild Otherness of nature. As a teacher who wishes my students to see the faces of these multiple Others, I wonder about ways to avoid a “turning away.” How can we pave a clear path to the Other’s doorstep? What must we do to avoid de-tours in the road?

These questions situate de-tour in a negative place. They conjure up images of falling rock and blocked mountain passes. They suggest that de-tours take us out of our way and slow us down. In our fast-paced Western lives, de-tours frustrate our desire for immediate gratification. From this perspective, de-

tours can limit our ability to see and to hear the Other. While the Other stands out in front, de-tours send us backwards and sideways.

Yet, I wonder if these negative associations with de-tour blind us to its positive possibilities. For example, as a hiker, de-tour takes me into unfamiliar and uncomfortable territory. Yet, in these places, like cold water, an anxiety and an adrenaline splash me in the face. At these times, I feel a-live. Oftentimes, de-tours have led me to the places where I feel the most captured by nature's Otherness. I welcome those experiences of stumbling off of the intended path and discovering the Other of the out-of-doors.

In Greece, on a warm, spring afternoon, a teaching colleague and I climb above Delphi. After lunch, having granted our students and ourselves a free afternoon, we accept directions from a local inhabitant and begin climbing up the mountain toward a rumored cave. Informed that reaching the cave requires an hour or so of hiking, we climb at a moderate pace. As we trek higher and higher, fields turn to rocks and rocks turn to snow. As the afternoon and the hours slide away, we realize that we have "missed" the cave. As the snow creeps up our legs, I feel a "charge" of energy. With preconceived notions of warm temperatures and Greek islands left far below, we find ourselves in an unexpected winter scene. Standing knee-deep in snow with spring's early sunset upon us, an excitement captures me. Unexpectedly, we have discovered this place. My mental image of Greece finds little welcome in this place. We will have to race darkness down the mountain. I feel captured by nature's Otherness. I am a-live and I do not care that I have "missed" the cave.

Our accidental de-tour in Greece leads us to an inspiring place. Yet, what if de-tour announces itself? What if some-thing stands up in our path and we “turn around?” In this situation, from the beginning, we anticipate the de-tour. For example, when we come upon a sign announcing de-tour, we sigh. We have to redirect ourselves.

In discussing her journey as a teacher, Roderick (1991) suggests that announced de-tours can be seen as possibility too:

When viewed as possibility, detour has the potential for creating a context in which we see opportunities for welcoming the serendipitous, for making connections, and for living with what at first might seem to lack continuity but which has the potential for becoming a part of the fabric of the larger journey. (p. 107)

Dressing de-tour in the fabric of the larger journey creates a new appearance. Throughout this chapter, as I “open up” the experience of encounter with the Other, I embrace the metaphor of de-tour as possibility. Seen in this light, I avoid passing negative judgment on those elements of the encounter with the Other that might “turn us around” or “slow us down.” Instead, I recognize their role as a part of the fabric of the larger journey that takes us toward the Other. De-tour has the potential to bring us “face to face” with the Other. De-tour can direct us toward an authentic, genuine encounter. If we fail to see de-tour’s possibility, then we risk missing part of the experience. After all, de-tour can bring us to a wall upon which we sit, feet dangling, and where we “fall into conversation” with the Other.

As a matter of fact, invoking its etymology, I suggest that de-tour might offer a clear path toward seeing the Other’s face. First, a quick glance at the etymological root of “de-tour” reveals a “round about way” (Onions, 1966, p.

261). This description suggests that de-tour represents a less-direct path. Yet, if we move beyond this first meaning, we find that “de-tour” also means a simple “change in direction” (p. 261). Following this lead, for someone traveling in the “wrong” direction, a de-tour could offer an improved route. It changes our mis-direction and sends us toward the Other.

Second, removing the word’s prefix, we are left with “tour.”

Etymologically, “tour” describes a “turn,” a “circular movement,” a “travelling round” and a “circuitous journey” (Onions, 1966, p. 933). Meanwhile, the prefix, “de-” means “away from” (p. 246). Thus, reattaching the prefix, “de-,” to the core word, “tour,” but re-membering the two parts’ individual meanings, we find a “turning away” from a “circuitous journey” or a “turning away” from a “travelling round.” In “turning away” from a “travelling round,” the possibility of de-tour becomes evident. We can move forward. We can move beyond the circle. We can reach the Other.

In encountering the Other, de-tour might represent our best hope for achieving genuine engagement. Yet, I do not want to focus on a search for the “best” or “most direct” route to seeing the Other’s face. My intention remains to explain the meaning of my students’ experience of encounter with the Other in South Africa. In doing so, I present the metaphor of de-tour as possibility and explore its etymology because I want to liberate the word from the traditional meaning with which we shackle it. By doing so, when I present elements of the encounter experience that speak to de-tour and the Other, I can avoid branding these elements as “negative.” On that Brazilian beach, I do not have to cast my

“turning away” in a negative role. Instead, the elements of the encounter experience that cause accidental or announced de-tours can be seen as holding the potential to contribute to the eventual “face to face” interaction. We should not shun them; instead, we should welcome them and dwell with them.

As a part of the journey’s essential fabric, de-tour can help us to bridge our “apartness” and to reach the Other. As Gadamer (1960/1989) describes, “‘To have a horizon’ means not being limited to what is nearby but being able to see beyond it” (p. 302). If we can accept de-tour as possibility and as a “turning away” from our “travelling round” in circles, then we can see it as leading us toward a new place with a new horizon. Gadamer (1960/1989) suggests that understanding the Other requires getting “to know the horizon of the other person” (p. 303). Therefore, instead of worrying about de-tour as slowing us down, maybe we should be content to dwell with it for a while. It might just lead us to the Other’s horizon.

Yet, in the murky waters through which this study’s hermeneutic journey takes us, I caution the reader that, at times, I abandon the metaphor of de-tour. I refuse to “force” the metaphor upon the phenomenon. When it applies, I engage it. When it seems “out of place,” I discard it. After all, phenomenology pieces together a lived, human experience. In the experience, it seeks the common and the unique. In the end, a static and fixed shape does not result. Instead, phenomenology encourages metamorphosis.

Yet, I am getting ahead of myself. In this chapter, it becomes obvious that we react often to the Other by “turning away.” Overwhelmed by the barriers

between us, we de-tour. We seek a different way. In de-tour, we begin to see the changing shape of encounter with the Other.

In order to unveil further the changing shape of encounter with the Other and the role of de-tour, I turn to the historical common-place of encounter. Gadamer (1960/1989) writes, “If we fail to transpose ourselves into the historical horizon from which the traditionary text speaks, we will misunderstand the significance of what has to be said” (p. 303). Without introducing how encounter has been experienced historically, I cannot explore my students’ experience today. The past has far too much to say about the present. As a history teacher, to fail to recognize this fact would be sacrilege. We carry the baggage of previous generations that weigh on our conscience and can lead us to “turn away.”

The Historical Common-Place Of Encounter

By claiming a God-given right to take-away that which the Other possesses, to “wall-out” the Other, the Afrikaaners entered into an historical common-place where many cultures and nations have “milled around” together. Cilliers and the *Voortrekkers* appeal to God for victory and hear God’s response as the granting of a “manifest destiny” to take the Other’s life and land. Thus, coming from a place of perceived superiority, Afrikaaners encounter the Other. Seeing themselves positioned “above” the Zulus, the Afrikaaners believed that they deserve to dominate. How often have gods been called upon to lend their legitimacy to encounter driven by human violence and domination?

Beyond domination by violent means, many historical and contemporary groups claim that either their god or their moral duty obligates them to “civilize”

the Other, to “educate” the Other and to “bring light” to illuminate the Other’s darkness. In these cases, dominating groups wear well their coats of haughtiness while requiring the Other to wear deference on their sleeves. In 1899, Rudyard Kipling wrote his famous poem describing the burden carried by the white man into his encounter with the Other:

Take up the White Man’s burden –
Send forth the best ye breed –
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives’ need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild –
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child
(Kipling, as cited in Johnson, Johnson & Clark, 1992, p. 197)

The poem, “The White Man’s Burden,” speaks about the British climbing down from a place of superiority to encounter the Other. The British soldier, missionary and colonial ruler face the Indian Other in order to “save” the Indians from their “half-devil” side. Behind the façade of bringing “civilization,” the colonizers disguise their “taking away” of land, resources, culture and life.

Totality, Infinity And The World’s Stage

For Levinas (1961/1968), ego drives the world behind the façade. He names humanity’s historical condition as “totality.” In this common-place, we come to the Other as his/her superior. Driven by our own ego, we seek to assimilate. Whether through war, religion or education, we orchestrate a plan to minimize Otherness. From our *laagers* and from our pulpits, we “kill” the Other’s spirit and culture. Throughout Africa, Asia and the Americas, in the interests of mercantilist surplus followed by industrial competition, we cut open the Other of

nature and disembowel her. From this common-place of encounter, Europe raided the continent of Africa. Extracting and enslaving her people, Europeans paid homage to their own perceived superiority.

As Africa resisted these incursions, the unceasing nature of European imperialism wore her down. In *Things Fall Apart* (1959), Achebe addresses the impact of colonialism and Christianity on breaking traditional Ibo life “a-part.” In one line, he names the vision that Africa saw on its horizon with Europe. He writes, “It seemed as if the very soul of the tribe wept for a great evil that was coming – its own death” (p. 172). Back in America, a similar ghost walked the horizon between Native Americans and European Americans. The history of encounter with the Other has been announced often by a death knell.

Looking beneath “encounter” to see its etymological underpinnings, we find a “meeting in conflict” (Onions, 1966, p. 312). Looking more closely, the word, “counter,” directs us to a place of “going counter to” the Other where we deliver “counterblows” (p. 220). Reflecting on the historical nature of encounter between groups, I notice the sad irony in the fact that the word finds its origin as a hunting term. When one “hunts,” one “runs counter” to, as compared to parallel with, his/her prey (p. 220). Thus, the etymological underpinnings support the violent, historical common-place of encounter.

Yet, I wonder how we can reach a new understanding. Can we encounter peacefully? After all, to face the Other, we stand “opposite” from that person. Does this position require conflict? How do we reach beyond encounter’s direct etymology to the words that share similar roots? After all, the word, “count,” can

take us in more positive directions. Can an encounter take us to a place where we “recount” our stories with one an-Other? Does an encounter offer the chance of seeing the Other’s “countenance” which refers to his/her “face, visage and way of living” (Onions, 1966, p. 220)?

In *Totality and Infinity: An Essay On Exteriority* (1961/1969), Levinas offers us an escape from the historical common-place of encounter. He writes, “When man truly approaches the Other he is uprooted from history” (p. 52). There is a way out. We can encounter the Other from a different place. We do not have to “look down upon” or “talk behind some-one’s back.” We can encounter the Other in a different way. Levinas names this new condition “infinity.” Going face-to-face with the Other, conversation calls us. As a result, Levinas (1961/1969) writes that encounter can lead to a moral claim being made on our souls. From this encounter, the Other of social justice can appear. Our encounter with the Other can lead to a better, more just world. We can escape from the prison in which encounter has trapped us in the past. After all, as Levinas states, “Only beings capable of war can rise to peace” (p. 222).

Today, as students and teacher traveling to South Africa, does our arrival re-mind the Other of the historical common-place? Do we carry the baggage of Europeans who came before? Coming from our “first world” homes, have we rid ourselves of all disdain for “third world” lives? Might some sense of superiority still reside within us? Will it reveal itself? Can we hide it well enough? What must we do to make sure that our encounter with the Other stands far “a-part” from the historical common-place? Will the Other recognize our complicity in the

historical crimes of our ancestors? When we look into the Other's eyes, shake the Other's hand and listen to the Other's story, where will our guilt go? Can they recognize that we have come to learn and not to teach? Do they see that we seek to heal and not to harm? Will they hear that we whisper about peace and not war?

“Leaping Ahead” To Set The Stage For Encounter

In reaching out for the Other of social justice, we should tread cautiously. We stand on unstable ground. We must ask ourselves, Where is the line drawn between acting on behalf of social justice and acting on behalf of some paternalistic mission to “save” the Other? Listening to Heidegger, we receive some direction.

Using the term, *Da-sein*, Heidegger (1927/1996) names our “being.” He then states, “The world of Da-sein is a ‘with-world.’ Being-in is ‘being-with’ others” (p. 112). Thus, being-in our lived world, we stand with-Others. Heidegger uses “concern” to define our state of being-with-Others. Yet, this concerned being-with-others can take different shapes. Primarily, in the historical commonplace of Levinas’ totality, our concerned being-with-Others exposes itself in deficient modes.

Being for-, against-, and without-one-another, passing-one-another-by, not-mattering-to-one another, are possible ways of concern. And precisely the last named modes of deficiency and indifference characterize the everyday and average being-with-one-another. (Heidegger, 1927/1996, p. 114)

For Heidegger (1927/1996), the positive concerned-being-with-one-an-Other also takes various forms. Through my concern, I can “leap in” for the Other and “take over what is to be taken care of” (p. 114). Yet, by doing so, on the part

of the Other, I can create dependence. I can also position myself in a place of domination over the Other. When I continue to encounter from a place of superiority, on behalf of the Other, I take care of “some-thing.” Often intending to help the Other, I take over and remove the responsibility for the “some-thing.” As a teacher, I have found myself in this place. Seeing a student struggle with a question, I “leap in” and take “care” away from him by providing the answer. In doing so, I displace the student.

In this concern, the other can become one who is dependent and dominated even if this domination is a tacit one and remains hidden from him. This kind of concern which does the job and takes away “care” is, to a large extent, determinative for being with one another and pertains, for the most part, to our taking care of things at hand. (Heidegger, 1927/1996, p. 114)

Heidegger suggests a more authentic form of concern.

In contrast to this, there is the possibility of a concern which does not so much leap in for the other as ‘leap ahead’ of him, not in order to take “care” away from him, but to first to give it back to him as such. This concern which essentially pertains to authentic care; that is, the existence of the other, and not to a ‘what’ which it takes care of, helps the other to become transparent to himself ‘in’ his care and ‘free for’ it. (Heidegger, 1927/1996, p. 115)

Returning to that struggling student, instead of answering the question for him, Heidegger suggests that I join together with him in working toward an answer. By doing so, I give him my “care.” I spend time with-him. I converse with-him. Side-by-side, I teach and I learn with-him.

If we can be-with-Others by “leaping ahead,” then we can draw the line more solidly between action on behalf of social justice and action on behalf of some mission to “save” the Other. If we can “leap ahead,” then we can face the Other and enter into conversation. We can reach Levinas’ “infinity” and welcome

the face of the Other of social justice. As Levinas (1961/1969) advises us, “The presence of the face, the infinity of the other, is a destituteness, a presence of the third party (that is, of the whole of humanity which looks at us), and a command that commands commanding” (p. 213). Thus, we must learn to “leap ahead” and to work together with the Other.

Cognizant of encounter’s historical horizon and the possibilities suggested by Levinas and Heidegger for moving beyond this common-place, I turn to Jessie and Greg’s voices. Listening to these two students, I begin to unravel the encounter experience. Yet, as we encounter the South African Other, we must remember that encounter’s historical scarlet letter hangs around our necks.

Beginning To Follow Student Voices Toward Encounter With The Other

Thus, onto the pre-set historical stage, my students and I walk. Joining the historical procession of encounter based on superiority, “death-bringing,” “totality” and deficient modes of concerned being-with-Others including “leaping in,” my students and I go. Regardless of our own personal baggage, we carry this historical burden. It represents a potential obstacle between the Other and ourselves. Our nation built itself, and continues to build itself, on the backs of Others. Aware of the fact that we come from a place that openly calls itself “the first world,” we enter the Other’s “third world.” Knowing that the West claims unabashedly that it remains “superior,” we offer our hand. Aware of our hand’s “whiteness,” we hope it does not repel the Other.

In the preface to his study on remembering, Casey (1987/2000) describes his phenomenological approach as “an enterprise devoted to discerning and

thematizing that which is indistinct and overlooked in everyday experience” (p. xxi). Pursuing a similar goal, I explore the taken-for-granted in the experience of encounter with the Other. Driven by a desire to better understand my own students’ “encounter experience” when they traveled in South Africa during the spring of 2002, I follow a phenomenological path back to their doorsteps. In writing and in conversations, I ask them to describe their South African experience.

Before turning to the community of students with whom I traveled to South Africa in 2002, I require a better map than the one drawn by my own experiences. In order to locate my origin, I need to hear an-Other’s voice. I look for an-Other to guide me in my initial “digging” in the dirt of encounter. Going back to 1998 and to the first group of students with whom I traveled to South Africa, two students answer my call. Guided by their direct experiences and the literary and philosophical words of Others, I begin to sift through the “taken-for-granted” in our lived encounter with the Other.

Entirely through a written dialogue, conducted four years after their journey to South Africa and just weeks prior to their college graduations, these two students recapture the experience as they lived it. Through their stories and descriptions, Jessie and Greg, along with the published stories and insights of various authors, lead me to those places where I can begin to see the unseen, where I can begin to notice the unnoticed and where I can begin to name the unnamed. In these places of seeing and noticing, I begin to “sketch out” the

structures of my students' lived experiences of encounter with the South African Other.

Presence: "Starting From Oneself" In The Encounter With The Other

All real living is meeting. (Buber, 1923/2000, p. 24)

When I invite my students to leave their homes and we travel halfway around the globe in order to meet the Other of South Africa, we undertake "real living." Otherness surrounds us. We meet one-an-Other as co-travelers and co-learners. We encounter the primary Other of South Africa's people. We explore the Other of nature and we seek the elusive Other of social justice. In beginning to reveal our experience of "surrounded encounter," I turn first to Levinas for guidance. When I approach the Other, catch her eye and offer her my hand, I recognize where she and I differ. Before meeting the Other and engaging in Buber's "real living," Levinas directs me to look down at my own feet and to see from where I will begin the journey. From this position of my separate being, I step toward the Other. Levinas (1961/1969) describes "the inevitable orientation of being 'starting from oneself' toward 'the Other'" (p. 215). Just as Buber informs us, we begin from the "I." From this egoist stance, I can venture out and begin to approach the Other. Yet, I must ask myself a question. How do I feel as I encounter the Other?

In reading Jessie and Greg's descriptions of their experiences in South Africa, I follow their words toward their "starting from themselves." As they enter into the surrounded encounter with the many faces of the Other, they describe feeling a certain presence, a mood, that emanates from within their own being.

They bring this presence and mood into the encounter. It grips them. It positions them. It wraps around them.

Heidegger (1927/1996) refers to our essential mood as an attunement. Initially and for the most part, this attunement is defined as “an evasive turning away” (p. 128). Thus, in our everyday lives, this attunement causes us to “turn away” from genuine encounter. When listening to Greg and Jessie’s stories, I notice Heidegger’s everyday mood of “evasive turning away” reveals itself in two distinct types of presence that they name. First, Greg and Jessie speak to an advertised-presence. Gripped by this mood, when encountering the Other, they feel “spot-lighted.” Second, they speak to an alienated-presence. Positioned here, when encountering the Other, they feel that they do not belong. In these moods, they “turn away.” They de-tour.

Jessie and Greg also speak to a third presence. Yet, this presence captures them and holds them firmly. Blanketed by this mood, when encountering the Other, they feel privileged and imprinted. In this captured-presence, they do not tend to “turn away,” or if they do turn, they seem to move more slowly.

When describing their encounters with the primary Other of the people and the Other of social justice, they describe these three distinct types of presence and/or mood that ripple through their bodies. By “starting with ourselves,” and thus, with these types of presence and mood, I begin to explore what we feel as we enter into the encounter with the Other.

Beyond advertised-presence, alienated-presence and captured-presence, an additional type of presence should be mentioned. When we encounter the Other,

an absent-presence can also take hold of us. Again, reflective of Heidegger's attunement to "turning away," this feeling can limit our openness to genuine encounter. In adding this fourth mood, it is imperative to state that all four types of presence can flow together. More than one of them can be felt at the same time. They do not stand alone as notches on a straight line. Linear thinking can limit our understanding of lived experience. In particular, absent-presence, alienated-presence and advertised-presence share the ability to cause a "turning away." Yet, captured-presence does not stand-alone. It can co-exist in the same place with its fellow moods. We do not want to clothe lived experience in Hegelian dialectical opposites. If we do so, then we "cover up" the complexities of human behavior. Again, absent-presence, captured-presence, advertised-presence and alienated-presence can merge in the same place. They do not have to stand at an arm's length from one-an-Other.

Thus, I begin with a warning. In order to dig phenomenologically and to unearth the experience of encounter with the Other, I am going "to get dirty." The explanation is going to be "a little messy." With lived experiences, metamorphosis occurs. With these four types of presence, I cannot create a "neat," clearly divided box diagram and place one in each square. Despite years of being told to "color within the lines," human experience refuses to stay bordered. These four types of presence bleed together. They refuse easy categorization. After all, if we hope to expose the taken-for-granted in human experience, then we have to leave behind the world of "black and white" and enter the gray.

In *Solitude: A Philosophical Encounter* (1997), Koch examines the experience of solitude and suggests that we abandon Western notions of clearly defined opposites. Instead, we should turn to the East and rely more upon “an image of symmetry and harmony between opposites” (p. 94). While I find no more comfort in Koch’s wholesale adoption of a well-known Eastern image, the yin and yang swirling together, than in our traditional adoption of Western images based on linear or dialectical thinking, I do value his recognition that human experience does not appreciate being “boxed in.” We have to allow the lines to blur.

An absent-presence. Turning to encounter, I expect that many of us have experienced an absent-presence. While Jessie and Greg do not speak to this mood, we can predict its appearance in our encounters with the Other. Sitting late in the evening and reading a text for school, I stop myself and look up from my book. Reflecting for a moment, I note that I do not remember anything from the last several pages. While my eyes have been scanning words, sentences, paragraphs and pages, I have experienced what can be called an absent-presence with the text. With the book in front of me, I have been “reading,” but I have “understood” nothing. I have not been with the book.

Similarly, I sit in a room with persons around me and I detect their voices. Yet, registering as little more than background noise, I do not “hear” them. Mentally, I am far away. Working at my desk, engaged in writing an email, I hear a knock. In our “open door policy” world, someone enters. They begin to discuss something. I stop and listen. Yet, soon, finding myself disinterested in the topic

and pressured to finish my own task, I disengage. My mind returns to my work. Mentally, I write the next few lines. I am not with the person who stands in my door. In my own office, I experience an absent-presence.

Of course, I, too, have stood there talking and realized that the Other person is not listening. They hear a few words. On occasion, they even nod. Yet, I notice that their nods do not come at the right time. Their eyes leave me often and dart back and forth to the computer screen. Mentally, they have left me. If I am talking about a personal issue, like a family member who is sick, and they nod off-cue, then I might say they have left me spiritually.

While traveling with students, I have detected an absent-presence. Standing at Delphi, after visiting one ruin too many, I scan my students' faces. Some members of the group look down and kick their feet in the dirt. A few students stare off into the distance. Two girls whisper back and forth. Watching my students, I lose track of our guide's words. I stand with him, but I do not hear what he says. For the students and for me, he has become background noise.

In reading these brief descriptions, you might shake your head disapprovingly. How can we live such distant lives? You might declare, "That's the problem with us. We do not fully engage with one-an-Other." Thus, we fall into the traps of idle talk, rhetoric and discussions that barely scratch the surface. We stand in the shadows of the walls that we construct with our inattentiveness and carelessness. We must listen to Heidegger and seek out more authentic engagement. We must follow Gadamer's advice and "fall into" genuine

conversation. We must respond to Levinas' charge to turn toward the Other and allow her face to claim us.

While I remain committed to the pursuit of more genuine encounters, I must acknowledge the impracticality of believing that we could always engage fully with one-an-Other. Who would have the time? Can you imagine the required energy? In his philosophical examination of solitude, Koch (1997) reminds us that we live "in an age which never wearies of complaining of the distance, the distraction, the part-quality of all human encounters" (p. 83). In this age, I find it easy to chastise myself and Others for our experiences of absent-presence. We should maintain a focus on the person with whom we engage. Yet, as Heidegger (1927/1996) emphatically states, "The expression 'idle talk' is not to be used in a disparaging sense" (p. 157). It represents our everyday being. Now, our goal remains to find authentic, genuine engagement. Yet, we should not establish an unrealistic and unattainable goal of trying to always engage one-an-Other authentically. Speaking for myself, I do not desire a meaningful, genuine encounter with every person that I "bump into" during the course of my day. I doubt that I have the mental or spiritual stamina.

Even when I find myself enamored by an-Other, the engagement can remain skin-deep. Yet, as with all goods, the scarce nature of genuine encounters is exactly what gives them their value. As with all goods, attaining them demands effort and time. Yet, in realizing genuine encounters, we benefit tremendously. In a world full of inauthentic nods to one-an-Other, genuine encounters can have a

profound impact on us. When we share horizons, we become rich. To these experiences and the accompanying mood or presence, I turn my attention.

A captured-presence. In looking at encounter, I name the more genuine, more authentic, more Other-focused and more self-reflective encounters as taking place within the context of a captured-presence. Just as with an absent-presence, many of us have experienced a captured-presence. By this term, I refer to a feeling of being held, turned-around and blanketed. While I can feel either comfort or discomfort, I cannot leave. I cannot de-tour from the encounter. It captures me. In this place, I see her face. In this place, I can “fall into” conversation. In this place, the Other touches me.

In the opening of the first chapter, I talk about two kitchens. Now, I return to the first one and to the grandmother hustled out of her bed. This time, I share Greg’s description of that night and of a feeling of captured-presence.

This first hand account of her life was one of the most authentic and powerful that I have ever heard... I went home that night feeling both privileged for having been able to hear her story, affected by what she had said, and feeling that I learned a great deal... I went home with a lot on my mind, and whereas some people maybe were disappointed and saddened by what she had to say, I just felt like it was an amazing story that I knew would stay with me for a long time to come.

Feeling privileged, going home with a lot on your mind and knowing that something will stay with you speaks to captured-presence. Of the drive home after the encounter with this grandmother, Jessie writes:

The van ride home was very quiet, someone cried. I remember thinking that I didn’t feel like crying. I knew it was a somber and reflective moment but I had come away from the meeting with Mrs. Majola feeling encouraged and awed by the strength of black South Africans to endure such a rough and unfair past and still be optimistic.

Captured-presence involves a moving beyond the powerful capture of the Other's words into a "being captured" by your own-self. The Other holds your full attention and then you turn inward. Within you, the Other remains. As you distance yourself from the Other, she continues to call. You will remember her well. You have been imprinted.

Later in this study, I re-turn to the feeling of captured-presence. I have a lot more to say about it. After all, as teacher and traveler, my normative stance desires that my students feel a captured-presence when they encounter the Other. Yet, Jessie and Greg help me to see two lesser-known types of presence that play a large role in their encounter with the Other of South Africa. Prior to reading their accounts of the trip, I had not wrapped words around an advertised-presence or an alienated-presence. These two types of mood stood still, hidden behind the more traditional and well-known moods of absent-presence and captured-presence. Yet, by listening to Jessie and Greg, they re-veal themselves.

An advertised-presence. In writing about the trip to South Africa, on several occasions, Greg describes feeling uncomfortable. For example, he writes about our *braai* (barbeque) in the poor township of Langa. Nestled between several corrugated metal and wood shacks, we gathered with local students and community leaders to share stories and break bread.

That afternoon, when we had that *braai*, I felt a little bit uncomfortable for the first time on the trip... I felt like a guest of honor in many ways, which is always nice, but I didn't want to feel like a guest of honor. It made me feel like an outsider. I guess this is impossible to avoid, since we were outsiders, but it made me feel uncomfortable.

Later, he describes our visit to Cowan Secondary School in a township on the outskirts of Port Elizabeth. He writes, “I felt again like we were being treated as honored guests. When I went to a couple of classes to sit in on them, the students would brush off a chair for me.” In light of the historical common-place of encounter and the possible guilt associated with that experience, how does it feel to have your black, African host “brush off” your chair? Do we feel “honorable” as their guests? When asked in a follow-up question to describe his feelings of discomfort, Greg named the mood of advertised-presence:

I felt uncomfortable when much ado was made for us and when we were treated like “honored guests” or something. It goes beyond the “ugly American” syndrome, which I have learned to deal with. Anywhere we go, we are Americans, and we will attract attention... I think with Langa and Cowan, it was mainly the money gifts and the presentations that we made to the people there that made me uncomfortable. We had everyone gathered around, us on one side, the recipients on the other, and I felt more “in the spotlight” than usual. I am glad we made the gifts and know they were appreciated, but perhaps I would have been more comfortable keeping it low profile... The moments of discomfort that I mentioned in these scenarios were not so strong as to have made me not want to be there, and I still got a lot from each experience, but felt that our presence was advertised.

Greg’s language names an advertised-presence that grips us in the midst of our encounter with the Other. Following the trail left by his words, we feel the “spotlight” on us. We blush when “much ado” is made about our visit. As Shakespeare suggests, should we beware of “much ado about nothing?” What does that “much ado” say about our attempts to deal with, or hide, our “American ugliness?” Under the lights, are our blemishes more easily exposed? Do our intentions stand out? Or does the spotlight confuse and distort our reasons for being with the Other?

In our advertised and announced presence, in the historical land of apartheid, we give gifts by standing a-part from the Other. Coming as “guests,” knowing our historical and contemporary privilege, do we feel “honorable?” As if plastered on our own historical billboard above their heads, do we send a message of “coming to save them” with our gifts? Do we offer gifts as some type of reparation?

To his description above, Greg hints at why we find discomfort in our advertised-presence:

In thinking about it, it seems like one element that bothered me is that with increased attention comes certain expectations. I can't really put my finger on what I saw those expectations to be, but I felt like I wanted to play the role of observer, and getting a lot of attention may have made me feel the need to respond to that attention somehow. Perhaps not knowing how to respond made me uncomfortable.

Later, Greg adds, “I wanted to learn from the wings rather than be center stage.” Can we imagine standing under the spotlight, in the center of the stage, and not knowing our lines? Without script or director, we must respond to the Other. Far removed from the anonymity of the audience, we cannot just “slink down” in our seats. Instead, we sit in “brushed-off” chairs on stage. The Other looks up at us and “expects” a responsible-response from one who looks like the “ugly American.”

In our advertised-presence, we worry about the Other's expectations. We also fear the position in which an advertised-presence places us. In the giving of gifts, we stand a-part. We feel a sense of uneasiness at our status as “guests of honor.” We can “brush-off” our own chairs. Given centuries of encounter based

on oppression and perceived superiority, we do not want to be miscast in the historical role. We do not want any notions of superiority attached to ourselves.

In his Peace Corps memoir, Jason Carter (2002) speaks to his own advertised-presence and how uncomfortable he feels sitting in the “brushed-off” chair. Carter also takes us into the dangerous place where miscasting can lead. He recounts a conversation with one of his South African supervisors. He talks about how she constantly asks for his advice. For this woman, Carter’s whiteness translates into virtual omniscience. After multiple questions on various topics, an incident in which the rubber knob comes off of the car’s stick shift finally brings Carter, called Musa, to his breaking point.

We loaded up the car, and she put it into gear. As she did this, the rubber knob on the top of the stick shift broke off. “Hawu! Musa, what happened?”

“Ma’am, I don’t know.”

“Can we get it fixed? Is it broken forever?”

... This woman was intelligent and experienced, and yet she was asking me about everything. I grabbed the broken piece of the stick shift and said, “*Bheka, Ang’azi! Tsina belungu, asikwazi konke!* – Look! I don’t know. White people don’t know everything!” (Carter, 2002, p. 109)

Reflecting on his South African teaching colleagues, Carter writes, “Teachers asked me, the white man, about everything under the sun” (p. 107). For Carter, being white and being male bestow upon him an unwanted expertise. Reflecting on my own travels through South Africa as a Fulbright-Hayes teacher, I identify with Carter. In most conversations with teachers and Other South Africans, I ended up being asked for my advice on how school violence should be addressed, on how to train new teachers, on how to manage schools better and on

how to improve the South African economy. My most typical response inside South Africa became “I don’t know.”

I had five years of teaching experience. I came to South Africa to learn about their situation. Yet, as our bus arrived at different stops, the crowds gathered and my advertised-presence announced me. We faced question after question. Some questions focused on American culture and life and they served a valuable purpose in improving understanding. Yet, so many of the questions demanded an “expertise” of which I had none. Did my first world American status translate into an expertise in all things? Under the “spotlight,” I felt they were looking at me as if through inferior eyes. I did not like this position.

When looking through inferior eyes, O’Donohue (1997) describes the resulting blindness:

To the inferior eye, everyone else is greater. Others are more beautiful, brilliant, and gifted than you. The inferior eye is always looking away from its own treasures. It can never celebrate its own presence and potential. (p. 64)

In our advertised-presence, as outsiders who walk an historical road of oppression, do we fear any possibility of the Other gazing upon us as superior? Especially inside the former apartheid state, where the government mandated its own superiority, I hope to avoid any “guilt by association.” I do not want to be acknowledged as the authority or the expert. I do not want to be associated with those who claim to be the bearers of first world “light” who have come to lead the way out of third world “darkness.” Gadamer explains the risk. If I am seen as the authority, then I stand in a prime position from which to pass on my own prejudices.

Acknowledging authority is always connected with the idea that what the authority says is not irrational and arbitrary but can, in principle, be discovered to be true. This is the essence of the authority claimed by the teacher, the superior, the expert. The prejudices that they implant are legitimized by the person who presents them. (Gadamer, 1960/1989, p. 280)

Hoping to avoid a position of superiority from which my prejudices can be passed on more easily, Greg, Jason Carter and I wish to avoid the spotlight. We wish to acknowledge our South African hosts' authority. As Palmer (1998) explains, "Authority is granted to people who are perceived as 'authoring' their own words, their own actions, their own lives, rather than playing a scripted role at great remove from their own hearts" (p. 33). As freedom fighters and bearers of the gift of *ubuntu*, why would the Other of South Africa seem willing to accept a scripted role?

From his work with the poor, Paulo Freire reaches a possible explanation for why the oppressed might memorize their script. He explores why they continue to look out at the world through inferior eyes. Freire (1970/2000) explains why they spotlight us:

Self-depreciation is another characteristic of the oppressed... So often do they hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything – that they are sick, lazy, and unproductive – that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness. (p. 63)

Inside South Africa, where racism and the denigration of one's humanity formed a cornerstone of the political, economic and social system, Freire's notion of internalized inferiority seems plausible. After all, Mandela (1994) does not let us forget just what apartheid meant:

An African child is born in an Africans Only hospital, taken home in an Africans Only bus, lives in an Africans Only area, and attends African

Only schools, if he attends school at all.
When he grows up, he can hold Africans Only jobs, rent a house in Africans Only townships, ride Africans Only trains, and be stopped at any time of the day or night and be ordered to produce a pass, failing which he will be arrested and thrown in jail. (p. 95)

Yet, we might find an alternative factor at work. In his writing on the resistance of oppressed groups, Scott (1990) argues that historically subordinate groups do not accept their inferior status. Disagreeing with Freire, Scott does not believe that the poor become convinced of their unfitness. Instead, aware of the need to publicly mask their resistance, they play the role of “willing, even enthusiastic, partners in (their own) subordination” (p. 4). Far from convinced of their inferiority, they simply play the part in order to avoid further subjugation. They read the script, but they do not internalize the words.

Scott (1990) suggests that we only can know the true intentions of the poor with a “privileged peek backstage or a rupture in the performance” (p. 4). From Scott’s perspective, amidst our advertised-presence, we might only see and hear the “public” Other. Historically accustomed to playing the inferior role, they act accordingly. Yet, behind the scenes, the Other authors her own narrative. She believes in her own authority, but she has learned to hide it well. In particular, inside South Africa, where blacks authored a secret life hidden behind white banning orders and inside the *shebeen* (illegal, township bars), we should not be surprised at their reluctance to author openly their own stories.

At the same time, placed on an historical stage where we feel great discomfort, we haltingly read our own scripts. In our advertised-presence, we dislike being announced and possibly linked to those who have come before us.

Thus, with masks on, we encounter one-an-Other. We come together, but we remain a-part. According to Scott, at our public encounters in schools and at *braais*, where we feel an advertised-presence, it seems that we are less likely to engage in a genuine, authentic conversation.

For Jessie and Greg, they come to South Africa to build understanding. I hope they will meet the Other of social justice. Yet, as we “start from ourselves,” we must recognize the discomfort with which we travel. Seen as “guests of honor,” feeling expectations to respond-responsibly and fearful of being miscast in some “superior” role, we do not feel at home in our advertised-presence. The advertised-presence represents de-tour. Searching for a more direct path, should we run from these advertised experiences and seek fewer public encounters? On the Other-hand, what might happen if we enter into these public encounters, embrace our advertised-presence and wear our masks for a while? After all, we should not seek to avoid the rituals and the public ceremonies of gift exchange and welcome. In these de-tours, possibility exists. Instead of seeking a way out, we should mingle with our discomfort. We should “live” our way through it. By doing so, in time, we can move beyond the formal ceremony to the informal conversation. Without a panicked search, in time, we can find a way out of the “spotlight” and climb off center stage. By doing so, we might just reach the place where Freire’s cultural synthesis occurs.

In cultural synthesis, the actors become integrated with the people, who are co-authors of the action that both perform upon the world. In cultural invasion, both the spectators and the reality to be preserved are objects of the actors’ action. In cultural synthesis, there are no spectators; the object of the actors’ action is the reality to be transformed for the liberation of men. (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 180)

Following the de-tour associated with an advertised-presence, we chance reaching Freire's co-authoring and cultural synthesis. In the process, we should embrace the time spent "moving beyond." A mood of advertised-presence can have tremendous value. This presence allows us to straddle the border with discomfort. In this place of de-tour, we learn and we can be transformed. As Palmer (1998) advises, "If students are to learn at the deepest levels, they must not feel so safe that they fall asleep" (p. 75). On stage in the "brushed off" chair, we do not sleep. How can we be comfortable with our discomfort? What must we do to relax in that chair while still recognizing the anxiety that we feel because it was "brushed off" for us?

We can ask the same questions when we consider our fourth mood or presence. Sharing a number of features with an advertised-presence, an alienated-presence also carries with it a sense of discomfort. It sets us apart from the Other. It stands tall and appears to block our access to the Other. Thus, as with an advertised-presence, it signals a need to de-tour. Yet, at the same time, an alienated-presence distinguishes itself from its advertised brother. It deserves its own name.

An alienated-presence. In encountering the Other, we can expect to feel alien. After all, by definition, the Other is alien to the "I." As visitors and strangers, we enter the Other's world. Our ancestors have been there before, but their legacy embarrasses. Today, as students and teacher, we approach the Other in order to learn. Still, encountering the Other in her world, we feel that we do not belong. O'Donohue (1999) describes the place of belonging in the visit:

The visitor is one who belongs somewhere else, but is now here in the world of your belonging. The visit is a powerful and ancient theme. Regardless of the frequency of the visits, the visitor remains essentially an outsider, an intruder from another area of belonging. (p. 42)

As we leave the *braai* in Langa township and we encounter a van full of soccer players, Jessie echoes O'Donohue's words. She writes, "Who knows what they thought of us. We obviously didn't belong there." As outsiders, traveling from the airport into Cape Town, Jessie describes the roadside scene. From inside our fast-moving van, perched on an elevated highway, we voyeuristically examine the Other.

There were densely packed makeshift shacks no bigger than a small room and low to the ground. They were colorful but dirty and made of mismatched pieces of corrugated metal and other scraps. Then and later on the trip when we saw people living in these conditions, I remember having mixed feelings - sometimes awkward, sometimes I felt like it was inappropriate for me to be there because I was wealthy and white, not knowing what to say...

An alienated-presence makes us feel awkward and inappropriately-placed. Again, we sense that we do not belong. As a privileged white student from America, where could Jessie dwell in a black township? How could she belong there?

Contributing to the feeling that she does not belong, Jessie describes being unaware of what she should say. Feeling alien, we question what to do. How should I express myself? Will my words and my actions offend? What cultural norms will I trample upon today? How can I maneuver through the rituals and the customs without emphasizing my strangeness? In his memoir, describing an early interaction with a South African host, Carter (2002) describes this alien lack of knowledge. "I did not know what was polite or what was rude. I wondered if I had offended her. I had no idea" (p. 37). Much later in his stay, at a funeral, he re-

turned to the anxiety associated with being alien. Carter writes, “I was terrified I would do something wrong” (p. 155).

Asked about her feeling awkward in Mrs. Majola’s house and at Cowan Secondary School, Jessie further speaks to the feeling of cultural illiteracy that accompanies the stranger:

Again, being torn between observing, examining vs. just hanging out, trying to get to know individuals on a more personal, intimate level. Wanting to ask them a bunch of questions but not wanting to sound insensitive or like I was studying them or like a tourist. Also, the cultural differences were more pronounced in these situations, or at least I felt like there was some edicate [sic] of which I wasn’t aware. Plus, I’m not the best with small talk and other social skills one needs when meeting and talking to strangers.

An alienated-presence speaks to the fear of making a mistake and of being unaware of what to do. As with Carter, Jessie does not know the etiquette. I have found myself in the same position. Why are we afraid to reveal that which we do not know? Especially wearing the shoes of strangers, why are we afraid to reveal that which we most likely could not know? Do we expect to be judged as uncaring? Do we fear whispered suggestions that our arrogance prevents us from learning the way of the Other? In the historical common-place, our ancestors never bothered to learn the ways of the Other. They simply asked the Other to adopt their ways. From this source, the world met the “ugly American.”

As Carter says, we hesitate because we wish to avoid being rude. Yet, at the same time, we wish to avoid being compared to our ancestors. We do not want the Other to perceive us as unwilling to learn their customs. In this place, as if in our grandmother’s living room where nothing can be touched, we sit still. We

doubt our every move. For Jessie, a simple meal can become an exercise in self-doubt:

We had dinner and again the issue of silverware came up. They (gave) me a fork and a knife but they themselves didn't use them. I didn't want to use them either, when in Rome, but I wasn't nearly as graceful at eating with my hands and using the bread as a utensil. Plus again I got the feeling that they found it odd that I wanted to use my hands and liked the food so much and so I think I ended up using the fork.

When aware of the Other's customs, we still feel discomfort. Will our mimicry insult them or be perceived as odd behavior?

Jessie's description of an alienated-presence goes beyond missed cultural cues. Her words take me back to one of my own experiences in Brazil. She writes that the people might see her as "studying them." Her words re-place me in my host mother's car, crucifix swinging wildly under the mirror, as I lean out of the window and snap photographs of the children in the *favelas*. We do not want the Other to see himself as a subject-to-be-studied. We cannot treat our journey into the Other's world as if on a field trip to the zoo. We can learn with the Other, but we cannot simply observe and record. In describing the reaction of white tourists to a meeting with one of his Aboriginal friends, Jackson (1995) shows us the risk of observation and recording:

As one of the Americans pointed a video camera at his face, Pincher gasped, "My name... is Pincher Jampinjinpa. My Dreaming is... *watiyawarnu*... but this dance, today, is..."

He might have been a stone or tree for all the effect it had on the man with the video camera, who did not take his eye from the viewfinder. The camera recorded the scene: Pincher sputtering through down and grass fiber, trying to impress his identity and name on the man behind the viewfinder. But the man did not see Pincher. He saw only an Aboriginal decked out in ritual paraphernalia. (p. 72)

Instead of seeing the face of the Other, the American simply aims and shoots *at* the face. Through a viewfinder, he finds no-one. Through my camera, I found no-one. In these situations, we objectify and we dehumanize. We try to make the images of these people “belong-to” us. We fail to make any effort to “belong-with” the Other. As O’Donohue (1999) advises, “True belonging is not ownership; it never grasps or holds on from fear or greed... True belonging is gracious receptivity” (p. 3). Thus, Jessie fears being perceived as studying the Other because such a stance would exacerbate her not-belonging. It would inflate her feeling of being inappropriately-placed.

Similarly, Jessie wants to ask questions, but she does not know how to pose them. What if she sounds insensitive or uncaring? What if she sounds like a tourist? What if she reveals a prejudice against the poor? After all, Freire (1970/2000) reminds us that as the privileged ally with the poor, “they almost always bring with them the marks of their origin: their prejudices and their deformations” (p. 60). As strangers, are we afraid that we will let some-word slip? At the *braii*, far removed from the sanitized kitchens and gourmet food of home, are we nervous that our distaste for the local meat hanging out-of-doors, warm with sun, will reveal our privilege? Looking down the aisles of shacks in the township, do we fear that we might wince? After all, when poverty shakes its stick, we tend to flinch.

As the stranger, burdened with uncertainty, we encounter the Other. Knowing that we do not belong, we walk gently. Aware of our historical relationship and our contemporary privilege, we feel even more out-of-place.

Still, whether advertised and sitting in a “brushed off” chair or alienated and standing in an “inappropriate-place,” we fear our own prejudices. Yet, Gadamer (1960/1989) warns us about our “prejudice against prejudice itself” (p. 270). This habit blinds us. It prevents true understanding. Thus, we should embrace our own prejudices. Without doing so, we can never move beyond them. While writing about textual interpretation, in one sentence, Gadamer expresses the point beautifully. For my purposes, I simply modify Gadamer’s “text” to be read as “human text.” By “human text,” I mean simply the persons we encounter. He writes, “The important thing is to be aware of one’s own bias, so that the (human) text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one’s own fore-meanings” (p. 269). For genuine encounter, we have to stop hiding.

In order to come out of our hiding places, we must recognize the role of wealth and race in our mood of alienated-presence. Marxists have written about the alienation of the poor from their labor. In America, where a large middle class operates, the poor stand-out as the minority. Similarly, through their displacement from Africa, Africans have faced forced alienation into an American minority group. In my students’ world, being black and/or being poor represents the stranger, the displaced and the alien.

In viewing South Africa’s informal settlements, Jessie writes, “I felt like it was inappropriate for me to be there because I was wealthy and white.” Reflecting on the feelings generated by our visits with the primary Other of the people, Jessie adds, “It was just that I was aware of the disparities between our group and those we visited.” Having grown up surrounded by white faces strolling across middle

class lawns, now on the South African borders, we find ourselves to be the stranger, the displaced and the alien. We become the minority.

Early in his journey to South Africa, Carter (2002) writes, “I was, for the first time, a member of a minority and was constantly conscious of my race” (p. 26). We come from a country where a white majority oppressed a black minority. We journey to a country where a white minority oppressed a black majority. We cannot overlook the distinction. Despite the historical connection as the oppressor, belonging to a minority group sets us a-part from belonging to the larger community. Our whiteness alienates and advertises us. It announces us as different. Yet, at the same time, more evident to us, we live-with our color. We belong-with it. It grounds us. It shapes us. It names us. In his memoir, Carter allows us to see where this new consciousness can take us. “But until I had to live as a minority in a community where I was forced to be conscious of my race every day, I had not scratched the surface of what racism meant” (p. 211).

Some white Americans find it easy to discount race, and thus, racism. We do not think in terms of race because we see our color so often. On television, in magazines, in our upper middle class neighborhoods and in our schools, we see our-white-selves everywhere. In her ethnography of a predominantly white, suburban high school, much like the one from which my students and I hail, Perry (2002) describes how white students “experienced themselves as ‘normal’ and viewed race as an insignificant social and political category” (p. 20). They did not hold this race-neutral view because of some enlightened notion of humanity. Instead, they simply did not “see” enough of different races in their lives to make

race meaningful. Perry writes, “White people are the only members of the U.S. population who have the option to live in entirely racially homogeneous environments” (p. 181). Thus, we can turn easily a deaf ear to the charges that racism persists. While we encounter the racial Other through the media, many of us lack face-to-face encounters.

Journeying into South Africa and becoming the minority-alien, our face announces us. We become more aware of the complications of oppression, racism and even euphemistic “turns of a phrase.” On their first day in South Africa, Jessie and Greg encountered these complications. In a meeting with a National Party representative, the former party of the apartheid state, they listen to the representative describe his party’s commitment to “minority rights.” At first unaware of the term’s meaning, Jessie describes her realization of the term’s euphemistic misuse:

The last thing that I remember... was his concept of “minority rights,” which I always associate with blacks in this country, but meant the exact opposite, protecting whites, in South Africa. I assumed that he must have been aware of the connotation the phrase had for Americans and chose that language in order to disguise his meaning.

Scott (1990) warns, “At every occasion on which the official euphemism is allowed to prevail over other, dissonant versions, the dominant monopoly over public knowledge is publicly conceded by subordinates” (p. 53). I maintain that our alienated-presence as a member of the minority offers us greater hope at seeing through the euphemistic treatment of life’s more sinister elements. Similarly, it offers us greater hope at seeing the Other’s face and hearing her ethical call. Thus, just as we should dwell within the anxiety surrounding our

advertised-presence, we should spend some time “on de-tour” with our alienated-presence.

At the heart of an alienated-presence, we feel that we do not belong. We stand in an inappropriate place. Yet, we must also ask what our arrival brings to the Other’s sense of his presence. Can our arrival make the Other feel more alien in his own world? O’Donohue (1999) reminds us that the visitor does not leave his destination untouched:

In earlier cultures when communities were more local and separate, the visitor brought news of a different world. Through the stories told of things seen and heard beyond the horizon, the prospect of other worlds became vicariously tangible. (p. 42)

In our increasingly homogenized world, where American capitalism sings praises to mimicry and sameness, the Other stands endangered. When we arrive in South Africa, we represent the imperialistic culture of Nike and The Gap. To the altar of foreign places, we bring the worship of materialism. We bring news of cultural demise and of Western domination.

I remember waking on a Sunday morning in Dijon, France. Leaving my hotel and walking through the town, I searched for a small café where I could enjoy a light breakfast. Yet, at this hour, I could find no place with an open door. I searched up and down the streets. Eventually, defeated, I succumbed to my hunger and entered the one place serving breakfast. As I sat in McDonalds, I thought about my students in France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Greece and the Czech Republic and how many times I had heard them shout excitement at the sight of the golden arches. Was it some type of victory cheer? In McDonalds, did we recognize our ability to stretch out and make the Other more like ourselves?

By stamping our culture all over the globe, do we seek to reduce our own sense of alienation? Do we intend to make the Other feel more like a stranger in his own land?

In his Peace Corps memoir, Carter (2002) stands accused by a Dutch woman:

Americans are so insensitive and so blind that they do not see anything that is happening outside their borders, and still their culture presses in everywhere. Even you, you come here to teach people how to be American...

Deep down, I agreed with her. The cultural stampede was moving right along, and something had to be done to preserve indigenous culture. (p. 237)

Reflecting upon our visit to Langa township, Greg remarks, "It was also fun to hear the kids talk about 2Pac and Notorious BIG, etc. because I didn't expect poor township children to watch MTV." As a Fulbright-Hayes teacher, I remember being quizzed about rap, hip-hop, and American soap operas. How can such innocent questions trigger such a guilty conscience?

Whether on MTV or CNN, the image of America broadcast around the world displaces the Other from their own culture and their own community. Among the Other, we create a sense of alienation, inappropriate-placement and a lack of belonging. We make them feel as if they no longer belong in their own world. As Carter (2002) confesses, "This cultural imperialism would have happened without me, but I could not escape the thought that I was contributing to it" (p. 236). To make matters worse, we offer a lifestyle that few in the third world could ever afford.

Feeling more alienated in their own world, they seek what America has to offer. In his conversation with a Sri Lankan friend, Toner (2001) witnesses globalization's effect:

“You in America have it right,” Vijay said between sips of tea. “You are free to do what you want, not what your mother or your culture tells you to do. It is primitive, this system”...

“So, Jim, I must ask you again to help me get to America. You see that I have no future here. Find me a university, a job, any job. I will work in your McDonalds. I'll do anything.” (p. 86)

How do we react when the Other places the label of “primitive” upon their own culture? In our encounters with the Other, can we avoid collusion with the cultural imperialism that seeks to alienate them from their own lives? At the same time, who are we to determine that the Other requires protection? Is this stance not condescending to the Other's ability to choose his/her own way of life? As a person who benefits tremendously from a Western lifestyle, who am I to suggest excluding the Other from that possibility?

As we encounter the Other, “starting from ourselves,” we can feel absent, alienated, advertised and sometimes captured by the experience. As we travel through South Africa, these feelings journey with us. These feelings that accompany us represent a first structure of the encounter experience. Absent, advertised or alienated moods can present themselves as de-tours to genuine encounter. They have the power to “turn us around.” Yet, seeing possibility within these de-tours, we might want to follow the path they clear toward the Other. At the same time, a captured-presence possesses a magical quality. It transcends the barriers surrounding the Other. It pulls us up and over the wall.

Mapping further our encounter with the Other, through the haze, Greg and Jessie's words help me to recognize the outlines of a second structure. Beyond the felt-presence, when they enter into the encounter with the Other of South Africa, they are searching for, and expecting to find, some-thing. As they journey to South Africa, packed away in their pre-judgments, they carry an expectation of the exotic.

Placing The Other Behind An Exotic Mask

For Jessie and Greg, encounter with the Other involves a search for the exotic. Prior to departing for South Africa, they feel excited. For many of us who travel, we anticipate the journey. It holds the possibility of adventure and discovery. Describing her feelings as the trip began, Jessie reveals her sense that she is a part of something "new and exotic." She writes:

I felt privileged to be part of such an exclusive and landmark visit. There was something new and exotic and fascinating about going to South Africa, as opposed to my previous travel experience, since this was to be an educational (compared to recreational, sight-seeing) trip and because it was to a 3rd world country with a unique history. Africa seemed like a much more impressive destination than Europe.

In search of a "much more impressive destination than Europe," Jessie arrives in South Africa. In a similar way, Greg announces the trip to be his first sojourn out of the "first world." From the beginning, they hope to discover the places and the people far removed from their own "average everydayness." They seem to heed Heidegger's (1927/1996) warning that our everydayness imprisons us in a place where "every mystery loses its power" and where all possibilities are "levelled down" (p. 119). They plot an escape. In entering the third world, the continent of

Africa and the new democratic nation of South Africa, Greg and Jessie seek out exotic Otherness.

Escaping everydayness. They want experiences far removed from the place where they conduct their daily lives. Unlike African Americans who might travel to Africa intending to “find home,” Jessie and Greg see their journey as a “going away from home.” For example, Jessie remembers the game drive as “something new and exciting, something we couldn’t do back home.” Greg finds the safari and the accompanying meal exciting because they “wouldn’t happen in the US.” They value those experiences that distance them from home and that cannot be replicated in their everydayness.

In pursuing difference and distance, they seek the exotic. Greg speaks to this search when he describes our visit to the ostrich farm:

The best part of the day was definitely the ostriches. They are dumb but majestic animals, and very “exotic.” I think this is why I have such fond memories of the ostrich farm because it was unique, something I had never done before and something I knew you can’t do all over the rest of the world.

Jessie adds to the description of the ostrich farm:

(D)efinitely one of my favorite experiences on the trip was the next day’s visit to the ostrich farm. Again, it was one of those silly, slightly touristy things to do. But it was still so unusual and exciting that it will always stand out in my mind. To this day, I’ve never met anyone else who has ridden an ostrich or fed it corn from one’s mouth.

Both Greg and Jessie speak to the exotic nature and the unusualness of the ostrich experience. By having the exotic experience, they step beyond their “everydayness.” Even after the trip ends and they return to their “everydayness,” they return being less “everyday.” They have had experiences that few others can

claim to have had. From this point forward, going on a game drive and riding an ostrich separate them from those with whom they spend their daily lives. Thus, when they return home, the experiences of the trip allow them to maintain a distance.

Seen as an escape from the “everyday,” the pursuit of the exotic seems courageous and commendable. Yet, might this search lead us astray? When Greg describes the ostrich farm, he places “exotic” in quotation marks. Possibly, he understands the negative connotation associated often with this word. Possibly, he recognizes a reason to be cautious.

Revealing exoticism Merryfield (2002) describes how global educators must challenge the typecasting of the Other as being exotic. She writes, “Global educators... purposefully address stereotypes and challenge the exotic images and misperceptions that students bring with them into the classroom” (p. 18). While Merryfield worries about the exotic images that students bring into the classroom, I wonder about the expectation of the exotic that my students carry out into the world. The word, exotic, stands “cocked and loaded.” In his essay on exoticism, Segalen (1955/2002) presents the typecast role. He writes, “Exoticism is willingly ‘tropical.’ Coconut trees and torrid skies. Not much Arctic exoticism” (p. 13). He then launches an assault on the traditional, stereotyped view of exoticism.

Throw overboard everything misused or rancid contained in the word exoticism. Strip it of all its cheap finery: palm tree and camel; tropical helmet; black skins and yellow sun; and, at the same time, get rid of all those who used it with an inane loquaciousness... What a Herculean task this nauseating sweeping out will be! (Segalen, 1955/2002, p. 18)

In his “sweeping out,” I wonder if ostriches and game drives should find their way into the dustbin. Have we blindly accepted stereotypes and perpetrated a crime against deeper knowing? Does casting the ostrich as exotic send us on a detour toward stereotyping and generalizing the South African encounter? In seeking an escape from the everyday, how do we avoid falling prey to the “toxic” dangers lurking behind the “exotic” stereotype? For example, when talking about the primary Other of the people, can seeing them as exotic actually lead us to objectify them?

Through racist laws and through inhumane practices, the apartheid government of South Africa attempted to dehumanize the people. The Nationalist Party understood well that “The intention of racism is to shame its victims into becoming non-persons” (O’Donohue, 1999, p. 113). Can our search for the “exotic” in encounter lead us down a similar path?

In his phenomenological study of solitude, Koch (1994) shows us the potential for dehumanization. While he believes our mind constantly intermingles object and person, he warns us about our ability to see and treat Others as only objects:

Employers objectify workers when they see them as only production units; men objectify women when they see them solely as collections of sexual parts, or when their sexual behavior remains fixated solely upon those parts and does not express or seek emotional connection. (p. 88)

If we see the Other as “exotic” and cast them in this role, then do we risk objectifying them? After all, Buber insists that in our everyday lives, as soon as the interaction ends, a person undergoes a metamorphosis into a thing. Buber

(1923/2000) writes, “The particular Thou, after the relational event has run its course, is bound to become an It” (p. 43).

In his *Essay On Exoticism: An Aesthetics Of Diversity*, Segalen (1955/2002) intends to “sweep away” the version of exoticism that Western imperialism created. In its place, he plans to rebuild. He holds an alternative concept of exoticism. Simply put, Segalen describes the new exoticism as “the feeling that Diversity stirs in me” (p. 57). His exoticism “is nothing other than the notion of difference, the perception of Diversity, the knowledge that something is other than one’s self; and Exoticism’s power is nothing other than the ability to conceive otherwise” (p. 19).

Exoticism as seen through Segalen’s eyes is what I want students to find in South Africa. Instead of running the risk of objectifying South Africans, this exoticism heralds their differences and their Otherness. Yet, it does so without positing them in some tropical, ostrich-rich land of Tarzan and Jane. It opens the door for the possibility of seeing the exotic in the mundane. After all, Otherness can live next door. Yet, if we refuse to recognize the Other as our neighbor, then we risk not-seeing. We remain blind to the Other if we force it behind some exotic mask. We remain unable to touch the Other if we shroud it in some image of rain forests and dark jungles. We remain deaf to the Other if we listen too intently to the chants and drums on the horizon and ignore the whispers from around the corner.

Thus, placing the Other behind an exotic mask creates two distinct risks. First, we see the mask and we mistake it for the Other. We journey through South

Africa in search of the mask. The experience becomes a “game drive” in search of exoticism that threatens to objectify the Other. Second, we risk not-seeing behind the mask. In this case, we risk “missing” the actual Other.

Masks and missing the Other. In his book, *Travels* (1988), Crichton recounts how the search for the exotic mask can leave one near blind. In traveling to Borneo, he hoped to see the Dyaks, the island’s indigenous headhunters. Yet, waiting for his search of the jungle to begin, he had to spend time in a local town.

I walked around Sibü restlessly... I was quickly bored. I had come to see Dyaks, and now I was stuck in this tedious little town, its streets lined by the stalls of the Chinese merchants... I was annoyed to be standing in the kind of crowd I could see any day in Singapore. I wanted to see Dyaks, damn it! (Crichton, 1988, p. 295)

In search of the exoticism of headhunters, he had come to the island. He could not believe that he was “stuck” in a familiar, everyday place. Yet, as he looked more carefully around the town, he made a discovery:

A little girl in a white dress stared at me while she sucked her thumb... I looked at her father’s hand, then his arm.

Starting at the elbow, the man’s arm was covered in dark blue tattoos.

Then, in the V-neck of his shirt, I saw more tattoos. I knew that Dyaks used tattoos for clan identification...

This man was a Dyak!

I looked at the crowd at the market, and now I saw that nearly everyone had tattoos and hanging earlobes. I had been depressed about not seeing Dyaks while I was standing in a crowd of them! (p. 296)

Saddled with his preconceived notions of the Dyaks out in the wilderness, Crichton stood in their company and could not see them. Along with objectification, the search for the exotic creates this potential to simply “miss” the

encounter with the Other. If we do peer behind the mask and see the Other, we might find a more mundane or familiar face.

Masks and finding the familiar. Anticipated exoticism can reveal itself in the most mundane ways. In writing about her spiritual pilgrimage to the Himalayas, with a holy man in a Himalayan cave, Anne Cushman (1999) realizes just how “everyday” the exotic can be:

The most exotic experience, I reflected, is made up of the most mundane details. I was in a Himalayan cave with a holy man; back in California, I could tell that to my yogi friends and they’d moan with envy. Yet the actual experience mainly consisted of damp socks, numb fingers, sore throat, and shivering jaw. Maybe my spiritual teachers were right when they told me, over and over, that all moments are equally magical, if we give them our full attention. (p. 155)

Reading about this woman’s damp socks and shivering jaw, I recall my visit to a church in Soweto. Looking at the bullet holes in the walls and thinking about the people who prayed in this place as a part of their struggle for freedom, I sit freezing. Sitting on a hard, wooden pew, I cannot stop thinking about my sore back. When will the service end? How long will we have to stay and talk? This church meets the preconceived stereotype. It “fits” my idea of what a church that was engaged in the freedom struggle should look like, but I still find it all too mundane. While Cushman has a much more enlightening revelation about the mundane in the exotic that leads her to realize that we should give our full attention to all experiences, I feel simple disappointment sitting in Soweto.

When reaching the town of George on our trip, Greg describes a similar disappointment. In his case, an anticipated exotic mask fails to appear.

After a morning in Mosselbaai, we went to George. Before the trip, we knew that Botha was coming to stand trial for not appearing before the

TRC (the Truth and Reconciliation Committee), and were excited for some more political stuff. Unfortunately, we didn't hear or see any mention of Botha or anything about it in George. I don't know what I was expecting, like people running around in the streets protesting Botha or something, but I think I was a little disappointed.

Feeling disappointed follows naturally from an unrealized hope. Greg had expected "some-thing" and it failed to appear. He wanted protesters in the street, but he found a quiet town. The missed opportunity disallows him from placing more distance between himself and his "everydayness."

If we anticipate finding an exotic experience, and then only discover something that resembles what we already know well, we can be left feeling disappointed. For some of us, expecting the exotic and finding the familiar takes us beyond feelings of disappointment. Instead, the experience leaves us feeling "strange." For example, after spending a "normal" day with her Indian hosts, Jessie describes being left with this "strange" feeling. She writes:

The whole scene could have taken place back *home* in Bethesda. It was so familiar and normal and ordinary that it seemed strange. I guess I expected them to be more exotic, that their customs and activities would be different from my own, but they were just like any other high school kids.

By suggesting the experience could have taken place "back home," Jessie seems to equate it with her "everydayness." The Indian students became "just like any other high school kids." The day's similarity to her life makes the experience seem "strange." Jessie expects the "exotic," but finds the "familiar." In response to not finding an exotic mask, Jessie deposits the experience in a "familiar" place. By doing so, Jessie risks placing the Other behind a different mask. By "seeing" the Other as familiar, she risks missing the lines on the flesh, the intricacies, the

discrete gestures, and the subtle differences. In a sense, we reduce the Otherness of the person or of the place.

While it might be natural to label experiences as familiar or exotic, I suggest that we must be cautious. Placing the Other behind either one of these masks can limit our ability to see him. As O'Donohue (1997) warns, "Familiarity enables us to tame, control and ultimately forget the mystery. We make our peace with the surface as image and we stay away from the Otherness and fecund turbulence of the unknown that it masks" (p. 91). Yet, if we take the time to see things for what they are, then "behind the façade of the familiar, strange things await us" (O'Donohue, 1997, p. 90).

I label the Other as "exotic" and warn that this characterization threatens to misshape her face. I label the Other as "familiar" and warn that this characterization threatens to misshape his face. Thus, in encountering the Other, I suggest that we must be careful with placing the Other behind any masks. In doing so, we de-tour from a face-to-face encounter.

Living with the "de-tour of masks". Yet, I also recognize a possibility within the "de-tour of masks" that accompanies Jessie and Greg's encounter with the Other. In searching for the exoticism of ostriches and game drives, we can come to understand better our capacity to objectify Others and to minimize Others. In time, the masks can "fall away." Yet, dwelling in the de-tour, we can examine the masks. We can seek the familiar in the exotic and the exotic in the familiar. By doing so, we might understand better from where these masks come

and from what material they are made. We might develop an improved sense of why we construct them in the images that we do.

In Other words, in examining the masks that we affix to the Other's face, we spend time with our prejudices and our stereotypes. We heed Gadamer's (1960/1989) advice and we challenge the Western "prejudice against prejudice" (p. 270). Instead of hiding the stereotypes that we carry, we can look to expose their origins and to consider where they lead us. By following this de-tour, we "open" ourselves to the real possibility of horizon-shift.

In South Africa, Jessie and Greg expect to find a Western-generated notion of exoticism. In my first visit to South Africa, I traveled with a similar expectation. Yet, I do not want to oversimplify their lived experience. In their baggage, they carry additional preconceived and pre-constructed masks. Exoticism does not travel alone. The media, the schools, the literature and our families feed us South African, African and third world stereotypes and typecast characters. Yet, in the encounter with the Other, Jessie and Greg do not always "miss" what stands behind the mask. Instead, throughout their journey, they take the time to wonder about the masks and the stereotypes. Instead of reducing or objectifying the Other, at times, their direct encounters reveal the lines, the blemishes and the intricacies of the Other's face. In these "gray areas," the stereotypes fade. At these times, Greg and Jessie are "taken aback." In these encounters, they find themselves living with the "complicated."

Living with the "complicated". During our homestay in one of the Indian suburbs of Durban, Greg saw behind the mask. He expected to find "joy and

support for the new, moral, democratic government across the board.” Instead, his host father lifts the mask.

(H)e told me flat out how he thought life was better under apartheid. This surprised me a lot, to hear his opinion, because I hadn’t really expected it. How could anyone rather live in a society where his rights and freedom were impinged upon every day? It turns out that he had some good arguments, all economic... He was a doctor and was allowed to practice and make money under the old regime, and had himself a nice house and a nice car. With the infusion of black people into the city, though, squatters had moved in and shantytowns had sprung up just blocks from his house... He told me that ‘before we weren’t white enough, and now we aren’t black enough’ and that he wanted to leave the country. Although his reasons make sense, I was taken aback at his viewpoint.

As a teacher, inside my American classroom, I struggle to teach the complexities of post-apartheid South Africa. The Indian condition presents a difficult case. Imported as labor, the Indians were viewed as inferior to the British and to Other white groups. Yet, the racial hierarchy placed the Indians above the blacks. Thus, despite a history of struggle against the British colonial power and the subsequent white apartheid government, the Indians have always stood as an awkward partner with the blacks.

When Greg’s host father spoke, the mask affixed by Greg failed to “muffle” his voice. Greg’s pre-judgment that the Indians would prefer the new government “fell away.” Jessie describes her response to hearing this message:

I never expected anyone who had been treated as a second-class citizen under apartheid to actually prefer that to the current system... But it also made me realize that my ideas about the end of apartheid as a complete positive were wrong. It was more complicated than that. It wasn’t that easy or harmless.

To see the Other behind the mask and to hear the Other’s voice “unmuffled” leaves Jessie in a complicated place. According to her words, this place is not

“easy.” In fact, her actual word choice takes us to a place where encountering the Other and having your own preconceived notions “stripped away” can hurt. It is not “harmless.”

At the same time, Greg describes his conversation with his host father as “enlightening.” Living with the “complicated” challenges us to go beyond easy categorization and typecasting. Encountering the Other opens up the possibility of examining the baggage that we carry. It makes us susceptible to being “taken aback” into a gray area from where we can critically reexamine our own stereotypes.

The expression, “being taken aback into the gray area,” grounds itself in terms of place. Similarly, when discussing the experience of presence and mood, on a “spotlighted” stage in a “brushed off chair,” I rely upon language that places us some-where. Chapter One opens in a grandmother’s kitchen in the informal settlements outside of Port Elizabeth. Chapter Two opens at Blood River with advancing Zulus facing the murderous firepower from the Voortrekker’s *laager*. This study roots itself in the places of South Africa. The entire experience emerges from the wandering-out into South Africa. Therefore, relying heavily upon Edward Casey’s phenomenological work on place, I follow Jessie and Greg into the South African places of encounter. Following their lead, I detect place to be a third structure of the encounter experience.

The Places Of Encounter: Dwelling And Wandering-Out In South Africa

The scenery was so dramatic and beautiful and it was amazing to know that we were standing at the tip of an enormous continent, at the edge of the world, where two oceans meet. (Jessie)

Jessie's words bring me back to the Cape of Good Hope. Standing on the cliffs at the southern edges of the African continent, with a strong wind and a warm sun on my face, looking out at an expanse of blue sky that meets blue ocean at the horizon, I feel captured. Surrounded by ocean on three sides, I stand impressed by the place. On these rocks, I wander-out and South Africa introduces me to the Other of nature. As I wander-out, I take comfort in my companions' presence. Jessie and Greg stand with me. We dwell with one-an-Other in a pedagogical community as we wander-out into the places of South Africa.

Casey's (1993) work on place helps me to frame the discussion of this extraordinary aspect of the encounter experience. Drawing on his understandings of the place-world, I characterize the encounter experience in South Africa as grounded in two distinct places. First, the encounter experience finds itself rooted in a cultivated and constructed pedagogical community. This community of students and teacher represents a built place. In this built place, as students and teacher, we dwell with one-an-Other. This dwelling place provides an element of home and an element of comfort. Second, the encounter experience finds itself walking among makeshift shacks, sitting inside township schools, staring out of prison windows, looking down from mountain peaks and driving in open land rovers. Through these places where a sense of homelessness and discomfort can confront us, we wander. Thus, simultaneously, we dwell in a community-place while we wander-out into South African places. We remain in place while moving among places. We are implaced in our pedagogical community while voluntarily displacing ourselves into third world places and South African places.

Displacing ourselves into third world places provides access to the Other. Casey (1993) frames the encounter with the Other in terms of place. He writes, “Levinas refers to the ‘infinity’ separating me from the other. In these circumstances, the here and the there are in such tension that they seem to break apart, even to repel each other” (p. 55). For Casey, we must bring the Other’s “here” to be our own. When we say that we are studying “here” inside of South Africa as compared to when we say that we are “here” inside of our American classroom and studying South Africa which is “over-there,” a border is crossed.

Yet, as I have discussed previously in this chapter, wandering-out into the Other’s “here” can involve de-tour. Confronted by a feeling of homelessness in the Other’s places, we can “turn away.” Yet, with my students’ encounter experience, the dwelling with one-an-Other brings some comfort. As we wander-out into the Other’s places, seeking the exotic and feeling either an absent, captured, advertised or alienated presence, we dwell with one-an-Other as fellow learners. We travel in a community that shares the experience. We are not alone.

Cultivating a community-place. When I read Casey’s (1993) description of the “non-thetic” quality of certain places, I think about the two groups of students with whom I traveled to South Africa as being “built community-places.” For Casey (1993), a place is considered “non-thetic” when “we cannot fix its limits precisely. Its place is not (to be) a site” (p. 216). My two groups of students represent what Casey calls places of congregation. In these places, “Distinctive forms of cultivation occur, ways of caring in common that range from how people greet and talk with one another to how they work and disport and are affectionate

together” (Casey, 1993, p. 180). These places require building and construction. Community requires cultivation. After his etymological investigation into the roots of “cultivation,” Casey writes, “Cultivation *localizes caring*” (p. 175). Thus, if cultivated well, communities of students localize caring. Dwelling together, they care for one-an-Other.

Of course, just as Heidegger’s concerned being-with Others represents an ideal state of being-with, Casey’s view of cultivated places as localizing care represents an ideal place-world. As a teacher, my pedagogical goal might be to create a community-place where students localize caring. Yet, in this study, I seek to describe my students’ experience of encounter with the South African Other. In doing so, the community in which we travel represents an important structure of the experience. Yet, it does not necessarily represent an ideal-place.

Dwelling together. When I was in Brazil as a high school exchange student, I discovered independence and became dependent upon it. Up to that point in my life, I had lived in a small Vermont community with clear paths to my destinations. Yet, awkwardly navigating my way through a new culture, loosely wrapping my words around a new language and haltingly traversing a new city forced me to embrace and rely upon my own inner determination. At the same time, away from family, friends and supports, I confronted a cultural and personal loneliness. On my own, I encountered the third world Other.

For Greg and Jessie, the experience of journeying to South Africa means being together. They encounter a foreign physical, cultural, political and social presence within the company of peers, traveling companions, friends, classmates,

fellow group members. Far removed from my solitary journey, they belong to a traveling community of learners. Greg describes what it is like dwelling within this community-place when he says:

I had a wonderful time with our group, and there was definitely a great sense of camaraderie that I felt the whole time. The fact that the group was so small was important, and the fact that most of us already knew each other well (excepting Katie and Amy) contributed to the close bond.

Traveling and learning with friends allows for a sense of comfort. It binds people. When Bottorff (1991) discusses comfort as it is experienced with nursing, she reveals that home is where we feel comfortable with ourselves. Thus, for patients staying in hospitals, she describes the comfort delivered with “things from home” (p. 249). While she does not make the distinction, it seems obvious that persons can play an even more powerful role than things in delivering comfort. Especially with young children, hospitals often allow a parent to stay in the room. For a group of learners and travelers, to enter new places with friends is to bring a “piece” of home, and thus, a level of comfort, with you. When traveling into foreign places and encountering the Other’s “here,” friends link us to the more secure and familiar places from where we have come.

Etymologically, friend refers to “one joined to another in mutual benevolence and intimacy” (Onions, 1966, p. 377). As Greg describes, the small size of the group – its intimacy - allows for these ten young people to come together. Looking at where being “intimate” plants its own etymological roots, we find an “inward,” “essential” place where we share “inmost thoughts” (Onions, 1966, p. 482). Can we imagine a better “class” of students than those joined to one-an-Other in an inward search for essential and inmost thoughts? Far from the

oversized classrooms of most schools, Greg and Jessie journey with a small group coming together to seek understanding and to make meaning. Jessie describes:

It was great to have people I felt very close to, comfortable with in order to discuss some of the difficult things we saw and learned about and also to share all the amazing, beautiful adventures we had.

Schonhammer (1992), in his own phenomenological exploration of youth travel, identifies a glue which holds young travelers together when he writes that “The ‘feeling of solidarity’ within this group can be understood as a way of coping with the ambivalence of free movement in strange space” (p. 22). For Jessie, the solidarity provides a way to cope with the difficult images and stories confronting the group in the “strange space” known as South Africa. Yet, the coming-together also provides peers with whom she can share the beauty and live the adventure. It allows her to dwell “at-home” while wandering-out among the felt-homelessness of foreign places.

Etymologically, when you “dwell,” you “delay,” “hinder,” and “abide” (Onions, 1966, p. 296). When wandering-out among the places of South Africa, the community-place in which Greg and Jessie dwell represents a place that can “delay” and “hinder” their journey into the Other’s world. Dwelling can be comfortable. It slows us down and takes us back. On the Other hand, wandering-out can be uncomfortable. It takes us to where we see the Other’s face. It challenges and confronts us. Thus, to dwell in a community-place with friends while wandering-out into South Africa represents a convergence of two places. We can go face-to-face with the Other and then slip back into the comforts of one-an-Other’s familiarity.

Yet, within our community-place, Greg discusses a “close bond” and a “sense of camaraderie.” Jessie writes about a place where she can “share” and “discuss.” These descriptions imply some-place more than a site of “delay” in our wandering-out into the Other’s places. To better open up the idea of dwelling, Levinas (1961/1969) offers an expanded notion of the word. He describes dwelling as “a recollection, a coming to oneself, a retreat home with oneself as in a land of refuge, which answers to a hospitality, an expectancy, a human welcome” (p. 156). In this sense, the pedagogical community-place in which Greg, Jessie and I travel offers us a place of retreat. It offers a respite along the way. As we encounter the poverty of South Africa’s townships and the voices of her people, we have a place where we gather and make meaning of the day’s experiences. We dwell in a community where we offer our hospitality and our welcome to our co-travelers and co-learners.

Beyond our welcome, while dwelling, we offer our care to one-an-Other. Just as Casey had identified a cultivated dwelling place as one where we would find localized caring, Heidegger (1971/2001) writes, “The fundamental character of dwelling is sparing and preserving” (p. 147). According to Heidegger, “To spare and preserve means to take under our care” (p. 149). Thus, as we dwell together, Heidegger returns us to the notion of taking care of one-an-Other.

Coming together. Creating this community-place, or dwelling-place, where we care for one-an-Other requires preparation. We cannot build a dwelling-place overnight. It requires a common understanding and a trust. Greg discusses the role of preparation in bringing the group together:

(D)uring the trip I felt like since we had all studied the same materials and watched the same documentaries and heard the same presentations, that we were learning similar things and making similar observations. It was cool to be able to discuss any thought I had or any interesting things I had noticed with other group members, knowing that they had the same background that I did.

Community does not magically appear. We construct it. Prior to the experience, many of the travelers were already friends. Yet, for several months prior to the trip's departure, a purposeful gathering and preparing took place. Meeting at a different student's home each week where we often shared a meal, the group struggled with the challenges facing South Africa. We also had the opportunity to learn about one-an-Other. Jessie describes how she felt when we were leaving for South Africa:

I was also excited to be traveling with my closest friends, not to mention Greg, and a teacher who I felt close to and admired. I was especially grateful for the preparation for the trip – weekly meetings, reading on the country's history and current events, meetings with various people from the South African embassy, UN, Peace Corps, etc..

I cannot ignore my own role in this community-place. After all, beyond the ten students, an adult also appears. As the teacher leading this traveling community, I sought to construct a lived relationship with the students based on the values of respect, trust and learning. As Jessie indicates, the power of such a lived relationship between teacher and student holds value for the students and for the operation of the learning community.

You were the perfect teacher/chaperone/adult for the trip. I knew you through several different interactions (classroom, extracurriculars, leadership trips) so I felt comfortable with you. Plus, our relationship was more casual, personal than most other teachers I knew. You trusted us and gave us a lot of freedom on the trip which I appreciated. I also respected, admired you, didn't want to let you down which just added another incentive to take the trip seriously and get the most out of it. (Jessie)

Jessie defines the lived relationship between teacher and student as having a little history, being relaxed, personal, trusting and giving. It grows from a place of previous experience, respect, admiration and not wanting to disappoint. It blossoms into a place of comfort. Greg remarks that “The relationship we all had with you was close and relatively informal, so I certainly felt like I was travelling with friends.” Thus, both Greg and Jessie adopt a comparative stance. The teacher is “more casual, personal than most other teachers” and he is “relatively informal.”

Why do Jessie and Greg have few experiences with teachers who invite them into places where more casual, informal and personal learning occurs? Are teachers resistant to enter into this type of dwelling place with students or does the normal structure of teaching create barriers to this type of lived interaction with learners? Do non-traditional learning spaces such as traveling to South Africa offer teachers and students more opportunities to establish personal, genuine lived relationships? How can we expect to create learning communities and experiences where students will openly share, participate and make meaning when teachers are conditioned to remain a-part from their students? In South Africa, a nation terrorized for forty years by a system of apartheid, or apart-ness, how ironic and sad would it be for a traveling community of learners to stand a-part from their teacher or from one-an-Other?

Coming a-part. At times, despite a desire to construct a tight community of students, regardless of the irony, we do stand a-part. With the South Africa group, some students enter as close friends. Jessie and Greg even recently had

started dating. Some friendships reached back to elementary school. For some, they had met in class that year and were just developing a bond. For some, they met as members of the group and never truly connected. As Jessie notes with Amy, “I still feel like I don’t know (her) too well, even after the trip.” Thus, our coming together walks hand-in-hand with a coming a-part. Being together co-exists with being divided.

Greg and Jessie describe a “ruling elite” subgroup. Named in jest, the four members use the title to stand a-part from their peers. Jessie remembers the subgroup when she writes:

The four of us (Kris, John, Greg and I) were definitely our own sub-group. We egotistically called ourselves the “ruling elite.” I can’t remember where the name came from, it was obviously in fun but does reflect some of our feelings. We thought that we were more fun to be with than the rest of the group, not that we didn’t get along with everyone else, just enjoyed each others’ company more.

Within communities, multiple and layered relationships exist. Inside the South Africa group, different people come together or come a-part in different ways. Even when cast in harmless terms, do our divisions and hierarchies limit some people from being able to share genuinely? Does the group discriminate in its own subtle ways and leave some members feeling excluded?

Greg also describes the “ruling elite” subgroup as a running “joke,” but notes, “I don’t remember our group really dividing at all... I felt like everyone was very together.” In my own first journey to South Africa, a few of the younger teachers formed a subgroup. We came a-part from one-an-Other. While forms of self-segregation appear throughout our lives, the irony of it occurring in South Africa should not be dismissed. O’Donohue (1999) reminds us, “When we are

rejected or excluded, we become deeply wounded. To be forced out, to be pushed to the margin, hurts us” (p. 4). In a country where a government systematically pushed the majority of its members to its margins – to the townships and to the *bantustans* – we must recognize our own inclinations to come a-part from one-an-Other.

Retreat toward solitude. Recognizing our inclination to come a-part does not mean that we label such an act as being exclusively negative. In his writing on learning space, Palmer (1998) notes, “The space should support solitude and surround it with the resources of community” (p. 76). As a temporary condition, a retreat from one-an-Other offers an opportunity to renew our commitment to the group. Time spent alone offers an opportunity to process and to think. Time spent in a subgroup offers a chance to improve the bond among that smaller cadre of people. As Greg describes, “On a trip such as that one, I think it is good to have a little alone time, or at least time spent with only one or two other people, to think about things individually.” Greg connects “opportunities for us to get out of each other’s company” with the fact that “nobody ever got on my nerves.”

In his book, *Solitude: A Philosophical Encounter* (1994), Koch describes how encounter and solitude thread together tightly throughout our lives. These two states of being co-exist. For Koch, without coming a-part and retreating into what he calls the distance of solitude, we cannot come together genuinely with one-an-Other or go face-to-face with the Other.

We need this distance to feel the full extent of our caring for another, need to stand alone and behold the other from the distance of disengagement if they are to be to us all that they can be. (Koch, 1994, p. 151)

Leaving the dwelling place of community does not discredit that place. As Koch describes, we seek a place where we can dwell alone or with a smaller number of peers in order to reflect upon our dwelling-in-community. Traveling with one-an-Other, the students surround themselves with a sense of home and a feeling of comfort. They can share the experience of encounter. Yet, they also desire to step back and to experience the comfort of being with self.

At the same time, Koch suggests the retreat to solitude might involve a stepping back to experience the discomfort of being with self-alone. After examining Greek mythology, he writes, “Only in isolation can guilt, remorse, and redemption run their full course” (p. 8). Is it possible that in wandering-out into South African townships and schools that guilt swells up within us? Does the Other of social justice drive us to retreat from one-an-Other and to reflect upon our potential complicity in the development of third world places? Can standing alone or standing with our closest of peers help us to find redemption?

Retreat toward “authority”. I must also ask, Can standing alone help us to find our own voice? Can it lead us toward an increased sense of responsibility, and thus, an improved ability to respond to the Other? When Greg describes an evening out with his peers in Durban, he does not speak about a retreat from the community. Instead, he describes an escape from one member of that community. On that evening, a retreat from the teacher occurs. Thus, as the teacher, I must ask, Does standing a-part from me provide the students with some-thing?

Describing the night in Durban, Greg writes, “It was nice to make our own decisions about where to go and what to do during the free time.” Without an

adult presence, they find their own authority. When discussing youth tourism, Schonhammer (1992) describes how adults limit independent mobility. His exploration of youth travel speaks to Greg's description of that night in Durban. Escape "leaves behind all forms of adult control" and allows for "independent mobility beyond the boundary of known familiar places and social situations" (p. 20).

Thus, for Greg and Jessie, going "beyond the boundary" and gaining one's own authority represents an important "border crossing." Yet, as the adult responsible for their well-being, I recognize a trade-off. Their "unusual freedom is a loss of physical and social security" (Schonhammer, 1992, p. 20). While they wander-out into South Africa, I stand back and let them go. At these times, I feel the most vulnerable. Am I irresponsible in letting them wander-out? Would I be able to respond if challenged on this surrendering of my own authority?

In opening up the idea of authority, Palmer (1998) speaks to the reason why I turn away and allow my students to step "beyond the boundary:"

The clue is in the word itself, which has 'author' at its core. Authority is granted to people who are perceived as 'authoring' their own words, their own actions, their own lives, rather than playing a scripted role at great remove from their own hearts. (p. 33)

When Greg and Jessie retreat from their teacher, they express a desire to "author" their own journey. They retreat toward their own "authority," and thus, toward their own "authorship." For me, the instrument with which they author their wandering-out is responsibility. As Jessie writes, "You trusted us and gave us a lot of freedom." The trust came from believing in their ability-to-respond, and thus, their ability to be responsible.

Retreat toward anonymity. In retreating from their teacher and from the pedagogical, built community, Greg and Jessie also flee from the advertised and alienated presence with which they walk often in South Africa. Our journey called for public appearances, school visits, presentations and introductions. As described earlier in this chapter, at times, these “spotlighted” events left Greg and Jessie feeling uneasy. Thus, one night in Cape Town, after “slipping away” from the hotel with an-Other student, Greg describes his experience as “cool” because the people “didn’t pay so much mind to us there as they did most other places.” Returning to this thought, Greg reflects, “This was a rare feeling, since we were always in a group of 10 American kids.”

Thus, for Greg, he seeks being one with the crowd. On several occasions, he and Jessie identify being American, being students, being tourists and being white as characteristics that draw attention to the group. They sit in “brushed off” chairs at center stage. At times, in response, they seek hiding places. They hope to “fade” into anonymity. About the night out in Cape Town, Greg writes, “That was one of the activities that I felt most closely approximated what one would do while ‘living’ in Cape Town.” As compared to his daytime role as the advertised and alienated Other, on that night, he tries to act the part of the local inhabitant. He tries to belong.

Exile. In discussing retreat from the group, I have focused on voluntary withdrawal toward solitude, authority or anonymity. Yet, on one occasion, Jessie and Greg faced “forced removal” from the group. Near the end of the journey, outside of Durban, we stayed with Indian families. During these home-stays, Greg

and Jessie faced “exile” from our traveling, pedagogical community. Jessie describes the anticipation associated with her “exile.” She claims:

The home stay was also different from the rest of the trip because we were on our own. We didn’t have the security of the group and had to fend for ourselves for those two days. At this point, it seems so trivial but at the time I remember being nervous and slightly dreading separating from the group. I remember when we first got to the school where we met the students who we were to stay with. One of the girls read off the pairs and my name didn’t get called and I immediately thought that I had been forgotten.

Jessie speaks to a loss of security, a nervousness and a fear of being forgotten. While she describes her fear of being forgotten in the assignment of host families, could she be alluding to an-Other fear – a fear of going home with the Other? While describing her being-forgotten, is it possible that she is afraid of being forgotten there in South Africa? Could the group leave her behind? Could we lose her or could she lose some piece of herself when confronted by the Other’s face?

Prior to journeying to South Africa with Jessie and Greg, I remember sitting in a parking lot in a town north of Hamburg, Germany. I watched over forty students, one-by-one, leave the bus in which we had been traveling for almost two weeks. The students slid into the back seats of cars and were driven away. Into “exile,” I had ordered them. As they passed me at the front of the bus, I recall seeing genuine fear in some students’ eyes. Especially for some of the Jewish students, they had spoken with me about their fears of going home alone with German families.

O’Donohue (1999) writes, “When a stranger approaches, we usually exercise caution and keep him or her at a distance. This is the fascination of

encounter” (p. 48). What is it like when the stranger approaches and takes us home? How do we react at the “forced removal” from our dwelling-place? Unable to maintain a cautious distance, what happens to the encounter? Without the option to turn away, where do we look?

When arriving at his home-stay, Greg describes feeling “a mixture of emotions.” He writes, “Nobody except Priven (his student host) seemed too excited to have me staying there.” Feeling an uncertainty about his welcome, Greg shares Jessie’s discomfort with “exile.” Forced to go home with the Other and to go face-to-face with the Other, Greg and Jessie toss back and forth feelings of fear and excitement.

Levinas (1961/1969) suggests from where these uneasy feelings might come:

This event is the relation with the Other who welcomes me in the Home... But in order that I be able to free myself from the very possession that the welcome of the Home establishes, in order that I be able to see things in themselves, that is, represent them to myself, refuse both enjoyment and possession, I must know how ‘to give’ what I possess... But for this I must encounter the indiscreet face of the Other that calls me into question. (p. 171)

Are we uncomfortable going home with the Other because of how the experience might transform us? In going face-to-face with the Other, do we fear hearing her ethical call? After all, I might not feel at-home with the idea of knowing “how ‘to give’ what I possess.” Behind the Indian Other, do I fear seeing the Other of social justice?

Heidegger (1927/1996) writes, “Anxiousness is a fundamental mode of being-in-the-world” (p. 176). It represents our everydayness. Yet, as we enter the

Other's home, we might not feel an anxiety about the Other, but about ourselves. Is it possible that in these encounters with the Other, on their home-ground, that we suspect that we will lose a firm footing on our own home-ground? In going face-to-face inside of the Other's home, do we risk stepping beyond the fear and anxiety of everydayness? In the Other's home, might we find ourselves captured by the 'Angst,' or the uncanny feeling of not being-at-home, about which Heidegger writes?

Later in this study, I return to the home-stay experience. Inside of the Other's home, I believe more remains hidden and should be revealed. Yet, at this point, I do not wish to stray too far from the dwelling community. With that in mind, I discuss one final element of the community-place in which we dwell. For with both voluntary retreat and forced exile, a return to the community takes place.

Return to dwelling. The return to the group provides the place where we can debrief and describe our individual experiences. In this place, with our co-travelers, we can bring back and make shared the activities conducted alone or in subgroups. In *Toward Curriculum For Being: Voices Of Educators* (1991), Berman explains the power of this return to the group when she writes, "Through community all have a chance to share what has been explored in solitude" (p. 150). During the home-stay, Jessie speaks to the desire to participate in such a "sharing" with her American peers. She writes, "I definitely wanted to see them again and know what they had been up to..."

At the same time, Greg attests to a risk associated with the return to the group. In the middle of the home-stay weekend, all of the Indian students and American students came together as one large group in order to spend the day together. Greg reflects on what happened:

I remember, though, that at several points, when the whole group was together, there was some segregation. At the lunch tables, or at the beach, or walking around the Zulu village, there developed some clumps of people, either of us or them. I remember thinking this was kind of lame, and we should have been interacting more with our guests, so I tried to speak to more other people.

Back close to our dwelling-place, Greg describes how we return to our side of the border. Self-segregation takes hold and we impose a-part-ness upon ourselves.

Back near the comfort of our dwelling-place, we do not require the South African government to separate us. We divide ourselves.

Considering my own normative stance, I am quick to agree with Greg that the division between our group and the Indian students was “lame.” Yet, at the same time, I must place the experience in context. Over a two-week period, for twenty-four hours a day, the group journeyed together. With one-an-Other, they discovered South Africa. Meanwhile, they spent one night with their Indian hosts. Thus, returning to the dwelling-place, their self-segregation might speak simply to the strength of their community and have little to do with their relationship with their Indian hosts.

Wandering-out. The strength of the pedagogical community in which Jessie, Greg and I traveled cannot be understated. As I have mentioned previously in this section, dwelling with one-an-Other allowed us to bring a sense of home and its comforts with us. Dwelling provided us with a place where we felt

welcome and we felt care for one-an-Other. As we wandered-out into the Other's places, this community provided a sense of security. Yet, while dwelling together represents an essential structure of the encounter-place, it must take a back seat to our wandering-out. After all, the wandering-out into South Africa provides the mold in which this entire experience takes shape.

In studying Australia's Aborigines, Jackson (1995) asserts that the West has a bias toward dwelling-places and against wandering. Writing about the white person's view of the Aboriginal experience of the "walkabout," Jackson claims, "'Walkabout' is invariably described as a wholly irrational or instinctual urge that seizes every Aboriginal from time to time" (p. 85). Jackson argues that Westerners feel secure with walls, houses and limited horizons. Jackson draws his readers' attention to the fact that our discomfort with the notion of wandering finds expression in common phrases that we use to dismiss arguments with which we do not agree. For example, we use expressions such as "does not come to the point" and "wanders off the subject" (Jackson, 1995, p. 87). Examining the word's basic etymology reinforces the bias. To wander means to "move aimlessly about" or to "deviate without purpose" (Onions, 1966, p. 991).

As I turn to an opening exploration of the places of wandering, I keep this bias in mind. Yet, as I expressed in chapter one of this study, I hold a tremendous pedagogical faith in the possibilities that come from a wandering-out into the world where I stand at my students' sides. In making the world my classroom and being-in-the-world with my students, I find a position from where I can teach.

Thus, I step beyond the bias against wandering. In going farther down the etymological path of the word, “wander,” O’Donohue (1999) helps to expose its pedagogical value:

The word “wander” derives originally from the verb “to wind” and is associated with the German word “wandeln,” to change. The wanderer does not find change a threat. Change is an invitation to new possibility. The wanderer is as free as the wind and will get into corners of experience that will escape the settled, fixed person. (p. 46)

Seeking to “get into the corners of experience” and accepting the “invitation to new possibility,” we wander-out into South Africa. Leaving our “settled, fixed” classroom behind, we open ourselves to change. Yet, unlike O’Donohue’s assertion, I believe we can feel threatened by our wandering. After all, despite being voluntary, we are displaced into the unknown of South Africa and the third world.

Wandering-out as displacement. Displacement takes two forms. First, forced and involuntary displacement occurs. With the removal and relocation policies of the apartheid government, we find an example. With bulldozers and dogs, the South African police destroyed communities and forced the black population to move to Other areas. Forced displacement represents a human injustice that haunts the closets of many nations (including America). On the Other hand, voluntary displacement occurs whenever we decide to take a trip. These displacements can be sought-after and anticipated with great excitement. Yet, both types of displacement share one quality. Although to very different degrees, they unsettle our sense of place. Sitting in an open land rover on the South African veld and watching zebra graze can “unsettle” our sense of

landscape and terrain because it looks unfamiliar. Yet, when I suggest that displacement unsettles our sense of place, I mean our home-place - the place from where we begin our wandering-out.

In examining the Aborigines, in particular the Warlpiri, Jackson (1995) explains the effect of being displaced by a journey:

Warlpiri say that no journey brings you back to exactly the same place from which you set out. By this they mean that the place stays the same, but you will have returned to it from a different direction, accompanied by different people, having undergone experiences that may have changed you. (p. 126)

In describing a homecoming, Casey (1993) makes the same claim:

(T)he journey that has intervened between my leaving home in the first place and the present moment of return has led me to other experiences in other places, thereby tempting me to regard a given place, and most notably a home-place, as quite different from what I first took it to be... It is as if I had to leave my home to become acquainted with a more capacious world, which in turn allows me to grasp more of the home to which I return... I now know my home in light of the larger place-world through which I have traveled. (p. 294)

Thus, as we travel through the larger place-world of South Africa, our sense of home undergoes a metamorphosis. As we visit townships at dusk and schools at dawn, we encounter the Other of the people. From behind them, the Other of social justice peeks out. How could we possibly displace ourselves among the shacks and the mountains and come-home as the same persons who left? As Lingis (1994) claims, "To see the other is to see her place as a place I could occupy" (p. 127). Seeing that alternative home-place, who could stand unmoved? Knowing that her life could be my life, how do I remain unchanged?

As I discussed in chapter one, in the section entitled, "Risking Homelessness," Heidegger (1927/1996) advises us to accept an "uncanny feeling"

of “not being at home” (p. 177). Levinas (1961/1969) tells us to stand up and leave “the being at home with oneself where everything is given” (p. 76). In wandering-out into the Other’s world, we follow their direction *away* from our settled homes.

Wandering-out: Up-close and from a-far.

It is one thing to go to the Third World and see poverty. But in South Africa you see, first and foremost, luxurious First World living. There is no trace of poverty in the malls and cafés of Pretoria. The beautiful purple jacarandas and the huge palm trees lining the streets convey a sense of comfort and security. Yet down the road an amazingly short distance, there is poverty that rivals any in the Third World. (Carter, 2002, p. 15)

When Greg first arrives in South Africa, on the road from the airport to Cape Town, he notices the proximity of First and Third World about which Carter writes. Greg recalls, “The most memorable moment from the first day was seeing the informal settlements on the sides of the road, just hundreds of yards from the wealthy townhouses.” Jessie describes the same scene:

I remember the ride from the airport passed by at least one shantytown. This stands out in my mind because it was my first image of South Africa and my first look at real poverty... There were densely packed makeshift shacks no bigger than a small room and low to the ground. They were colorful but dirty and made of mismatched pieces of corrugated metal and other scraps.

From inside a van, moving along at fifty miles per hour on a well-maintained highway, Jessie and Greg frame these descriptions of their first glances at South Africa’s informal settlements. With rolled-up windows and the radio playing, we watch shacks “fly by.” Occasionally, we spot a person walking through the littered space between the highway and the settlement. We can turn our heads easily and see the wealth on the Other hillside. Voyeuristically, we

consume the images of poverty along the roadside. We can see the Other, but they have no time to catch sight of us.

Wandering-out and keeping a distance, we position ourselves away from the Other. In these distant places, we gain a critical perspective. We see the horizon. Seated safely inside the van, we observe the Other. Staring out of the window, we find ourselves in a comfortable place where we can reflect. Without any pressure, we can turn away at will in order to make meaning of what we have seen. We can question the inequity, the inhumanity and the injustice. Turning to one-an-Other, on the spot, we can question what we see.

Of course, we can also turn away in order to think about some-thing entirely different than what we have seen. With some ease, we can dismiss the Other. We can drown out our thoughts with music. After all, from a distance, when it comes to catching the Other's eye or seeing their distinct features, we stand little chance. The Other remains face-less. Possibly, from this place, we find it easier to objectify the Other. From inside the van, looking out, the exotic masks fit nicely. As I have mentioned before in this study, I remember well my own zoo-like treatment of the Brazilian Other as I shot photographs from the safety of a car's back seat.

From a-far, we can also stare and we can shake our heads. We can swallow deeply. Our faces can acknowledge a horrible smell. From a-far, we can do these things without feeling self-conscious about being caught. Away from the Other, inside the van or from the hotel balcony, we can feel an absent-presence and/or a captured-presence. A distant image can startle and shock us. Yet, from a

distance, we are far less likely to feel advertised or alienated. No spotlights shine this far and the Other has a difficult time seeing into the van.

A few days ago, I had a common experience with those people who live in metropolitan areas. Stopped at a red light, I looked up and I saw him coming. My hands stopped their tapping on the steering wheel. Falling back to my standard “trick” of appearing preoccupied, I started to adjust the radio. Out of the corner of my eye, I could see that he was staying on course and approaching my window. His sign announced that he required spare change in order to buy food. This man’s perseverance was about to violate the distance that my car usually provides between myself and the Other. I wanted to avoid eye contact because I was not going to give him any money. If we caught one-an-Other’s eye, then he might mistake that brief connection as an offer. I did not want to mislead him. I also feared that my shame and guilt might wash red over my face.

Similarly, in Brazil, at traffic lights, I remember children running up to the car in order to sell candies. Their little arms would dart through the windows. They did not ask if you wanted to buy. They pleaded. My gazing at them from a far fell a-part as we came together. Heidegger (1927/1996) describes how a coming-near can provoke fear:

Something may be harmful in the highest degree and may even be constantly coming nearer but if it is still far off it remains veiled in its fearsome nature. As something approaching in nearness, however, what is harmful is threatening, it can get us, and yet perhaps not. In approaching, this ‘it can and yet in the end may not’ gets worse. It is fearsome, we say. (p. 132)

If we accept Heidegger’s description, then it is no wonder that Jessie and Greg feel discomfort when they wander-out and up-close in South African places.

In South Africa, they get out of the van and the Other comes near to them. Up-close, they fear what the Other might see. Will the Other notice that they swallow deeply? Can the Other sense their uncertainty about cultural norms? In entering those informal settlements where white and middle class people do not go, we encounter the Other. In these places, we feel the most advertised and alienated. In these places, our search for exoticism leads us to open the stereotyped baggage that we carry.

Greg and Jessie remember well our wandering-out into Langa township. In this place, where white people rarely go, we spend a Saturday morning up-close with schoolchildren. Jessie recalls, “The atmosphere was very casual, we hung out, took a lot of pictures together, listened to the group play jazz and sing their national anthem.” Later, in the afternoon, we attend a *braai* in the township. Jessie writes, “We moved from the school to the Braii. This was a lot of fun, it was just like a barbeque should be – informal, friendly.”

Yet, in this place, Jessie and Greg also feel the discomfort of their advertised and alienated presence. Jessie writes, “Someone pointed out that they had given the best, most expensive meat to us.” Greg notes, “That afternoon, when we had the braii, I felt a bit uncomfortable for the first time on the trip. At the braii, we were all served first.”

Similarly, the visit to Cowan High School in a township outside of Port Elizabeth leaves them feeling conflicted. Despite having students “brush off a chair” for him, Greg remembers, “This visit was cool, though, and I spoke with the kids a bit... I definitely feel that I interacted more directly with them than I

had with the other children we had met.” Still, Jessie notes, “I felt like a guest of honor for which I was grateful and a little guilty to receive such treatment. Like in Langa, we got a lot of attention...”

Questioned about feeling discomfort, Jessie summarizes well the dilemma of being in up-close places as compared to distant places.

These were the times when we interacted with real people. Again, being torn between observing, examining vs. just hanging out, trying to get to know individuals on a more personal, intimate level.

For Jessie, wandering-out into South Africa and staying at a distance lends itself to observation and examination. Coming up-close, we can “hang-out” and develop personal and intimate connections. Yet, wandering-out and up-close can also place you at the center of attention. The Other comes near and you might fear what the encounter brings. At times feeling tired of being at the center of attention and “fearing” what the Other believes about the “ugly Americans,” Greg declares, “I felt like I wanted to play the role of observer.” Yet, if Greg’s desire is to dispel the “ugly American” myth (at least as it applies to him), then why would he seek distance? Without up-close encounter with the Other, how could he - or anyone - show the Other that some Americans are not loud and arrogant?

Wandering-out: Up-close in the out-of-doors. Facing the Other and feeling an advertised and alienated presence leaves Greg and Jessie wanting an escape from these up-close places of face-to-face encounter with the primary Other of the people. On the days when we encounter the Other of nature, they find a different type of experience. Lingis (1994) reminds us of the importance of nature’s place:

We go to places not only for the discourse that circulates there – the scientific community assembled there or the writers’ colony – but for the sun, for the wide-open skies, for the tropical monsoons or for the dry sparkling air, for the desert or for the ocean. (p. 118)

In South Africa, Jessie and Greg go up-close with the Other of the out-of-doors. From Table Mountain to the Cape of Good Hope, from camping in Nature’s Valley to going on safari in the Eastern Cape, they feel captured by the beauty of these places. On top of Table Mountain, Jessie remembers, “I was completely blown away by the view... I enjoyed being outdoors, the weather was beautiful and I liked being able to wander on our own and explore.” At Cape Point and the Cape of Good Hope, Jessie describes, “The scenery was so dramatic and beautiful and it was amazing to know that we were standing at the tip of an enormous continent, at the edge of the world, where two oceans meet.” Greg describes these places as “great opportunities to let the air and scenery soak in.”

While the Other of nature impresses us with its beauty, it also slows us down and provides us a place where we can relax. In these out-of-doors places, we can wander up-close with the Other of nature. Unlike the Other of the people, the Other of nature calms us. Under her sun, we do not feel spotlighted. As Greg describes, in these places, we can take a somewhat passive role and “let the air and scenery soak in.” For Jessie, we can “wander” and “explore.” While camping along the Garden Route, Greg writes, “We all went back to the campsite, we made a fire and hung out for a while, which was also fun. It was relaxed, and I think we all enjoyed that.” The out-of-doors allows us to “hang out.” In these places, we “soak it all in.”

Thus, the Other of nature represents an encounter that attends to our uneasiness. Leaving the discomfort of the Other of the people and the Other of social justice behind, we hike, camp and “breathe in” the out-of-doors. Being up-close with the Other of nature, we feel consoled.

Yet, there exists no apartheid to separate the Other of township poverty and the Other of nature. In South Africa, they co-exist and intermingle. Just as first world and third world collide, the informal settlements live with the blue skies and the rolling hills of Africa. The Other of the people and the Other of social justice cannot be neatly removed from the broad presence of nature’s Otherness. No where are these strange neighbors more apparent than along the Garden Route. While riding by train, Jessie writes, “I thought it was ironic that the Garden Route was famous for its beautiful scenery and tourists who rode the train probably didn’t expect to see dilapidated shacks as part of the landscape.”

Similarly, when Greg describes our visit at Cowan High School, a rather poor township school, he describes a scene that I, too, remember well. During our visit, we made a presentation to the school. Gathered at an assembly out in the front parking lot, I recall looking up at the sun and the blue sky. The South African flag danced in the wind above our heads. A breeze sliced through the yard. As Greg recalls, “The sun, sea air, and flag made it a memorable occasion.” Into that township school, the Other of nature crept in and made its presence felt.

Thus, while Jessie and Greg wander-out to the out-of-doors in order to escape the “nearness” of the Other of the people, absolute escape does not exist. From the top of Table Mountain, you see Robben Island, the symbolic prison of

apartheid. Driving back from Cape Point, you cannot avoid the poverty that straddles the roadside. Wandering-out to be up-close with out-of-door places does not shelter us from the Other of the people.

Similarly, wandering-out into nature's presence and sensing the nearness of her mystery can generate as much fear as can the approach of any-Other. Especially for those who live in suburban and urban places, nature's approach can create a sense of "it can get us, and yet perhaps not." Casey (1993) warns us of nature's ability to surprise and "expose" us:

The always lurking possibility of being undone at some unpredictable moment – of being disarrayed in the surrounding array – distinguishes wild from domestic places. This is why we feel so "exposed" in wilderness, always at risk there to some degree. (p. 224)

When Casey describes nature's ability to "expose" us, I think of Greg and Jessie's descriptions of an advertised presence. It seems the Other of nature does hold the power to spotlight us. In her company, we can feel fearful and self-conscious. Later in this study, I re-turn to nature's ability to "expose" us.

Wandering-out: Going off the map and leaving the itinerary behind.

Whether in the places of the people, the out-of-doors or their merged frontiers, I have been describing our wandering-out into planned places. We can find these places on our map. We list them on our itinerary. Yet, as Casey (1993) notes, "(J)ourneys can be mapped... But the exact trajectories, even the precise destinations, are not always known; nor need they be" (p. 306).

During our journey in South Africa, at times, we wander-off the map and leave the itinerary behind. On occasion, places and events capture us and we allow ourselves to linger there. For Greg and Jessie, when the group leaves the

itinerary behind and lives in the moment, they seem to feel quite captured by the experience. For example, after spending the day in Langa township, we find ourselves running late. Yet, on the way to the van, Jessie describes how an event captures (literally and figuratively) us:

I remember as we were walking back to the van to leave, the sun was beginning to set and as we approached the van, a bus pulled up and out poured a local rugby or maybe soccer team. Who knows what they thought of us, we obviously didn't belong there. But they immediately broke into some sort of victory song and completely surrounded us. With the light the way that it was and the loud, passionately sung song, and the strangeness of the encounter, the whole thing took me quite by surprise and was completely surreal.

To be willing to leave the itinerary and linger in the moment means to welcome the accidental. Feeling captured, we open ourselves to hearing and to feeling the Other. With the Other of nature bringing down its sun and the township team sharing its celebration, we watch their shadowy silhouettes dance around us. We do not turn away.

On occasion, we also throw the map aside and wander-off to a destination planned only at the last minute. Greg describes a de-tour into one of these unscripted places. He writes:

I remember the visit being thrown together at the last minute. It was certainly not on the itinerary... it was an evening visit, which was a bit unnerving, because a township at night is probably a dangerous place for white people.

For Greg, the unplanned night visit to a grandmother's home in an informal settlement leaves him feeling a captured-presence. Previously in this chapter, in the section entitled, "Captured-presence," I share Greg's description of this night. He left this unplanned destination feeling "privileged" for having heard

one of the most “authentic and powerful” first hand accounts of some-one’s life. On this night, adjusting the itinerary and wandering-off of the map creates the “pedagogical conditions in which students become border crossers in order to understand otherness in its own terms” (Giroux, 1992, p. 28).

At the same time, in looking back on this unmapped location, Greg remarks, “I just really wish we had recorded it or something, because there was so much more said than I actually remember, and it is frustrating to think that all that has been forgotten.” Greg’s sense of loss from not having tape recorded the conversation speaks to an uncertainty about ever being able to find our way back to this “place.” Existing off the map and off the itinerary, this place offers a challenge for those who wish to return. It will not be easy to relocate or to replicate.

Yet, is it possible that not having any pictures or recordings enhances the power of the encounter? Does our inability to find our way back to this unmapped place make it unique? After all, because it is not on the map, the experience casts us far away from our everyday routines and patterns. Greg fears losing his memories of this night. Instead, they stand out as some of his most lived memories. While certain details might fade, the night visit has touched him. By wandering-off the map and into Mrs. Majola’s home, he has seen the Other’s face. In his mind, the lines and wrinkles on that face might fade. Yet, the face’s ability to make him reconsider his own home-place and his place in the world will stay with him for a long time.

Chapter one begins with a retelling of that night in Mrs. Majola's kitchen. Leaving the map and the itinerary behind, on that night, we wander into that settlement. As chapter two comes to a close, Greg's words leave us wondering about the impact of this experience. Do we forget or do we stand transformed? Does our wandering-out on that night have the power to re-place our sense of home with a feeling of home-less-ness?

Throughout this section, I have followed Jessie and Greg's stories toward the Other's face. They have helped to reveal some of the taken-for-granted in our encounter with South African Otherness. They have led me toward a naming of some of the experience's structures. Their words have allowed me to begin to map a path toward the Other. Most importantly, they have reinforced in me the belief that student voices should be heard. When we do listen, these voices guide us honestly into the real, lived experiences and worldviews of young people.

With Map In Hand

With map in hand, I eagerly anticipate the journey down the path toward the Other. Greg and Jessie have pointed the way. Soon, in chapter four, the group of students with whom I most recently traveled to South Africa join me in order to guide me through the upcoming twists and turns. As van Manen (1990) suggests, their voices offer "a conversational partnership that reveals the limits and possibilities of one's own interpretive achievements" (p. 76). Where Greg and Jessie leave off, these students take over and lead me down the path toward a deeper sense of the phenomenon's meaning.

Before turning to their guidance, I de-tour. In chapter three, along the path toward the Other, I take time to stop and to linger. I turn to the phenomenological, hermeneutic and philosophical wood through which the path runs. In doing so, I address the reasons for the selection of hermeneutic phenomenology as my approach to exploring the encounter experience with the South African Other. Similarly, I describe the relevance of the particular philosophical stances taken. Finally, before re-turning to the path, I explain the methodology that I use to “hear” and to make meaning of my students’ voices.

CHAPTER THREE:

PHENOMENOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL ENCOUNTERS

Unaccustomed to direct experience, we can come to fear it. We don't want to read a book or see a museum show until we've read the reviews so that we know what to think. We lose the confidence to perceive for ourselves. (Crichton, 1988, p. 350)

As its mission, phenomenology seeks to challenge the fear of direct experience and to develop the confidence among us to perceive for ourselves. Just as my students and I leave our classroom behind and wander-out into South Africa, phenomenology transports people out into the lived world of human experiences. Coming-together with hermeneutics, phenomenology explores those direct, lived experiences in order to make meaning. Where Others might pass by and quickly notice a calm, still pond, phenomenology pauses to detect the slight ripple that reveals some-thing beneath the surface. In the process, phenomenology “offers us the possibility of plausible insights that bring us in more direct contact with the world” (van Manen, 1990, p. 9).

In this chapter, I attend to the ways in which hermeneutic phenomenology offers “plausible insights” that uncover my students' direct encounter with the world's Others. I also bring-together the philosophic voices that ground this study. In particular, I build a bridge between the ideas of Heidegger and Levinas. Finally, I reveal the specific research paths that I follow in order to capture my students' voices and to make meaning of their South African experience.

Shared Intentions: Hermeneutic Phenomenology And Encountering The South African Other

Hermeneutic phenomenology and my decision to take students to South Africa pursue a common destination where more direct contact with the world occurs. As such, both seek to make meaning in life by encountering the Other, by wrapping themselves in pedagogical concern and by helping people to come to grips critically and ethically with the world. Both the methodology and the “subject to be studied” walk a similar path. Aware of these shared intentions and shared direction, is it any wonder that I turn to hermeneutic phenomenology as the methodological guide for exploring my students’ experience of encounter with the multiple faces of the South Africa Other?

In The World, Encountering The Other And Keeping Pedagogy In Mind

For Heidegger (1927/1996), being-in-the-world represents the fundamental constitution of *da-sein* (being). Hermeneutic phenomenology attends to this way of being and to this unbreakable bond with the lived world. As van Manen (1990) directs us, “In doing research we question the world’s very secrets and intimacies which are constitutive of the world, and which bring the world into being for us and in us” (p. 5). As I explore the lived experience of my students’ wandering-out into the world and “being-let-in-on” some of its secrets and intimacies, hermeneutic phenomenology represents an ideal traveling companion. Even in the etymology of the word, hermeneutics takes us to the Greek god, Hermes, who derives his fame as the god of interpretation and as the god of travel.

As some-one who has found a teaching position out in the world, whether in Other countries or in the Other of the out-of-doors, I find reason to draw upon a methodology that insists that we ground ourselves out in the world. Van Manen (1990) writes, “All phenomenological human science research efforts are really explorations into the structure of the human lifeworld, the lived world as experienced in everyday situations and relations” (p. 101). Avoiding theoretically constructed places, I seek to explore and make meaning of experiences in the real, human world. Just as the journey to South Africa intends to reveal, phenomenology “teaches that I am unavoidably and intimately involved in the joint making and daily sustenance of the world” (Aho, 1998, p. 9).

At the same time, Otherness offers an additional reason for why I select hermeneutic phenomenology as my methodological guide. Beyond being grounded out in the lived world, my students’ experience leads us to an encounter with the Other. Similarly, as a methodology, hermeneutic phenomenology relies upon encounter with the Other. As a research methodology, it asks that people engage in deep conversations. In describing our hermeneutic ability to step beyond pre-judgments, whether in conversation with written or human text, Gadamer (1960/1989) emphasizes the place of the Other in research:

That is why a hermeneutically trained consciousness must be, from the start, sensitive to the text’s alterity... so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one’s own fore-meanings. (p. 269)

For understanding, the Other must be seen and heard. Gadamer specifies that when some-one or some-thing addresses us, then we realize “the first condition of hermeneutics” (p. 299). Following the address, “we must place

ourselves in the other situation in order to understand it” (Gadamer, 1960/1989, p. 303). Hermeneutic understanding and meaning-making come from a recognition of, and a taking-the-place of, the Other.

My decision to journey to South Africa evolves from a similar desire to help my students to recognize the Other. Thus, I bring-together a methodology that entertains the same means and ends as the experience that it explores. While Heidegger identifies “being-in-the-world” as the fundamental constitution of our being, he notes specifically that “Da-sein in itself is essentially being-with” (1927/1996, p. 113). Thus, being-with-Others represents our way of being in the world.

Joining with, and moving beyond, Heidegger’s emphasis on being-with, Levinas places the phenomenological project face-to-face with Otherness. Levinas’ phenomenology of Otherness provides the philosophical center around which this study revolves. His work provides a key to the door behind which my students’ encounter experience stands. Thus, phenomenology’s “history” with Otherness provides a strong rationale for why I turn to this methodology.

Similarly, phenomenology’s longstanding relationship with pedagogy provides an-Other reason for my turning to this methodology. In chapter one, I address my-self as teacher. As a researcher, I prefer to remain tied to my teaching-self. Thus, as a teacher-researcher, hermeneutic phenomenology serves me well in exploring my students’ journey. At the same time, it allows me to speak in a pedagogic voice and to recognize my own role as the teacher-companion who lives the journey with my students. As Hultgren (1995) suggests, while this study

focuses on my students' experience, phenomenology also allows me to bring my own "teaching out of hiding" (p. 386).

Thus, as a teacher first, pedagogical care and concern demand a place in my research. In exploring my students' encounter with the Other in South Africa, I insist that I adopt a pedagogic stance. Other-wise, as a teacher, what value exists in my examination of their experience? In looking for the ripples in the water and trying to make meaning of those "surface disturbances," I hope to develop a better understanding of how I can stand side-by-side and face-to-face with students.

Therefore, the methodology of hermeneutic phenomenology and the "subject to be studied" fit well together. With similar intentions, out in the lived world, keeping in mind their pedagogical nature, the "subject" encounters the methodological Other. Yet, some-thing about their reason for coming-together remains unsaid. As a social justice educator, hermeneutic phenomenology represents a key to unlocking my students' experience because of its sometimes-overlooked ability to speak in a critical and an ethical voice.

Critical And Ethical Calls In The Phenomenological Wild

Just as phenomenology plants research and pedagogy out in the lived world, Paulo Freire roots teaching there. For Freire, education must stretch beyond a banking model in which teachers "deposit" knowledge into the minds of their students. Young people must be challenged to pose problems and to question established practices. In order to do so, they must be taken out into the real world where they can go face-to-face with its beauty and its ugliness.

Our being in the world is far more than just 'being.' It is a 'presence,' a 'presence' that is relational to the world and to others. A 'presence' that,

in recognizing another presence as ‘not I,’ recognizes its own self. A ‘presence’ that can reflect upon itself as presence, that can intervene, can transform, can speak of what it does, but that can also take stock of, compare, evaluate, give value to, decide, break with, and dream. It is in the area of decision, evaluation, freedom, breaking with, option, that the ethical necessity imposes itself. (Freire, 1998, p. 25-26)

For Freire, presence-in-the-world demands that we take an ethical stance.

Unlike Heidegger who leaves ethics as optional, Freire requires it. As a social justice teacher-researcher, I prefer to use a methodology that can place an ethical demand upon itself. Although often overlooked, phenomenology does stand in an ethical and critical place from where it demands praxis (van Manen, 1990).

No where is the ethical implaced into phenomenology more than in the work of Levinas. In his overview of the history of phenomenology, Moran (2000) writes, “Levinas’ contribution consists in orienting phenomenology towards ethics, specifically towards the appearance of the other in our subjective sphere” (p. 19). Agreeing with Freire, Levinas takes phenomenology out into the world where an ethical necessity exists. For Levinas, the face of the Other addresses us and we must respond. I follow that phenomenological road.

On that road, I encounter a number of travelers who emphasize phenomenology’s critical stance. With clear references to the Marxist concept of “alienation,” Aho (1998) claims, “Phenomenology also insists that the natural attitude is a false, ‘alienated,’ way of being in the world” (p. 6). Hultgren and Coomer (1989) explore the fusion of Gadamer’s hermeneutics and Habermas’ critical consciousness. Reflecting on the synthesis of his work with a liberation Marxist group in South America, Levinas (1998) writes, “I am very happy, very proud even, when I find reflections of my work in this group” (p. 119). With these

co-travelers, I feel comfortable thinking about phenomenology as a way of opening up an encounter with the Other of social justice.

Similarly, as a teacher-researcher, I require a methodology geared toward praxis. Phenomenology aims at such a target. As van Manen (1990) writes, “Whereas hermeneutic phenomenology has often been discussed as a ‘mere’ descriptive or interpretive methodology, it is also a critical philosophy of action” (p. 154). In describing this philosophy of action, van Manen sculpts a praxis-oriented model with which I am comfortable. In that model, I find the Other’s face. Recognizing our ability to construct a better future, Aho (1998) advises, “For if the world is shown to be our joint project, then it need not be as it appears” (p. 6). Yet, phenomenology’s praxis does not require a specific political stance, such as Marxism, and for that freedom, I am grateful.

And so to become more thoughtfully or attentively aware of aspects of human life which hitherto were merely glossed over or taken-for-granted will more likely bring us to the edge of speaking up, speaking out, or decisively acting in social situations that ask for such action. And while phenomenology as [a] form of inquiry does not prescribe any particular political agenda suited for the social historical circumstances of a particular group or social class, the thoughtfulness phenomenology sponsors is more likely to lead to an indignation, concern or commitment that, if appropriate, may prompt us to turn to such political agenda. (van Manen, 1990, p. 154)

Thus, hermeneutic phenomenology digs into the ordinary dirt in order to find the extraordinary rock. In discussing the taken-for-granted and in searching below the surface where we detect the ripples, phenomenology can reveal inequity, unfairness or even inhumanity. In doing so, it can uncover a thoughtfulness that serves to move people forward in pursuit of social justice.

Thus, as Langan (1984) describes, out of phenomenology, a course of action can arise:

Phenomenology, guided by the questions arising from praxis, in turn aids praxis by providing a method to discern and probe the structure of the most adequate context, within which the understanding of a strategy – a course of action – should arise. (p. 105)

Phenomenology as action-oriented research makes the union between this methodology and my students' encounter with the South African Other even more appropriate. Phenomenology grounds itself in the lived world. It wraps itself in pedagogical care. It goes out to encounter the Other in order to make meaning. It seeks an ethical and critical direction toward praxis. In doing so, hermeneutic phenomenology provides the ideal tool with which to "dig into" my students' experience of encounter.

As the digging takes place, I call upon many philosophical and literary voices to help "open up" the possibilities within the lived experience. Already heard loudly in the previous pages of this study, I consult two voices most often. As two of phenomenology's founding fathers, Levinas and Heidegger find special welcome within these pages. Drawing upon their tradition, this work builds upwards and outwards. Therefore, in this chapter, their ideas deserve some attention. At the same time, they merit additional discussion because Levinas stands out as such a harsh critic of Heidegger. Levinas placed ethics over being, and by doing so, he set himself a-part from Heidegger. Thus, finding their work brought-together in one phenomenological exploration might concern some people.

Yet, in the next section, bringing-together their ideas is exactly what I do. I seek to “de-distance” their two perspectives. After all, where does a better place exist to bring together the “opposing” ideas of two thinkers than in a study of encounter with the Other? In building a bridge, I reveal that some of their ideas stand quite close together. In their own work on Gadamer and Habermas, Hultgren and Coomer (1989) build a similar bridge in order to avoid the historical tendency “to polarize alternatives rather than find ways each can enhance the other in our concern for the human condition” (p. 302). In their conclusion, they describe their work’s intention – an intention that I now pursue with Levinas and Heidegger.

We have not resolved the debate about these two perspectives, nor was it our intention to think we might, since Gadamer and Habermas have not been able to accomplish that themselves! What we hope to have brought forward is the possibility of how their differences as well as similarities might contribute to our conversation as we continue to expand our horizons. (Hultgren & Coomer, 1989, p. 311)

De-Distancing Levinas and Heidegger: Bringing Their Language Together

In his introduction to Lingis’ 1969 English translation of Levinas’ *Totality And Infinity: An Essay On Exteriority*, John Wild describes the book as “one of the most basic attacks on the thought of Heidegger that has yet been formulated” (p. 20). As I read distinction after distinction drawn by Levinas between his thinking and that of Heidegger, Wild’s description seems to apply. With pick in hand and feet planted firmly upon Heidegger’s phenomenology, Levinas builds upward while assaulting the base upon which he stands. Levinas rejects Heidegger’s emphasis on solitude and the individual. He calls for communication

over silence and ethics over ontology. Rather than Heidegger's side-by-side stance, Levinas positions us face-to-face with the Other (1947/1987).

Levinas welcomes me into a comfortable and warm place. With a birch log burning in the open stove and the shadow of flames dancing on thick, wooden beams, stretched out on a couch, I "slip into" his text. *Totality and Infinity* deserves prime space on the shelf next to *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Just as Freire guides my teaching, Levinas' concept of the Other, the face-to-face engagement, and the subsequent ethical call speak to my position as teacher and my curricular focus on social justice. Like a firm hand wrapping itself around my arm, his philosophy supports my praxis. It leads me forward.

Yet, in thinking about my students' experience of encounter with the Other, I find myself setting Levinas down on the table, standing up from the couch, turning away from the fire and glancing toward the window. Initially, on the outside looking in, I see Heidegger. Apparently unwelcome, I try to ignore his ideas. After reading Levinas' criticism of his work, I cannot imagine making space for Heidegger. How could I bring together the ideas of these two men who apparently stand in opposition to one-an-Other? How could I invite Heidegger inside with the man who launched the "most basic attack" on his philosophy?

Yet, if Heidegger helps to reveal the experience of my students' encounter with the Other in South Africa, then how could I leave him on the outside? Am I not obligated to make some room for him? Despite the well-published and explored divide between these two men's ideas, why not construct a bridge? Why

not ignore the “taken-for-granted,” initial assumption that these two thinkers stand in opposition to one-an-Other and open the closed door?

In *Tomorrow Is Another Country* (1995), an account of the secret meetings and negotiations behind the final days of South African apartheid, Allister Sparks begins by describing the bringing-together of two men who stood in opposite camps. He tells the story of how Sidney Frankel, a stockbroker, invites Cyril Ramaphosa, the black secretary general of the African National Congress, and Roelf Meyer, South Africa’s white Deputy Minister of Constitutional Development, to join him for a fishing weekend in the country. In his invitations, he neglects to tell each man that the Other is attending. Upon their arrival, the two men and their families encounter one-an-Other. Despite their initial misgivings, “trapped” in the countryside, their eyes meet, their hands clasp and they begin to see one-an-Other. As Sparks tells the tale, ten months later, these two men sit across from one-an-Other as the key negotiators in the transfer of power from the Nationalist Party to the African National Congress. Frankel built the bridge. He ignored the “taken-for-granted” and he opened the door.

In the same spirit as Frankel’s fishing expedition, I cast out my line to bring-together the language and the ideas of Levinas and Heidegger. Without making an artificial mask to hide legitimate differences, I expose the ideas of Heidegger and Levinas that complement one-an-Other. I allow the language of these two men to run together. By doing so, I hope to speak to my students’ South African experience in a more illuminating way. In Heidegger’s own terms, I “de-distance” Heidegger and Levinas. I build a bridge.

The Historical Stage

Levinas describes the stage upon which most of our history has been played out as cloaked in a condition known as totality. In totality, we follow our egos and largely see the Other either as a mirror reflection of ourselves or as an object to manipulate. From these two self-centered positions, we construct a history in which we launch war, colonize distant cultures and dominate those with less power. We enjoy and feel justified in our “standing over” the Other. In this historical common-place of encounter, the Other is either an extension of the self which can be substituted easily or a thing to be moved and replaced. Levinas (1961/1969) describes, “The substitution of men for one another, the primal disrespect, makes possible exploitation itself” (p. 298).

For Levinas, we have acted out most of our history upon this stage. We do not see the Other as a genuine stranger with gifts to offer. Yet, while Levinas mourns for our inability to look into the Other’s face, he also recognizes this condition as a necessary prerequisite for eventually engaging the Other. He writes, “Only beings capable of war can rise to peace” (1961/1969, p. 222).

Taking the first steps out onto the bridge, I turn toward Heidegger’s own description of the stage upon which most of our history plays out. His set design looks surprisingly similar to the one put forward by Levinas. In *Being and Time* (1927/1996), Heidegger describes our lives as trapped in an inauthentic, average everydayness. We engage the “public they” with idle talk and written scribble. In this mood, we “fall prey” to a mood of “busyness” and avoid genuine interaction. Instead of concerned “being with one another,” we better define our everyday

being with Others as “passing one another by” or “not mattering to one another” (p. 114).

Both Levinas’ condition of totality and Heidegger’s condition of everyday inauthenticity speak to a similar state of human affairs. Likewise, just as Levinas recognizes totality as the necessary precursor to a condition known as infinity, Heidegger describes walking first along the pathway of inauthentic being and everydayness as the only route that takes us back toward authentic, concerned being with Others. Thus, both men place us in a condition from which we journey out to find a more genuine existence.

Striking The Stage And Facing Forward

For Levinas, we must stop avoiding the Other. We must turn toward, look into the face, hold eye contact, open an outstretched hand and make welcome the Other. Captured by the Other’s face and seeing the Other as stranger, we “recognize” our own poor assumptions, arbitrary attitudes and prejudices. The Other “arrests and paralyzes my violence by his call” (Levinas, 1961/1969, p. 291). We are drawn into a conversation that teaches us and places a moral demand upon us.

For Heidegger, we must also stop our “evasive turning away.” We must face our anxiety, fear and angst. By doing so, in our silence, we can hear a “call of conscience” (1927/1996, p. 273). Just as we must stop turning away from the Other, we must stop taking flight from anxiety. Wandering farther out on the bridge where Heidegger and Levinas might meet, we turn toward an anxiety associated with the Other. We turn toward poverty even though it shakes a stick at

us. We approach injustice even though it bares its teeth at us. By doing so, we open up the possibility of engaging the Other with concern and justice.

The authentic experience of going face-to-face with the Other allows us to turn a deaf ear to what Heidegger calls the “idle talk” of the “public they.” We pull away from the superficial rhetoric about which Levinas warns us. For Levinas, the “public they” represent those who avoid eye contact and who approach the Other with only flattery, propaganda and euphemism. They dictate. They oppress. They are the “totalizers.”

As described in chapter one, in moving away from the “public they” and turning toward our anxiety, Heidegger describes a need on our part to accept an uncanny feeling of “not being at home” (1927/1996, p. 177). Levinas says we must leave “the being at home with oneself where everything is given to me” and go out and find the Other (1961/1969, p. 76). Both thinkers leave home and find themselves homeless. In this homeless passage-way, we walk toward a more authentic possibility.

A New Script: Conversation And Reflection

In that homeless passage-way, Heidegger emphasizes a “letting be” which allows us to hear the silent call. We do not talk about what conscience has said. We listen. “The call speaks in the uncanny mode of silence” (1927/1996, p. 255). For Heidegger, the turn toward the authentic seems to dwell with solitude. In our silence, we allow one-an-Other to reflect and to hear one’s own voice. We look out of the window. We walk in the woods. We spend time with ourselves.

On the Other hand, Levinas describes a conversation sparked by the face of the Other. Silence does not teach. It does not transform. “The exteriority of discourse cannot be converted into interiority” (Levinas, 1961/1969, p. 295). For Levinas, conversation allows me to become more than I am. Teaching occurs through conversation with the Other. Speech addresses me. It captures me. It opens me to the Other.

Yet, speech does not have to exclude silence and silence does not have to disallow speech. Levinas does not discount reflection. He simply prioritizes conversation. After all, my eye finds the Other’s eye in silence. At the same time, Heidegger does not discount conversation. He simply prioritizes a “letting be.” On the bridge, we value both conversation with the Other and the retreat into solitude where we can reflect upon the Other’s call. In our teaching and our learning, we must respect both conversation and “letting be.” We should not seek to prioritize one over the Other, but to bring them face-to-face and side-by-side.

Out on that bridge, I must discuss the differences between Levinas and Heidegger that most people cite. In particular, two distinctions test the bridge’s structure. First, Heidegger grounds his understanding of being in an examination of the self. Even in his discussion of our being with Others, he returns to the I. Heidegger (1927/1996) emphasizes that “The characteristic of encountering the others is, after all, oriented toward one’s ‘own’ Da-sein” (p. 111).

Self And Other

In contrast to Heidegger’s self-focus, Levinas offers us a phenomenology of the Other. We enter into genuine engagement with the Other in order to leave

the ego-self behind. Yet, on the bridge, we recognize that these two positions are not polar opposites. Levinas writes, “Being for the Other is not the negation of the I” (1961/1969, p. 304). For Levinas, the self hears the ethical call and becomes a better, less ego-driven person.

Peace therefore cannot be identified with the end of combats that cease for wants of combatants, by the defeat of some and the victory of the others, that is, with cemetaries or future universal empires. Peace must be my peace, in a relation that starts from an I and goes to the other, in desire and goodness, where the I both maintains itself and exists without its egoism. (Levinas, 1961/1969, p. 306)

Similarly, for Heidegger, a being with Others defined by concern stands at the ready as the potential outcome of authentic experience. Thus, while Heidegger clearly prioritizes the self and Levinas clearly prioritizes the Other, neither thinker denies the self or the Other as deserving a place on the stage.

Moral Claims

These philosophers’ ideas on ethics represent the second distinction that causes the bridge to sway. Levinas’ work hinges on the morality of the outstretched hand, the justice in the face and the arresting nature of the voice of the Other. As a teacher committed to social justice, I see hope in Levinas’ words. He suggests the transformative potential of going face-to-face with the Other. He offers a way out of prejudice and discrimination. As a teacher, inside and outside of the classroom, I hear his summons that I bring my students into contact with the Other.

Lacking the same moral emphasis as Levinas, Heidegger suggests that we can hear a “call of conscience.” Yet, this conscience might be good or bad. An authentic experience has the potential to lead us toward a more socially just

world. Out of an authentic engagement, concerned being-with-Others might develop. If so, it can reduce domination and dictatorship. Yet, just as easily, an authentic experience might take us toward a place of war, oppression or apartheid. Heidegger does not place moral demands on his understanding of being. He leaves the door open for authentic experiences that lead toward moral, immoral and/or amoral outcomes.

In an interview conducted in 1982, Levinas describes the ambiguity surrounding Heidegger's being-with-Others and the possibility of a moral "call of conscience." While refusing to deny the possibility that an ethical being-with-Others could evolve in a Heideggerian authentic experience, Levinas states clearly his belief that Heidegger did not focus his work on this condition. In responding to a question about Heidegger's notion of assistance to the Other, Levinas describes Heidegger's genius, but denies an ethical focus in *Being and Time*.

E.L.: I don't believe he thinks that giving, feeding the hungry and clothing the naked is the meaning of being or that it is above the task of being.

Q: It is an open question...

E.L.: Yes, it is open. Don't worry; I'm not a fool. I could not fail to recognize Heidegger's speculative greatness. But the emphasis in his analyses is elsewhere. (Levinas, 1998, p. 116-117)

Despite the fact that Heidegger does not situate an ethical being-with-Others at the center of his work, I do not find reason to abandon his thinking. Instead, in looking at Heidegger's concept of the authentic experience, I can focus on the *possibility* of an ethical summons for concerned being-with-Others. In that possibility, Heidegger's work can be seen as having an ethical component.

In Heidegger's thinking, even if I decide to embrace the ethical possibility of concerned being-with-Others, an-Other difficulty threatens the integrity of the bridge that I build. From his own life, a controversy casts a shadow over his philosophy. Levinas (1998) expresses well the dilemma that many people face when they choose to walk-with Heidegger's ideas:

For me, Heidegger is the greatest philosopher of the century, perhaps one of the very great philosophers of the millennium; but I am very pained by that because I can never forget what he was in 1933, even if he was that for only a short period. (p. 116)

Especially as a teacher seeking social justice, I must reconcile my own beliefs about humanity with the decisions that Heidegger made as a German during World War II. In light of Heidegger's horrendous life-decisions, I feel compelled to justify my use of his language and his ideas. In particular, when exploring the experience of students engaging the Other in a place like South Africa, a country with such an oppressive history of its own, I must be careful in turning to the ideas of a Nazi.

Reconciling With Heidegger

In Block A, he stands alone. In a gray fleece jacket and gloves, he stares at the dirty wooden bunk. Behind him, I watch. He seems to be calculating in his mind how so many bodies could be squeezed onto five or six planks of wood. Quiet footsteps reveal that Other students walk nearby. Yet, we all stand or walk in silence. The student in front of me slowly raises his head. His eyes scan upward over the four bunks. Looking at the bunk closest to the roof, his mind continues to do the math. How could so many people fit in those bunks? Slowly, I turn and

leave him. Other students catch my eye, but they seem to quickly look away. We all seem a bit nervous as we pay our respects to this place.

As I step outside, I shield my face and turn my back into the wind. Yet, I feel quite warm. My students' silence satisfies me. I bring students to places like Terezin because I hope to provide an opportunity for an authentic encounter with the historical spirit of the Other. I want my students to feel history. I want them to reflect on the human face of history. By doing so, I hope that they catch a glimpse of the Other of social justice. On a day when winter is trying to maintain its grip against an oncoming spring, bundled in hats and gloves, we move together through a Nazi concentration camp in the Czech countryside.

Later that afternoon, under a gray sky when the snow has started to spit at us, we walk across a large open field. Down the hill and up the Other side, only a few of us now "face" the weather and "face" this place. Most of the group has taken refuge in the bus. I feel a bit disappointed because so many have "turned away" from this place. Yet, can I blame them? This place rattles us.

For the four students and one teaching colleague who have stayed with me, I welcome their company. We stop in front of the remains of a farmhouse. Now wet with snow, the grass has reclaimed much of the stone floor. Slowly, the earth seems to be re-taking this place. One of the students asks if these stones represent the home described in the film where the men and boys faced their slaughter. The students look up to see my reply. With a nod, I affirm what they suspect. The remains of this house represent the place where the Nazis began to implement their plan to erase this town. Hitler had ordered the removal of this

small Czech town from all maps. In the town of Lidice, the Nazis murdered all of the men over the age of twelve. They sent all of the women to the camps. They scattered all of the children as orphans. They burned the livestock and razed the buildings. According to Hitler, no one was to speak of this place. It was to be forgotten.

Today, together in our small group, huddled around in the falling snow, we re-member. While a high school freshman, I had first encountered Lidice. My English teacher had shared a poem about this place. Now, fifteen years later, as a teacher myself, I bring my own students to pay our respects. Ever since reading that poem, the idea of erasing a geographical and human place has haunted me. Now, with my own students around me, I feel privileged to walk where the town once stood.

Nazism And Apartheid

The Nazi Party's inhumane treatment of the people living within the borders of the lands it stole in search of *lebensraum* (living room) has stood on a curricular pedestal in my classes. I have challenged my students to read vivid and graphic accounts of the Nazi's "final solution." Entering together, but leaving quietly in our own solitude, we have passed annually through the halls of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC. They have begged for reasons and explanations. In response, I have frustrated them with replies in the shape of questions. Still, we have come to see the Holocaust experience as one stitch woven into a pattern of human oppression, human resistance and human oppression.

Appearing later in the same pattern, apartheid's stitch represents a similar historical Other that my students and I come to be with in South Africa. In revealing the experience of "coming to be with" apartheid and multiple Others in South Africa, Levinas' philosophy helps to uncover the possibilities. His call that we face the Other and be-able-to-respond opens up the experience of travel and encounter. At the same time, Heidegger's idea of authenticity has paved the way for our understanding of Levinas. As suggested earlier, a merger of these two ideas provides the foundation upon which I seek to uncover the meaning of my students' experience in South Africa. Yet, in turning to Heidegger, out of the shadows, a dilemma steps forward and presents itself. At least for one year, Heidegger chose to walk with those for whom erasing towns and gassing Jews represented a way of being with the Other. For one year, he stood-with the Nazis. For that year, Levinas (1998) writes that a "marching-together" describes best Heidegger's concept of being-with-an-Other.

As a teacher-researcher with a commitment to social justice, in good conscience, can I "open up" an experience intended to promote a more humane world by using the ideas of a man associated with one of history's most inhumane movements? After all, on three occasions, in Germany and the Czech Republic, I have taken my students into former concentration camps. Inside my classroom, for every year that I have taught world history, I have offered the Nazi experiment as a central example of humanity's oppression and self-cannibalism. Therefore, how am I to reconcile my decision to use Heidegger's idea of an authenticity with my own disgust for his "marching-together" with the Nazis?

In particular, a sad irony exists in attempting to reveal my students' experience in South Africa by turning to the thinking of a Nazi. We travel to South Africa in order to be with multiple Others including the historical spirit of apartheid. I cannot ignore the similarities between what the Nazi Party did to the Jews and what the South African Nationalist Party did to the black, Coloured and Indian populations. Just as the Nazis removed the Jews from the cities and dumped them into the ghettos, the Afrikaaners forced the removal of the blacks from Sophiatown and "resettled" them in their own ghettoes. In both countries, the Other was separated, banned, branded and killed. In both places, racial superiority tried to wear a nationalist mask and sought to make the Other "faceless." In explaining my students' experience of being in South Africa, in good conscience, could I ever turn to the ideas of the party of apartheid? If not, then how could I consult a member of an even more evil group? As a self-described social justice educator, how do I turn to a Nazi in order to inform my research and my practice?

In considering these questions, I find myself drawn to two sources. First, by looking to Levinas, I find a context into which I can place Heidegger. Second, by looking to the South African experience, I find a reason to reconcile with Heidegger.

Heidegger In "Totality"

In *Totality and Infinity: An Essay On Exteriority* (1961/1969), Levinas writes about an-Other-oriented mode of being in which people seek freedom, creativity and a better world. We reach this place, a place of "infinity," after being

called by the face of the Other. Yet, for most of history, we have failed to welcome the Other. Instead, we have followed what Levinas refers to as a “Heideggerian ontology, which subordinates the relationship with the Other to the relation with Being... and leads inevitably to another power, to imperialist domination, to tyranny” (p. 46). As suggested previously, Levinas rests uneasily knowing that Heidegger’s emphasis on the world as a place of being-with Others does not require going face-to-face. Levinas asserts that Heidegger’s philosophy of Being has the potential to trap humans in a place, a place of “totality,” where the Holocaust and apartheid can feed. For most of history, the “totalizers” have refused to face the Other and instead have reduced the Other to a mirror image of themselves (Levinas, 1961). From this egoist position, war, oppression and inhumanity breed.

Levinas (1961) prioritizes our being-in-the-world with Others:

We therefore are also radically opposed to Heidegger who subordinates the relation with the Other to ontology... rather than seeing in justice and injustice a primordial access to the Other beyond all ontology. (p. 89)

The welcome issued by the face of the Other opens humanity to a more ethical being-in-the-world. He criticizes Heidegger for prioritizing a study of being that can relegate the Other to the back seat. Heidegger’s authentic encounter does not *require* that an ethical demand be placed on its participants. In his biography of Heidegger, Safranski (1998) validates this assertion:

Heidegger had always maintained the principle that “mood” determines our Being-in-the-world. That is why he now takes the revolutionary mood of upheaval, rising, and the new community as his starting point. Reprisals by the state, rioting by the mob, and anti-Semitic actions are for him concomitant phenomena that have to be accepted. (p. 234)

From this description of Heidegger, apartheid, the inferiority of one race to another and the imprisonment of Nelson Mandela for a quarter of a century simply represent “concomitant phenomena that have to be accepted.” Levinas refuses to accept such a stance. Instead, his philosophy of the Other declares, “To be for the Other is to be for good” (Levinas, 1961, p. 261).

I do not raise Levinas’ criticisms of Heidegger as an attack. Earlier in this chapter, I have addressed the differences between these men and suggested a merger in which both men’s ideas can be used to help uncover the meaning of my students’ experience in South Africa. While I adhere strongly to Levinas’ ethical call, I recognize that Heidegger’s idea of the authentic can help us to hear that call. Levinas claims correctly that Heidegger does not adopt a strict ethical stance. Yet, Heidegger does not dismiss the ethical possibility.

I offer Levinas’ ethical view of humanity as a way of recognizing the historical context in which Heidegger existed. In a history of “totality” where ego drives us to pursue power and control and with his own philosophical convictions disconnected from a strict ethical demand, Heidegger’s membership in the Nazi Party does not shock me. In history, he stands with a large number of people who have chosen power over justice. Safranski (1998) writes that Heidegger “had dreamed himself into the liberator who unfetters the prisoners in the cave and leads them out” (p. 247). As a Platonic philosopher-king, Heidegger plays a perfect pawn in “totality’s” game of power.

Recognizing Heidegger’s position in the world’s power struggles allows us to see the large audience with whom he shares his place. Throughout history,

men and nations have oppressed Others. Jefferson chose to remove mention of ending the slave trade from the Declaration. After his generals freed slaves in certain territories, Lincoln returned them to their masters. Still, the fact that a mistake has been made by many as compared to a few does not excuse the ethical misjudgment. In the pursuit of power and in an acceptance of the “mood” of the times, Heidegger took his place among the oppressors. As a teacher who values social justice and freedom, even with a view of the larger historical context as provided by Levinas, it remains difficult to reconcile Heidegger’s politics with my own values. Yet, in re-turning to South Africa and in listening to her story, I find a compelling reason for reconciliation.

Heidegger And Reconciliation

As discussed in chapter one, in the pursuit of healing, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission offers an alternative vision of justice. Replacing retribution with reconciliation, South Africa impresses much of the world. As the Amy Biehl story reveals, people have a compassion and an understanding that we rarely see. Yet, it exists. In South Africa, this ability to forgive surprises the world. It makes us shake our heads in disbelief. It makes us question our own capacity for forgiveness. We ask ourselves, could we do what they are doing? Desmond Tutu (1999) reflects on his own nation’s people:

It was the side that showed people who by rights should have been filled with bitterness because of the untold and unnecessary suffering they had endured. Instead, they were to demonstrate a remarkable generosity of spirit, an almost unprecedented magnanimity in their willingness to forgive those who had tormented them so. (p. 144)

In traveling to South Africa, I intend to expose my students and myself to this spirit of forgiveness. I have witnessed it there before and I have been drawn to it. At the same time, as I have described, I question my own ability to offer my hand to some-one who has intentionally inflicted pain and suffering. As I search for the meaning of my students' experience in a nation where mothers forgive their children's assassins, my questioning about the Heidegger dilemma changes. In the spirit provided to the world by South Africa, by Mandela and by Tutu, I wonder how, in good conscience, I could fail to reconcile and to accept Heidegger's mistake. In the following passage, while Tutu describes his apartheid oppressors, he could be talking about any oppressor, including Heidegger, you or me.

(T)here is an awful depth of depravity to which we all could sink, that we possess an extraordinary capacity for evil. As I have already noted elsewhere, this applies to all of us. There is no room for gloating or arrogant finger-pointing... it is important to note that those guilty of these abuses were quite ordinary folk. They did not grow horns on their foreheads or have tails hidden in their trousers. (Tutu, 1999, p. 144)

Reflecting upon a nation where a man can spend a quarter of a century in prison and upon his release offer his hand to his jailor, who am I to question the use of Heidegger's ideas? In this context, as a teacher-researcher committed to social justice, I must reconcile with Heidegger. To do Other-wise is to cast doubt on a future offered to us by South Africa in which reconciliation might replace retribution.

Thus, cautiously, I continue to draw upon the ethical possibility within Heidegger's work. In bringing my students to South Africa, as a teacher, I stand committed to creating opportunities for an ethically authentic encounter with the

Other. Traveling from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth to Durban, I hope we live-through Heidegger's *mitsein* experienced as a face-to-face and side-by-side encounter.

Similarly, in turning to the next section of this chapter, I explain my own pursuit of a face-to-face and side-by-side homecoming with my own students. As a researcher, I describe the "being-with" method used to capture my students' voices. In the section, I describe van Manen's (1990) six methodological components of hermeneutic phenomenological research. Using these six components as pathways, I map out my study's methodology.

The Hermeneutic Phenomenological Method: Following Six Paths Toward The Meaning Of My Students' Lived Experience

It is not entirely wrong to say that phenomenology and hermeneutics as described here definitely have a certain *methodos* – a way. Significantly, Heidegger talked about phenomenological reflection as following certain paths, "woodpaths," towards a "clearing" where something could be shown, revealed, or clarified in its essential nature. However, the paths (methods) cannot be determined by fixed signposts. They need to be discovered or invented as a response to the question at hand. (van Manen, 1990, p. 29)

In undertaking a study of my students' lived experience of encounter with the Other, I follow the direction established by van Manen's (1990) six research paths. I appreciate the *methodos* that he provides. Yet, at times, while wandering on these six paths, I step off the trail and into the woods. As van Manen suggests, more than his six pathways, I allow my question to orient me. It serves as my primary compass.

The First Path: Turning To A Phenomenon Which Seriously Interests Us And Commits Us To The World

As I describe in chapter one, the boys diving off the rocks in Brazil captured me. While running along the beach, I turned away. Yet, almost twenty years later, I continue to look over my shoulder. The experience of encountering the Other in Brazil changed the direction of my life's course. This study represents my re-turn to the commitment made on that beach. While unaware at the time, Brazil's Other obligated me to do this work. Thus, when van Manen (1990) describes the starting point of phenomenological research as the identification of a deep interest and the turning to explore that interest, I see myself at the trailhead.

In chapter one, I provide a more complete story of my turning to the phenomenon and to my pedagogic orientation. I speak to my role as a traveler and a teacher. I describe how I stumble into the place of social justice education and how I come to name South Africa as my classroom. Van Manen (1990) writes, "Phenomenological research is a being-given-over to some quest, a true task, a deep questioning of something" (p. 31). In chapter one, I seek to expose the reader to my arrival at the quest, the task, and the deep questioning of my students' encounter experience with the South African Other. By the end of that chapter, I present my phenomenological question. Yet, I do not limit a discussion of my turning to the phenomenon or a discussion of my stance as a pedagogue to chapter one. Instead, throughout this study, I share experiences as my students' teacher. After all, this study explores my commitment to the encounter

phenomenon and to the young people with whom I have chosen to go face-to-face.

The Second Path: Investigating Experience As We Live It Rather Than As We Conceptualize It

In beginning to reveal the experience of my students' encounter with the South African Other, in chapter one and throughout this study, I dig deep into my own experiences. As van Manen (1990) suggests, "The phenomenologist knows that one's own experiences are also the possible experiences of others" (p. 54). Thus, I explore my own lived experience. In chapter two, I also turn to the experiences of two students who traveled with me to South Africa in 1998. Prior to engaging with the group of students from the 2002 trip, I follow van Manen's advice:

To "borrow" other people's experiences and their reflections on their experiences in order to better be able to come to an understanding of the deeper meaning or significance of an aspect of human experience. (van Manen, 1990, p. 62)

By email, I invite Jessie and Greg to help me to explore their experience. In a series of two email strands, they send me written descriptions of their South African experience. First, they send an initial overview of their experience. I simply ask them to tell me about the journey and to keep their descriptions as concrete as possible. Second, I send them a series of individual questions about their writing. At the same time, I ask them to read each Other's initial descriptions. In a second piece of writing, they respond to my questions and to each Other's text.

As I explore their experiences, I weave in the writings of multiple Others. I consult philosophical sources as well as written descriptions of lived experience of travel and encounter. I also follow van Manen's (1990) advice and dig for the etymological roots of words:

Being attentive to the etymological origins of words may sometimes put us in touch with an original form of life where the terms still had living ties to the lived experiences from which they originally sprang. (p. 59)

In chapter two, I present my initial digging in the dirt of the experience. After exploring Jessie and Greg's experiences, I stand in a much more informed place. Thus, I feel better prepared to invite my students from the 2002 journey to join me in conversations about their experiences.

Homecoming. In many ways, when re-turning to see my students again, I undertake a homecoming. I am brought back toward that pedagogical place in which we dwelled together while journeying through South Africa. When called upon, they find themselves also pulled back toward the experience and toward the group. In this re-turn, now as a teacher-researcher, I hope to find what Casey (1993) suggests homecomings have to offer:

In homecoming I can find myself in the extraordinary situation where I return to a place which I can be said to know 'for the first time,' even though I have been there before and still retain intact memories of my earlier experiences there. (p. 293)

As I come-home to my students as a teacher-researcher, I know them and our dwelling-community "for the first time." Planning to dig into the lived experience of our encounter with the South African Other and uncover its meaning, I come-home and see my students differently. Within the context of this study, their faces shine white. As upper middle class students, their pockets go

deep. Coming from suburban homes and a public high school that more closely resembles a private school, they all graduated and acquired a year of college and life experience. Scanning their faces, they hold strong convictions about the world. They impress me with their dedication and hard work. They care about Others.

As I ask them to tell their stories about the South African experience, I remember that we lived the experience together. My role as teacher and co-journeyman remains explicit. My ability to say, I was there, can serve to open up, or close down, conversation. Sharing the experience allows me to understand better. At the same time, I remain cautious that I do not allow my words to drown out the voices of my students. I attend to their stories. I remember that we have all spent one year outside of our pedagogical community-place and we re-turn as different people.

Along van Manen's second path, I stop in three distinct locations, as articulated below, to find a place where I attend to my students' voices. Stopping in three distinct places allows me to go in-depth with each participant. As with my teaching and with the journey to South Africa, I seek engaged, authentic encounter with the Other of my students. I let go and "fall into conversation." I avoid idle talk and rhetoric. I go face-to-face. I see, hear and feel their lived descriptions.

In order to face my students and to spend time with their stories, I invite them to come-home. Ten students made the initial South African journey and I ask all of them to return to the experience. While I had spoken with my students

about my research for over a year, I send an official invitation via email in the spring of their freshman year of college. I explain briefly the nature of the study and my expectations for their involvement. From the original group, eight students agree to join this study. As is common with phenomenological studies, I choose to converse with a relatively small number of participants. By limiting the number of participants, I can “burrow” deep into their stories.

In early June, with their freshman year complete, I gather together with my eight students. Two of the students who happen to be twins host the initial gathering at their house. On a sunny Saturday afternoon, we sit in a circle and we talk about the year. Eventually, I turn to a description of the study and of their participation. In order to make clear my expectations for their involvement in this study, I present each student with a letter and I ask each participant to sign a consent form (see Appendix). Before we leave, we schedule two dates for group conversations. Back in the teacher role, I give them an assignment. With our first group conversation scheduled to occur in two weeks, I ask them to complete their first writing task in the next week.

A writing place. Coming-home to this group, first, I stop in a writing place. Without consulting one-an-Other, I ask my students to write about their experience in South Africa. Purposefully, I provide little direction about topics. I want them to write about those events and feelings that stand out in their memories. Yet, following van Manen’s (1990) advice, I offer three suggestions for their writing. First, they should avoid generalizations and causal explanations. They should stay “grounded” in concrete South African experiences. They should

write about “what happened” and leave the “why” for another day. Second, in writing about “what happened,” they should describe their feelings and their emotional responses. I want to know how experiences made them feel. Third, they should write freely. If they wish, they should abandon common writing expectations about grammar and style. I offer this final suggestion as a response to van Manen’s warning that “The linguistic demands of the writing process place certain constraints on the free obtaining of lived-experience descriptions” (1990, p. 64). Thinking about the appropriate grammar could result in my students losing a focus on an honest revealing of their experiences and of their feelings.

Reflective writing serves to “open up” initially the experience of encounter. In seven to eight pages of text, each student explores his/her experiences. I open each email eagerly and read my students’ stories. They bring me back to the places and to the people. I see initial sketches of possible themes. Down the path from this writing place, we take a few steps and reach a second location. Using their written words as guides, we come-home to the group.

A conversation place. In the second location, we enter into our first group conversation about our experience. We meet in late June and I use their initial written text to guide my questions. In the principal’s conference room at my school, in the early evening, we come together. With pizza and soda delivered, in an otherwise empty building, we eat dinner and we begin a two hour and thirty minute audiotaped conversation. While I plan to read a few passages from their written papers in order to begin the conversation, it is unnecessary. Based on the fact that all eight students write about the visit to Hout Bay High School, I start

with a simple question: What do you remember about that place? Following Gadamer's (1960/1989) advice, my students "fall into" a conversation.

I have questions that I want my co-participants to address. In conversation, at times, I am free to lead. Yet, at Other times, I have to follow. A highly structured interview with prepared lists of questions prevents a genuine conversation from taking place. If I am always "looking ahead" to my next question, then I am not seeing the person with whom I converse. I also recognize that the close bond between these students makes the conversation flow. They chase each Other's words. As soon as someone finishes, an-Other person begins. I can sit back and listen carefully. I also work to keep the discussion rooted in the concrete by jumping in to ask someone for specific examples when descriptions become too general. As van Manen (1990) advises, "Whenever it seems that the person being interviewed begins to generalize about the experience, you can insert a question that turns the discourse back to the level of concrete experience" (p. 68).

In the group conversations, the students begin to see one-an-Other and they begin to "live" with the research question. As Jessie and Greg prepared to graduate from college, at a turning point in their lives, their two email letters to me about the South African experience expressed a deep concern about the experience and what it meant in their lives. As van Manen (1990) indicates, their reaction was similar to that felt by many people who explore direct, lived experiences:

It has been noticed by those conducting hermeneutic interviews that the volunteers or participants of the study often invest more than a passing

interest in the research project in which they have willingly volunteered themselves. They begin to care about the subject and about the research question. (p. 98)

By the time my students and I enter into the second group conversation, I recognize their care for the question. Shortly after our re-turn from South Africa, for the first time, I discussed this study and queried them about their interest in participating. From the beginning, several of the students expressed a genuine desire to explore the experience. In coming-home to these students, I depend upon their collaboration and their willingness to stand-with me. Just as we shared the experience, we share the research.

Prior to the second conversation, I transcribe the text from our first gathering. I make the decision to transcribe the tapes myself because I want to be able to hear the tone, the pace and the passion with which my students speak. When a voice places emphasis on some-thing, I want to hear it. As I learn to coordinate between my hands typing and my foot using the “brake” pedal, at times, I pause and I type parenthetical notes to myself about themes and ideas. Tucked into the text of my students’ conversation, these notes serve as reminders to me of where my students lead me. At the same time, with bold type, I darken certain words and phrases that my students share. Later, in the writing of the study, these words name key aspects of the experience. In some cases, the words name the themes and the sub-themes themselves.

For the second group conversation, in the middle of July, we re-turn to the empty school and sit around the conference table. Yet, one student does not re-turn. He has a family obligation that he cannot miss. Thus, with more pizza and

soda, I turn on the tape recorder and seven students re-enter the dialogue. In the two-hour discussion that follows, I introduce my initial thematizing from their written assignment and the first conversation. We nod about guilt. We wonder about how we are seen. Yet, on this night, we spend a lot of time exploring the beautiful, poor places of South Africa. We talk a lot about the out-of-doors and we conclude with a discussion of what they believe my expectations have been for the m.

A writing place re-visited As July comes to an end and these students begin to contemplate their re-turn to college, I ask them to stop in a third location. Looking back on their initial writing and on our two group conversations, they write a final, individual reflection. In this piece, they step beyond the time spent inside of South Africa and they focus on the year that has passed since their return home. I ask them to address what the experience of encounter has done with them. I also “push” them to consider what they have done with the experience. By early August, I ask them to submit this final reflection. As I read these pieces, my students continue to dialogue with the theme of guilt that we have discussed. They also speak to the transformative potential of the experience.

Unfortunately, the one student who misses the second conversation does not complete the final writing assignment either. As a matter of fact, since the first conversation, I have not heard from this student. Despite several email requests, I have not received a response. Other students cannot explain his “dropping out” of the study, but they promise that he is not angry or upset. He has simply “moved on” to pursue Other interests. While I wonder about his reasons, I decide to

include his voice in the study. In the initial writing assignment and in the first conversation, he provides amazingly lived descriptions and I do not want to exclude his contributions.

In the fall, winter and spring, I enter into my own hermeneutic phenomenological writing. I explore philosophical writing, phenomenological sources, autobiographies and etymologies in order to “open up” the phenomenon further. I bring these written voices into the discussion in order to see what they have to say.

The Third Path: Reflecting On The Essential Themes Which Characterize The Phenomenon

In his phenomenological work on place, Casey (1993) compares the experiences of homecoming and homesteading. In describing the research activity of re-turning to hear my students’ voices, I apply Casey’s homecoming metaphor. After all, as a teacher, I have spent much of my life engaged in dialogue with students. Conducting phenomenological conversations brings me home. Yet, now as a teacher-researcher, home feels a little different. Similarly, in describing the research component of hermeneutic interpretation, I find that Casey’s (1993) homesteading metaphor applies:

This homesteading place is typically unknown to me, or known only from accounts given by others who have preceded me. But I am determined to settle down for the long term in this novel place. (p. 290)

Homesteading. As I undertake the daunting task of “digging for the essence” of the encounter experience, I think often about the Others who have preceded me. Having written and defended phenomenological dissertations, they

provide their insight and their account of the process. Still, the place remains “typically unknown” to me. Yet, captured by the philosophical rooting and excited about the possibilities of “opening up” lived experience, I am “determined to settle down for the long term in this novel place.” While the year of analysis and writing represents the “long term,” I suspect that the “settling down” will last much longer. New to the research frontier, I find the landscape attractive. I might want to stake my claim in this “novel place” of hermeneutic phenomenology and on the broader horizon of qualitative research. I like the hyphen that connects me as teacher-researcher.

On the homestead, in a more solitary place, I turn inward to analyze and to interpret my students’ words. In this place, I search for the themes that represent the “knots in the webs of our experiences, around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus lived through as meaningful wholes” (van Manen, 1990, p. 90). Referred to as the structures of the experience, these themes dialogue with one-an-Other in order to make meaning of the phenomenon being studied. Van Manen (1990) writes, “Grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule-bound process but a free act of ‘seeing’ meaning” (p. 79).

In our positivistic and rule-bound tradition, when phenomenology shakes free of “hard” science, some people question its rigor. Yet, van Manen (1990) defends phenomenology as rigorous human science:

Human science research is rigorous when it is ‘strong’ or ‘hard’ in a moral and spirited sense. A strong and rigorous human science text distinguishes itself by its courage and resolve to stand up for the uniqueness and significance of the notion to which it has dedicated itself. And what does it mean to stand up for something if one is not prepared to stand out? (p. 18)

Thus, themes remain dedicated to the significance of the experience. They uncover the meaning hidden beneath the taken-for-granted on the experience's surface. They let the essence of the experience stand-out.

Unearthing themes. Thus, I turn my students' words over and over in order to find those aspects of the encounter experience that resonate with meaning. In my students' descriptions, I locate common themes as well as unique variations on themes. I explore and map out both the shared and the unique ideas (Barritt, Beekman, Bleeker & Mulderij, 1984). In mapping out the structures of the experience, I begin by following van Manen's (1990) selective or highlighting approach to revealing themes:

In the selective reading approach we listen to or read a text several times and ask, *What statement(s) or phrase(s) seems particularly essential or revealing about the phenomenon or experience being described?* These statements we then circle, underline or highlight. (p. 93)

From the four hours and thirty minutes of audiotaped conversation, I generate over fifty pages of single-spaced, transcribed text. The students produce approximately seventy pages of writing. Thus, at first, I feel a bit overwhelmed by the task of uncovering thematic structures. Rolling up my sleeves, I begin by highlighting key phrases and words. I fill the margins with notes. When I transcribe, I also include typed, parenthetical notes inside the text and I place certain phrases or words in bold type. Thus, as I begin to search for themes, I return to these messages left as reminders. I circle words. Throughout the text, I place asterisks next to key ideas. Yet, deep down in the text, I have difficulty seeing the overarching vision.

Thus, in the process of thematizing, I step back and I use van Manen's (1990) second approach:

In the wholistic reading approach we attend to the text as a whole and ask, What sententious phrase may capture the fundamental meaning or main significance of the text as a whole? We then try to express that meaning by formulating such a phrase. (p. 93)

Reading the students' writing and the transcriptions in their entirety, I find it easier to "see" a structure or sub-theme. It allows me to recognize the big picture of the experience and then to dive back down into the more selective approach. In the generation of themes and sub-themes, when possible, I use student words to name them. After all, I advocate for an increased emphasis on student voice. I also consult other written texts and they provide insights and reveal distinctions that help to "open up" the themes and sub-themes. Finally, I test each theme's essential nature by asking van Manen's (1990) question:

In the process of apprehending essential themes or essential relationships one asks the question: Is this phenomenon still the same if we imaginatively change or delete this theme from the phenomenon? Does the phenomenon without this theme lose its fundamental meaning? (p. 107)

The Fourth Path: Describing The Phenomenon Through The Art Of Writing And Rewriting

In coming to grips with the structures of the encounter experience, I borrow some of my students' words while also wrapping my own written words around our experience. On the frontier, in my homestead, I begin to work the land. As Hultgren (1995) advises, "While lived experience is the starting point and the end point of phenomenological research, transforming that lived experience into a textual expression of its essence is a laborious task" (p. 382).

Turning inward, I write my own way through the phenomenon. I test metaphors, tell stories and converse with literary and philosophical sources. I search for words that convey meaning. I strategically hyphenate words in order to remember those words' parts. I learn that writing is about rewriting.

While all research demands a written communication of results, van Manen (1990) situates writing at the core of hermeneutic phenomenology. Understanding reveals itself through a thoughtful, rigorous writing-through of an experience. Writing is the methodological labor that allows us to see something extraordinary in the ordinary. It empowers the taken-for-granted. It moves us in and out of the lived world. In regard to phenomenology, as van Manen (1990) asserts, "Writing is our method" (p. 124).

Within this study's pages, based on my students' decisions, I use their actual first names. Whenever possible, I share their narrative and I seek to unmask its meaning. As van Manen (1990) writes, "The use of story or of anecdotal material in phenomenological writing is not merely a literary embellishment. The stories are examples or topics of practical theorizing" (p. 120). Thus, throughout the study, I share pieces of my students' stories as the keys to unlocking the door to more concrete and lived forms of theorizing about experience. I also choose my words carefully. As van Manen (1990) informs, "It is to our words, language, that we must apply all our phenomenological skill and talents" (p. 130). Through our words, we can reveal meaning and show the reader the way. At the same time, poor word choice can leave the meaning hidden and the way obstructed.

Throughout the fall, winter and spring, I work the written land of my phenomenological question. It takes time. Van Manen (1990) writes, “To be able to do justice to the fullness and ambiguity of the experience of the lifeworld, writing may turn into a complex process of rewriting (re-thinking, re-reflecting, re-cognizing)” (p. 131). Oftentimes, my finger jabs the delete key on my computer. Erasing text, I start fresh and begin to write in a different direction. Yet, within minutes, my finger hits the refresh button and the deleted text finds itself restored. Rewriting becomes a way of going deeper and of seeing the meaning more clearly.

The Fifth Path: Maintaining A Strong And Oriented Pedagogical Relation To The Phenomenon

As I write-through my students’ experience, I also maintain a pedagogic orientation. I remain a teacher-researcher who cares about the lives of my students. As I mention previously, the pedagogic sensitivity of phenomenology offers one reason for why I find myself within this methodology. I explore my students’ experience because I want to know what the experience means to them. As the teacher who led them to South Africa, I wonder if I did it right. Van Manen (1990) addresses this pedagogic concern:

We need to ‘act’ in the lives we live, side by side with our children, but then also ‘wonder,’ always wonder whether we did it right. We need to ‘listen’ to pedagogy so as to be able to act in a better way pedagogically tomorrow. (p. 149)

Therefore, phenomenological research keeps this ‘wondering’ alive. In chapter five, I conclude this study with pedagogical implications. Yet, throughout the entire study, I hope that the reader detects a pedagogical “wondering.”

At the same time, my phenomenological orientation aims toward praxis and ethics involving social justice pedagogy. Following Levinas' lead toward an ethical phenomenology, I make the connection between lived experience and a critical philosophy of action. Van Manen (1990) suggests:

It is on the basis of understanding what serves the human good of this child, or of these children in need, that one may engage in collective political action: action against political, bureaucratic or ideological structures. (p. 154)

Thus, a phenomenological study can direct us toward a place of action. It sparks a pedagogical "wondering" that fuels a commitment to praxis.

The Sixth Path: Balancing The Research Context By Considering Parts And

Whole

In order to present a phenomenological study, van Manen (1990) describes several organizational approaches. In this exploration of my students' experience, I rely upon two of his approaches. First, I "use the emerging themes as generative guides for writing the research study" (van Manen, 1990, p. 168). Different headings name themes and they announce sections in which I explore those themes and their sub-themes and analytical distinctions. Second, I engage my "writing in a dialogical or exegetical fashion with the thinking of some other phenomenological author(s) – in other words, with the tradition of the field" (van Manen, 1990, p. 171). Throughout this study and particularly in this chapter, I engage with Levinas and Heidegger. More than occasional references within my text, these thinkers provide the philosophical ground from which I unearth my students' lived experience. After all, on some level, this study provides a lived,

concrete exploration of the theoretical encounter experience about which Levinas philosophizes.

Building this study around the themes of my students' lived experience and constructing a dialogue between my students' stories and the philosophical writing of Levinas and Heidegger help me to maintain balance. In phenomenology, deep in the writing, I risk "getting lost." Thus, this final path provides a way out of the dark. With phenomenology threatening to leave me stranded in the woods, an organizational scheme shows the way out. It allows me to step back and to see the clearing in the woods. Van Manen (1990) warns, "It is easy to get so buried in writing that one no longer knows where to go..." (p. 33).

Now, as I present the next two chapters of this study, I turn toward my eight students and my exploration of their lived experience in South Africa. I know where to go as I seek that clearing in the woods. Their voices serve as my guide. Most importantly, as I follow my students' lead, I maintain one foot on van Manen's fifth path and keep that pedagogical "wondering" alive.

CHAPTER FOUR:

ENCOUNTERING TENSIONS “IN AND AGAINST”

THE MANY FACES OF THE OTHER

Stretching And Straining: Building Bridges Through

Contested Terrain

Before South Africa, my life and, for that matter, even the material that I studied or read was uncontroversial. The idea of going to South Africa complicates most people I tell. I can't even count how many times I have heard, "You went to South Africa. Why?" This whole idea goes back to the fact that I had never really traveled in my life, never been on my own, and never really acted or merely thought outside the box. The fact of the matter is that I never had really challenged myself, or been challenged. I had a habit of backing down and pulling out, and therefore, had never really done anything in my life that had much meaning. So it is kind of crazy to think that I went from that to spending two weeks in South Africa. I mean I have to admit the idea of going to Africa still makes me jump in my seat a little, although I am not sure why. But I was tired of living my life without risk, without challenge, and without controversy. I wanted to do something that impacted the way I thought and the lives of other people. (Steve)

As one of the students who travels with me to South Africa, Steve wants to "stretch" himself. He accepts the fact that his decision to go to South Africa complicates most people. Looking at his life, he does not want to satisfy a habit of backing down and pulling out. He wants to do some-thing that has meaning. He wants risk and he likes the idea of jumping in his seat a little. He wants to think and live. In the encounter with the Other, he seeks to "stretch" and to "strain." He desires tension.

With this mission in mind, Steve enters the contested terrain of South Africa. Carter (2002) writes, "Contrast defines the world in South Africa" (p. 161). For one of my students, Christina, she sums up much of our first

conversation together as a group by stating, “South Africa is full of juxtapositions.” An-Other student, Joe, responds, “The country is a juxtaposition in itself.” My students speak to South Africa’s mystery and its ability to “make us jump in our seats a little.” Throughout this chapter, these young people give voice to their discovery of a place far removed from their first world, suburban homes. Listening to them, I see the power of encounter in South Africa to unsettle us and to give us the “risk, challenge and controversy” that Steve desires.

From within the word itself, an “en-counter” with the Other places us on contested terrain. “En” brings us “in” with the Other. Meanwhile “counter” sends us “against” the Other. This apparent contradiction reveals a grammatical tension within “en-counter” that appears again and again in my students’ lived descriptions of South Africa. As they tell their stories, I listen and I detect tension in the encounter experience. Whether recognizing the country’s natural beauty as it runs up “against” man-made poverty or detecting “in” their-own-selves an unfamiliar Other, my students speak to tension, to juxtaposition, to contrast and to contradiction. While South Africa fulfills their expectations, it also surprises them. With no intermission, on Robben Island, they find themselves at Mandela’s cell and then being told to look to the right and see a springbok. With no border, along the road from the airport to Cape Town, they watch corrugated shacks reach out and touch wealthy townhouses. In wandering-out to view the Other, my students discover that they are seen as well.

Tracing its etymology, “tension” speaks to a “condition of being stretched or strained” (Onions, 1966, p. 910). After coming-home to my students’

narratives and to our conversations about South Africa, as I seek to make meaning of their encounters, I begin in a place where their experience involves a “stretching” and a “straining.” As we “stretch,” we “lay at full length, extend and widen” our-selves in the face of an-Other (Onions, 1966, p. 875). We grow. At the same time, we “strain” to see the Other’s face which causes us to “bind and draw tightly” around our preconceived notions and images of the Other (Onions, 1966, p. 873). We recoil. Recognizing our power and privilege, we walk with guilt in a land of reconciliation. With “di-stance” between them and us, etymologically, we hold a particular stance that positions us “far a-part.” It reflects an apartheid place and it suggests dia-lectical opposition. Yet, stretching and straining inside of South Africa, our encounter experience offers the possibility of bridging the divide between apparent opposites. Dia-lectical stances dissolve into dia-logue.

In this chapter, as my students dia-logue with the contrasts and the tensions in the Other-place of South Africa, I recognize that they struggle somewhere else too. Through their writing and in their conversations, their encounter with the Other brings them back to self. When Kearney (2003) writes, “The shortest route from self to self is always through the other” (p. 189), he maps out my students’ journey. At first glance, his words suggest a departure and a return to the same place. Yet, reading Kearney’s complete work and listening to my students’ descriptions of the lived encounter experience with the Other, I find that the de-tour from self to self does not bring them back home. Instead, it takes them to the contested terrain where an-Other-self lives.

In order to see clearly an-Other self, Levinas' phenomenology breaks the chains of the ego. He describes the moment when a person looks away from his/her reflection in the pool and sees the face of the Other.

Exposed to the alterity of the other person, the I's egoist capacities, its powers of synthesis, which have hitherto defined the ego for philosophy, are "reconditioned," "put into question," overexposed, such that the I is first for-the-other before the very firstness of its being for-itself. (Levinas, 1947/1987, p. 16)

As I make meaning of my students' experiences, I recognize that they walk into the contested terrain of questioning their own being. As they walk in the place of the Other, they interrogate their self-place. Levinas' words imply a moment of revelation when the self loses the ego. Yet, my students "stretch and strain" in the face of the Other. In their stories, I detect the lived experience of being exposed to alterity and it does not have the "snap-of-a-finger-and-I-am-transformed" moment suggested by Levinas' words. Yet, without doubt, in making meaning of my students' encounter with the Other, I discover that the Other does "recondition" and "put into question" my students' sense of self. Thus, as they describe the contrasts and juxtapositions within the Other of South Africa, they begin to encounter the tensions within themselves. This discovery of an-Other-self represents an essential structure of my students' encounter experience.

Choosing to follow Kearney's map, I reserve an in-depth exploration of my students' re-turn to an-Other-self until chapter five. In this chapter, I spend time in the "through the other" period of the journey. Facing the Other, my students' written reflections and their conversations lead me toward the meaning of their experience. Yet, before turning to these structures of the experience, I

introduce the eight students who re-turn in order to help me explore this phenomenon. In making meaning of their experience, I share often their words and stories. Thus, these co-researchers and co-authors deserve a welcome.

Re-turning To Follow Student Faces Toward Encounter With The Other

Earlier this summer, we got something from the South African Development Fund. The letter was addressed to my father and it was thanking him for contributing to the fund. This was very touching to me because it shows that he understands how important South Africa has become to me. Since my trip to South Africa, my parents always save newspaper articles or other stories about South Africa for me and Christina. This makes me feel that all of my talking about my trip actually had some influence on my friends and family and that I am somehow giving back to a country that has provided me with one of my greatest life experiences. (Elizabeth)

On a warm June afternoon, I walk into Elizabeth and Christina's (twin sisters) house and I come-home to eight of the students with whom I traveled to South Africa. For the past year, their studies have scattered them a-round in California, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania. As they finish their freshman year in college, I invite them to re-turn with me to our time in South Africa and they accept the offer. As the students settle in and talk about their summer plans, Elizabeth shares with me the thank you letter from the South African Development Fund. It arrived in that morning's mail. In her face, I can see how her father's donation has touched her. In our conversation, she stresses how unexpected it was. Until the thank you letter arrived, he had said nothing about the donation. As I listen to her describe her father's choice to help South Africa, I realize that she and her sister must be keeping South Africa "alive" in their day-to-day worlds. As Elizabeth writes above, she feels touched

because “he understands how important South Africa has become to me.”

Meanwhile, I am touched because South Africa has maintained a hold on her.

The letter’s arrival on the same Saturday that we begin to meet seems appropriate. The letter thanks Elizabeth and Christina’s father for the gift that he has given to South Africa. We come-home to enter into conversations through which we will begin to thank South Africa for the much larger gifts that she has given to us.

As I sit down in Elizabeth and Christina’s living room and I begin to map out the work that we will do together as a group, my students seem eager to participate. Of course, as I scan those eight faces, I am not surprised. From my earliest meetings with each one of them, I have been impressed. I have known some of them longer than Others, but they share an openness and a willingness to re-consider the world. From each student, regardless of whether they stand in a more liberal or a more conservative place, I have heard a critical voice. They do not simply accept the world as she presents herself. In the classroom and in South Africa, they ask for reasons, they propose better questions, and they seek better answers.

Looking around the room, each face brings me back to South Africa. Each face triggers memories. At the end of our home visits with the Indian families from Kharwastan Secondary School, we climb back into our van for the ride into Durban and I see **Alison’s** tears. She has been touched by our brief, but human, connection with our hosts’ generosity of spirit. I see her compassion. Late one night, I remember her sense of freedom running into the Indian Ocean. After a

day in an informal settlement, in her question about whether we should be wearing nice clothing in the midst of such poverty, I recall her honest self-searching about her values and her beliefs. I wonder how the past year at the University of Michigan has affected her compassion, her freedom and her honest reflection on self.

Next to her, **Joe** laughs about some-thing. Throughout the journey, he provides a sense of humor that I appreciate. He also has a courage that many travelers lack because he wants to experience it all. No where does this courage appear more readily than in his constant attempts to use (sometimes rather badly) South Africa's multiple languages. He values the unexpected, simple pleasures. He describes feeling so happy to find penguins in South Africa. At the same time, walking through an informal settlement, with a bottle of water and a sandwich, he recognizes certain privileges that make his life different than those with whom we come in contact. Over the past year at Emory University, I hope that Joe's sense of humor, desire to experience life, and growing sense of his privilege have served him well.

Similarly, out in California, I hope that **James** has maintained a willingness to "jump in" and to experience his surroundings. When thinking of James, I remember squeezing past the local on-lookers in an informal settlement and seeing James and David in the middle of receiving their haircuts, bantering back and forth with the young barbers. When finished, these young barbers display proudly their first-ever haircuts given to white people. With that new haircut, James joins me as we climb out beyond the gate at Cape Point in order to

reach the lighthouse. Going where we are not allowed, we enjoy South Africa's out-of-doors. At the same time, with James, a memory stretches back to another country. Prior to the journey to South Africa, looking up at a castle in the Czech Republic, James, Don and I first talk about traveling to South Africa. Thus, I owe Don and James a debt of gratitude. In their initial questions and request, our South African experience takes root.

Don plants the roots, but he also tills the soil a little. After I leave my teaching in order to become an administrator at another school, Don keeps the discussion alive. During the summer prior to the trip, despite his being in California, Don communicates with me and expresses his enthusiasm for the trip. Once in South Africa, I remember that Don and David debate everything. At each stop along the journey, their running, oppositional commentary accompanies us. Still, their exchanges help to clarify the tensions in our encounters. They speak to the contested terrain upon which we walk. At Dickinson College in Pennsylvania, I hope the past year has allowed Don's leadership and voice to develop.

As I continue to look around the room, I see Don's "debate partner." Initially, **David** did not plan on going to South Africa. As I settle into my role as an administrator at another school, I return to my former school in order to work with a group of nine students who plan to journey to South Africa. Yet, at the same time, I serve as David's senior project faculty advisor. As I listen to David talk about world politics, Latin America and public policy, I want him to have the experience of being in South Africa. As time passes, he begins to see reasons to join us. In South Africa, during the trip's early days, I remember that illness

afflicts David. From these days, I have an image of him “hanging back” and being reflective. Yet, at the same time, feeling ill does not stop him from climbing the gate and reaching the lighthouse at Cape Point. Throughout the trip, I recall that he speaks critically and challenges assumptions and generalizations. At the University of Maryland, I suspect that he continues to think critically and to ask Others to do the same.

On the University of Maryland campus, **Steve** has also spent the past year. At Cape Point, Steve joins David, James and me as we “jump” the gate, trespass in the “no trespassing” area and reach the lighthouse. In a township outside of Port Elizabeth, I have vivid memories of him using his digital camera to share with some young children their own pictures. With his Indian hosts, when racism rears its ugly head, I remember that he talks about his desire to reject their claims, but his discomfort at being a guest in their home. As he studies at Maryland, I hope that he finds ways to “jump gates,” to share with Others and to challenge the ideas that serve to oppress Others.

As I come close to completing my scan of the room, two faces remain. As our hosts on this Saturday afternoon, the twins help to bring the group back together. Of the eight students in the room, Christina and Elizabeth represent the two people who have never taken one of my courses. While I know their family, they study in a selective, smaller program at our school, and thus, they avoid my high school classroom. Yet, one year prior to the South Africa trip, Christina and Elizabeth join James, Don, Alison and forty Other students on a trip that I sponsor in Eastern Europe. Thus, in a peripheral way, I know them. Yet, I have to wait

until our preparatory meetings for the South African visit in order to develop a better relationship with these two young people.

After meeting a young American woman who works at the Amy Biehl Foundation in Cape Town, **Christina** feels inspired by her youth and courage. Christina's host sister points out that everyone is watching her as she walks through an all-Indian mall. For the first time, she sees herself as an-Other. As we prepare to search for lions, on a game drive, I laugh as our guide concludes his story about the dangers of being close to lions by startling Christina from behind. She jumps and announces our presence to anything within earshot. After a year at New York University, she talks of possibly joining the Peace Corps and working abroad. I hope that the inspiration that she felt in South Africa, along with the sense of "being startled" by her Otherness and by an-Other's lightheartedness, continue to speak to her.

With her father's letter returned to the kitchen, **Elizabeth** joins our circle. During our first morning's visit to Hout Bay High School, I remember Elizabeth's smile. During the entire time that the choir performs, it stays with her. At the University of Cape Town, the smile disappears as she reads silently the horrifying stories of rape and sexual assault. She stands speechless. Later, on Robben Island, she shakes her head at the juxtaposition of prison and penguin colony. After we return from South Africa, Elizabeth realizes that Bowdoin has a study abroad program at the University of Cape Town. According to her, it helps to sway her decision and she sets off for Maine. I hope that she maintains a place

for South Africa in her studies and finds her way back. In that contested land, I would like to see her find many more places to smile and to stand speechless.

Fronting Different Worlds: Following Student Pathways

In looking around at my students' faces, as we begin to explore our encounter experience with South African faces, I hear O'Donohue's (1999) words:

When you gaze into someone's face, a pathway opens, resonant with his or her life and memory. You glimpse what life has made or unmade, woven or unravelled in that life. Each face fronts a different world... The openness of the face shows that we participate in the lives of others. (p. 60)

As I see my students, I feel grateful for where they take me. Giving up a part of their summer, they face me. Each student looks forward and opens a new pathway. Through their writing and our conversations, they "front different worlds." They describe their encounter with, and their participation in, the lives of the South African Other. Face-to-face, we begin our exploration. Along the way, as I explore and track my students' paths, I accept the assistance of many writers and thinkers who open up the encounter experience with the Other. From chapter two, I also owe a debt of gratitude to Jessie and Greg who lead me quite a distance. Along with many Other sources, their words reveal three essential structures of the experience. Now, the eight students in my study help me to see the theme of encountering my-Other-self along with three additional structures of what it means to encounter the Other of South Africa.

My students' words and stories help me to name better the structures and the sub-structures of the lived experience of encounter. At first, where I see closed

doors, my students open up new possibilities. They stop me at the “taken for granted” and they ask me to reconsider. Their language sends me out in search of other writers and philosophers who help to “dig deep” into the dirt of lived experience. Looking into their faces, they help me to engage in the “free act of ‘seeing’ meaning” (van Manen, 1990, p. 79). As a result, the structures of the experience begin to reveal themselves.

Being In Beautiful, Poor Places

The township had to be one of the most beautiful, poor places in the world. Located at the base of a mountain, looking in one direction showed the Atlantic Ocean while the opposite direction was the mountain as it climbed toward the sky. It felt impossible for poverty to be able to exist when this was the scene the people would wake up to every morning. However, what I learned was that just because the people lacked money in the township, they did not lack in spirit or tradition. (Steve)

When people “wake up” every morning and face such beauty, how can poverty exist? Inside of our first world where we hide so well the less-fortunate, even euphemistically behind terms such as “less fortunate,” Steve’s words “awaken” an uncomfortable sense of location. How does poverty locate itself within the beauty of South Africa’s out-of-doors and among the people’s spirit and tradition? His naming of “beautiful, poor places” implies contested terrain. Yet, his description speaks to harmony. Thus, we ask, When we wander-out into “one of the most beautiful, poor places in the world,” what do we find?

In chapter two, with Jessie and Greg, we explore South African places. In those wanderings, I promise a re-turn to nature’s ability to expose us. Now, Steve’s naming of “beautiful, poor places” brings us back out-of-doors in South Africa. Yet, more than a re-turn, Steve leads us toward new places. For in this

structure of the encounter experience, we go beyond chapter two. We walk farther down the path in order to see what we find in these beautiful, poor places. Amidst the natural beauty and the spiritual beauty of poor places, we find ourselves “awakened” and “exposed.” Sketching the landscapes, we also find ourselves painting over some of poverty’s blemishes. Finally, in these places where beauty and poverty face us together, we begin to turn homeward and find what hides so well back there.

Watching The Mountains

Before turning to those places where poverty intervenes, we spend some time amidst South Africa’s uninterrupted beauty. In his Peace Corps memoir of his time in South Africa, Carter describes how he often would climb to the top of a ridge overlooking his town. On his way, each time, he would receive the same response from playing children. They would laugh, “Hah! He’s going to watch the mountains again” (Carter, 2002, p. 70). In South Africa, watching the mountains comes easily. As Don describes, even in the cities, these mountains make their presence felt; they stop us in our tracks.

I remember the first time we saw Table Mountain when we were coming out of the consulate. We came out and Steve had to take pictures and everyone else took pictures because it was this huge mountain and you don’t expect to see this single mountain sitting up right next to the city.
(Don)

Beauty’s call. Once on top of Table Mountain, Christina wishes to stay-put. She wants to keep watching. “We spent a good hour and a half up there and I remember not wanting to leave. It was very peaceful.” Along with mountains, South Africa’s beaches, woods and valleys offer us peace. As Casey (1993)

suggests, nature's landscape can "console, comfort and soothe" our souls (p. 193). In their conversations and in their writing, all of my students speak to the natural beauty of South Africa's out-of-doors. Elizabeth describes how "the water was so much bluer and the sky was so much bluer and the green was so much greener than anything I had ever seen before... Everything seemed so much more vibrant like the sunsets... Everything was a bit more intense." Upon arriving in the country, Steve writes, "When I looked around at the other members of the group, they too had stopped and put down their bags to essentially stare in awe of the physical beauty." For David, the intensity of Cape Point's granite rock and blue sky left him feeling "literally dizzy" while the power of the ocean below "mesmerized" him.

Watching the beauty of South Africa's "intense" out-of-doors, we feel "dizzy" and we "stare in awe." In these moments, as O'Donohue (2004) explains, we hear nature's beauty calling us:

In Greek, the word for 'the beautiful' is *to kalon*. It is related to the word *kalein* which includes the notion of 'call'. When we experience beauty, we feel called. The Beautiful stirs passion and urgency in us... (p. 13)

At the top of Table Mountain, with rocks stretching outwards and an ocean looking up at us, we hear the call. Hearing this call, as Christina describes, we do not want to leave. We feel captured, awake and alive. Perhaps, as O'Donohue suggests, we feel so alive because we come-home by going out-of-doors. He writes, "We are children of the earth: people to whom the outdoors is home" (2004, p. 36).

The power of the sublime. Yet, in coming-home, “beauty” misses something in its naming of South Africa’s landscapes. While traveling in the southern Sinai and reflecting on Edmund Burke’s philosophical writings about the sublime, De Botton (2002) identifies the limitations associated with the term “beauty.” Reading his words, I suspect that “beauty” fails to address adequately South Africa’s natural Other. Instead, the term “sublime” seems to unwrap South Africa’s natural gifts better. De Botton (2002) writes:

Many landscapes were beautiful – meadows in spring, soft valleys, oak trees, banks of flowers (daisies especially) – but they were not sublime... A landscape could arouse the sublime only when it suggested power – a power greater than that of humans, and threatening to them. Sublime places embodied a defiance to man’s will. (p. 164)

In questioning why we would seek to go face-to-face with something more powerful than us, De Botton (2002) responds, “We are humiliated by what is powerful and mean but awed by what is powerful and noble” (p. 165). When we stand on the edges of Cape Point, gaze at skies and ocean “bluer” than those seen before and feel the wind whip around us and the sun warm our skin, we see the nobility in nature’s face. With arms outstretched, we respect her power. Possibly, in the out-of-doors, we appreciate the challenge to our attempts at dominating nature. Watching the mountains, we detect resistance to the cities and strip malls. Standing at the tip of a continent and looking out at the fusion of ocean and sky, nature challenges our conqueror-being.

Yet, we have been thorough in our making-over of nature’s face with pavement and concrete. As some environmental philosophers claim, “Environmental destruction finds its foundation in our very being” (Williams &

Parkman, 2003, p. 449). Aware that “The human person is the creature that changes the wildness of the earth to suit the intentions of his own agenda” (O’Donohue, 1999, p. 99), do we truly see the noble power of South Africa? In the Other of nature’s most sublime places, perhaps, our conqueror-being truly stands afflicted. As we wander-out into nature, even if on a subliminal or unconscious level, we begin to understand that “No frontier could ever frame her infinity” (O’Donohue, 1999, p. 98).

Nature As Playground: Going Face-To-Face With Monkeys

Once in her “infinity,” what do we do? Just watching her and sensing her “intense” power, we might “feel dizzy” or “put down our bags” in order to “stare in awe.” Yet, in our encounter with the Other of South Africa’s out-of-doors, we go beyond voyeurism and we engage with nature. We climb over her rocks, straddle her cliffs, run into her ocean and hike through her forests. Examining quietly the landscape and playing in the out-of-doors, we reflect upon our own inscapes. As Abram (1996) describes in his own encounter with mother earth, he begins to pay attention to what nature means for him once he finds himself hiking through the forests and going “face-to-face with monkeys” (p. 20).

On a late afternoon, half way through our two-week journey, we split into two groups, board open land rovers and go in search of animals. After two hours, as the sun disappears and we shake off the evening chill, David recalls the discovery. “When our group first saw the female lion, I can remember the electric sensation that ran throughout my body.” A bodily shock startles his sense of everydayness. We do not have lions in the suburbs. (Of course, South Africans do

not have lions in their suburbs either.) We explore a place far removed from our daily lives. At the same time, facing these lions, we fulfill our “exotic” expectations. As Steve comments, “That’s exactly what I pictured Africa would be like... You know, lions, zebra and everything.” On a game drive, we find what we seek. As I discuss in chapter two, we place an exotic mask over South Africa’s face.

Yet, as I consider further my students’ active engagement in a face-to-face way with monkeys, lions or mountains, I recognize that the mask metaphor offers an unfinished story. There is more to be said out here in nature. While we travel with our prejudices and expectations, we move beyond seeing landscape as backdrop. Using Abram’s (1996) language, we allow nature to speak with us. The landscape awakens our in-scapes. The “electric sensation” from our going face-to-face with the out-of-doors jolts our minds into a reflective mood. As Alison describes, while doing the “outdoorsy things,” our reflective stance opens up the world and we feel free.

Particularly when we were doing the outdoorsy things, it gave you time to reflect on it. I remember at the Cape of Good Hope – I know this is going to sound corny – when all the waves were crashing below and we were up at the top. It almost felt like everything that was going on below was like what was to come, you know? I just remember I wrote in my journal that it was like all the madness to come in my year of going to school and all that stuff. I know it sounds ridiculous, but I really felt that way. We reached the end of our whole high school thing and we were going to - I guess you could say – in a sense, we were moving on to the real world. We are going to be on our own and that was like what I saw in that experience of being at the Cape of Good Hope. That is what I took away from it – me being free or freer.

O’Donohue (1999) refers to the “delicate art of freeing yourself” (p. 129).

With legs dangling, Alison watches the ocean swirl around the rocks below and

she reflects upon life. In the process, she feels “freer.” Having paid for the trip herself, when “doing the outdoorsy things,” she claims to feel “emancipated.” She sits on the edge of her future. Later in the trip, during a hike, James and Joe become separated from the group. As they run along the beach, yelling and trying to have fun by startling a group of people, James describes it as “so freeing.”

As Steve claims, the out-of-doors “allowed you to reflect... to be outside and to clear your mind and absorb the beauty.” At the end of their high school years and opening themselves to a much larger world, my students turn inward in order to see forward. They ponder the future. At the same time, even if only temporarily, an afternoon under the sun at Cape Point allows them to free their minds of humanity’s problems and to absorb some of nature’s beauty. As O’Donohue (2004) writes, wild places “draw us into their knowing and stillness. Almost without sensing it, the mind is gradually relieved of its inner pressing” (p. 35). Together, in South Africa’s landscape, they find their individual in-scapes. Elizabeth describes how one of her sister’s photographs bears witness to this turning inward:

Christina took this one picture that I love... We’re walking and I guess Christina held back a little bit and we’re walking on a beach and we’re holding our shoes and we’re all in a straight line just walking and we’re going toward these big rocks and all these trees. Even though we are all together, it just looks like we are all very separate and experiencing it on our own. I just love looking at that picture.

We walk together and alone. On the same hike, after being separated from the larger group, James describes how he and Joe sat on the beach and how “we were so peaceful.” He continues, “I definitely remember greatly appreciating life at that one moment.” With a human friend, he discovers the “solace and

friendship of Nature” (O’Donohue, 1999, p. 52). Back with the larger group, near the end of the infamous hike in Nature’s Valley, Elizabeth remembers a pause on a mountain’s side:

I kind of got stuck in the middle. There was a group ahead of me and a group behind me and I was at my own little pace. We were just going down one side and there was another side over there and at the bottom there was that jungle. I don’t even know how to describe it with the vines and stuff. I just remember stopping and looking at it and taking it in... I just loved looking at it – the trees and the rocks and it was – I don’t know – a reflective time.

As we hike through nature, we see its beauty and nobility. In the face of the sublime, we reflect upon our own lives and nature-as-friend listens to us. Not wanting to interrupt Alison on Robben Island, Steve recalls, “Alison was sitting on the dock by herself and I remember reflecting on it and I decided I’m not going to go and talk to her.” In the out-of-doors, we let one-an-Other be.

Etymologically, to reflect is to “turn one’s thoughts” upon some-thing (Onions, 1966, p. 750). To reflect also means to “deflect, divert and throw back.” Following the etymological trail of these words takes us to places of “turning aside” and “turning out of the way” (Onions, 1966, p. 278). In Other-words, reflection represents a form of de-tour. In chapter two, I present de-tour as a metaphor for the experience of encountering the Other. Running down the beach, I turn away from the boys diving off the rocks. Now, surrounded by nature’s landscape, we de-tour toward our in-scapes. Encountering the Other of nature turns us inward. In the face of the Other of the out-of-doors, I de-tour into myself. My students’ voices speak to the power of the Other of the out-of-doors to posit them in a reflective place. Hiking through South Africa’s beauty, I begin to

see that the trail out toward the Other leads me back to where I might see more clearly the lines on my own face. As O'Donohue (2004) writes, "Our deepest self-knowledge unfolds as we are embraced by Beauty" (p. 8). Yet, a lot more road must be traveled before I feel comfortable offering up a richer description of the unfolding of my-self. While the subject of self appears along the way, I reserve chapter five as a more appropriate place to discuss the detour of encounter and reflection toward my-Other-self.

Venturing Out And Freeing Ourselves

Re-turning to the Other of the out-of-doors and to nature's playground, my students do not always have time to reflect. Instead, the adventure calls. At Cape Point, James, David, Steve and I scale a fence and, as Steve describes, "Go past the point where you're not supposed to go." Steve recalls, "How often do you go into this no-trespassing area to get to the tip of a continent." As we discuss the experience, James declares, "We've been farther south than most of the population... even the people who go to the Cape of Good Hope. We went farther." Thinking about the climb to the lighthouse, Steve asserts, "You just don't do that stuff. Most people don't do that." In the end, thinking back, Steve concludes, "It was like I became brave." O'Donohue (1999) names habit as "a strong invisible prison" (p. 124). For him, "Practicing the delicate art of freeing ourselves" includes going "farther south than most of the population" and in doing the stuff that "most people just don't do." It involves breaking free from the chains of everydayness. It is a prison-break.

In Plettenburg Bay, Alison has a similar experience of “bravery” and freedom. After dinner, in the relative quiet of night, a group of us walking along the beach hear the Indian Ocean calling and we venture into her dark waves. In remembering the night, Alison says:

We all decided to go in the Indian Ocean at night. I never would have done that. Well, maybe I would have, but the thought never crossed my mind. My mom is always saying, “Don’t go swimming at night. Don’t go in the ocean at night.” I just felt safe. We just did so many things that I wouldn’t normally do and it was just cool.

Within two months of our return from South Africa, my students will graduate from high school. Positioned between living at home under the watchful and responsible eyes of their parents and heading off to college, they journey to South Africa. Standing on a dark beach and weighing whether or not to run into the Indian Ocean, Alison begins to sense her independence. While referring to what her “mom is always saying,” she begins to author more freely her own narrative.

As the teacher-Other on this journey, I must listen carefully to my students’ voices and to where those voices place me. For in both Steve and Alison’s stories, I play a role. In the journey out to the lighthouse at Cape Point, Steve describes my part:

It was awesome. The whole feel of it because you were like, “It’s fine, guys.” You were taking it so casually with all of us. Usually, if I was with anybody else... It was just different.

If I had not been there, Steve suggests that he might not have gone so far.

Similarly, Alison notes, “It’s really funny that you guys say that; because Mr. Garran was there you felt like you could go out farther and you felt safer.” She

describes how she probably would not have gone into the Indian Ocean, “but then Mr. Garran was like, ‘Yeah. Let’s do it.’”

When I journey to South Africa with students, I construct an itinerary. I envision the activities that I want my students to have. Next, I try to make those events happen. In chapter one, I explain that I name the world as my classroom for ethical reasons. I want my students to encounter the many faces of the Other. Thus, oftentimes, our pedagogical experiences do not occur by chance. In South Africa, as their teacher, I plan the “lesson” of encounter.

When my students encounter the Other, my own face is one that they come to see. As the teacher-Other, I must listen to where they position me. In one of the conversations about the trip, with quite a bit of laughter in response, Alison refers to me as “Mr. Twelve-Year Old Chaperone.” She suggests that they would not have considered going beyond the fence or running into the Indian Ocean if not for my child-like encouragement. I enjoy “playing” in the out-of doors and I want my students to have the experience of “going farther.” The out-of-doors provides a playground where my students might have a chance to “free themselves” a little from the routine and the everyday.

When we spend a day hiking in Nature’s Valley, the students become convinced that we are lost. To this day, despite my protestations, they remain convinced that I did not know where I was. On my part, any claim to the contrary has become useless. Beyond their lack of faith in my directional ability, I find that Steve describes the most important aspect of the experience. He states, “I liked the idea of being completely lost... It made it so much more adventurous.” To be

lost in the wilderness and then to stumble out into known territory, we experience adventure. It excites. Gadamer (1960/1989) writes:

An adventure lets life be felt as a whole, in its breadth and in its strength. Here lies the fascination of an adventure. It removes the conditions and the obligations of everyday life. It ventures out into the uncertain.

But at the same time it knows that, as an adventure, it is exceptional and thus remains related to the return of the everyday, into which adventure cannot be taken. (p. 69)

As the teacher-Other, I hope to model an openness to this adventure. Surrounded by the Other of South Africa's out-of-doors, when crossing borders into no-trespassing areas, into the Indian Ocean and into the lost wilderness, we play-out the adventure. With everyday obligations removed, we free ourselves and life feels a little more whole.

Nature As Playground: Darker Sanctuary

Playing with the Other of nature, we seek adventure. Yet, the out-of-doors represents a somewhat ominous playground. As Steve and Alison describe, my teacher-presence makes them feel a little more "brave" or "safe." Requiring a feeling of bravery or safety suggests risk. In such natural beauty, what risk exists? Is some-thing hiding there?

A dark ocean and a steep cliff threaten. They can reach out and snatch us away. De Botton (2002) explains that the sublime in nature defies and threatens humanity. Nature can flex her muscle and crush us. As Casey (1993) writes:

The always lurking possibility of being undone at some unpredictable moment – of being disarrayed in the surrounding array – distinguishes wild from domesticated places. This is why we feel so "exposed" in wilderness, always at risk there to some degree. (p. 224)

Despite Steve and Alison crediting my presence with their willingness to take on the adventure and the risk, I suspect some-thing larger plays a role here. As they walk deeper and deeper into the ocean at night, the darkness absorbs them. First, their feet disappear and then their legs. Yet, despite an anxiety, they spend time there. They know that the ocean can take them. Standing waist deep, they trust that she will not send an undertow their way. It is in her sublime power, not in mine, that they place their trust. In his description of our “going farther south” at Cape Point, James states, “We were being held up by a bush.” James’ word choice gives the power to the bush. A bush was holding us up and it did not let go. In order to climb across the rocks, we place our trust in the Other of nature. We stand at her mercy. Whether consciously or not, when wandering-out to play in South Africa’s out-of-doors, we recognize her power and we trust that she will “not let us go.”

Night. In order to explore more fully the idea of trust in nature, I walk into her darkness myself. Re-telling a part of my own story on the trip with my students, on an elephant reserve in the eastern Cape, I step forward and the darkness backs up, revealing a little more of the dirt road. My right foot leads; my left foot follows and then I stop. My heartbeat announces my presence to the surrounding bush on both sides. I wonder if the animals can hear me. If not, I suspect they can smell my anxiety. Miles away, they lift their noses into the air and detect my fear. In my mind’s eye, I can see them swiftly dodging through the bush. They rush my way. They navigate this darkness so well. Gathering on the edges of the road, just an arm’s length from my position, yet completely hidden

by the night, they stand, heads cocked to the side, and stare at me. I envision them lined up on both sides of the road like parade-goers. Here I come. Amused, they hold back laughter at my inability to see. Yet, I hear them. Over there to my right, a branch cracks. To my left, some-thing seems to exhale. My right foot edges forward and my left foot follows. My breathing tries to keep up with my heartbeat. Fear and excitement dance together as I move down the road. Behind me, I hear my students talking. On this quiet night, out here in the bush, their voices carry easily across the land. They have gathered in one of the cabins, at least one hundred yards away, but I can hear them as if they stood next to me. With no competing traffic, televisions or everyday noises, the entire valley can eavesdrop on their conversation. I turn back toward them and I can see some of the cabin lights peeking out over the top of the bush. I can make out the faint outlines of the cabins against the night horizon. Little outposts surrounded by the dark, the cabins huddle together. Why am I out-here moving away from them? Am I welcome here? In front of me, what continues to step back into the darkness and stay just out of sight?

The bush creeps right up to the road's edge. During the day, I remember its dry and prickly appearance. I also remember how it grew everywhere. At night, to leave the road, the bush would trap me. Through its thickness, I could not maneuver. About my height, it would tower over me. Especially in the dark, it would catch my legs and reach out for my arms. Head-to-head, its sturdy frame would knock me backwards. Tonight, on each side of the road, the bush stands there as one large shadow. I cannot detect where it ends and where some-thing

else begins. It hides so many creatures. Walled in, the road offers my only passage. The wind does not help. Funneling through the valley, it animates the bush. Catching the branches, picking them up and pushing them out, the wind causes my surroundings to move back and forth. Meanwhile, the wind muffles the snapped branch. It covers over the noises from the ground. Its chill shivers in stark contrast to the day's heat.

While I have found myself absorbed by the African night sky, tonight, my eyes dart upward, catch a star or two and then snap back to the road out in front and the bush to my sides. Off to my right, when I do look up, the silhouette of the surrounding hills rests against the sky. Like cardboard "pop-ups," the shadows of the trees dot the tops of the hills. I search the horizon hoping to see the moving shape of some animal. Yet, the wind seems to orchestrate all of the movement. Every-thing else stands still or remains under the cover of the bush.

When I reach the end of the camp road, I have traveled two hundred yards by day and a continent's reach by night. At this point, forming a "T," the camp road meets the main park road. These two roads join forces to "beat back" the bush. Looking down the park road to the right and to the left, my eyes can establish a wider perimeter. With the additional buffer zone, I breathe a little easier. Who walks a-lone in an elephant reserve? Earlier today, just down the park road at the viewing stand, we had watched an elephant drink. Farther down on the road's edge, a wild boar had given us fair warning that our vehicle did not scare him. What was I doing out here, late at night, too great a distance from the cabins

to outrun even the slowest of creatures? Was I testing my trust in nature? What if she did not want to be quizzed this evening?

Sanctuary. Standing in the Other's world, I wonder if she despises me? After all, I represent that which takes her land. I re-possess that which never belonged to me. I attempt to exorcise nature's spirit from this land. I pave roads. I build reserves and charge admission. I make the engagement with nature into a spectator sport. During the day, safe out here in a land rover, I chase nature with binoculars and cameras. Yet, in South Africa, some of those people who introduce us to the Other of nature exhibit a tremendous respect for the out-of-doors. In this elephant reserve, poachers have no-place to go. On an earlier game drive, the owner of the reserve with whom we traveled spoke almost as a father would about the animals with which he shares the land. These people derive tremendous pleasure from the open land. They take tourists dollars and lead game drives in order to preserve, and to serve, the land. They resist pavement. They re-introduce us to the Other of nature. As Buber (1923/2000) suggests, they "become bound up in relation to" nature (p. 23). With the help of these people, can the land, the wildlife and the sanctuary of the out-of-doors possibly re-possess us? Can nature exorcise the Western spirit of "pave-it-over"?

O'Donohue's (1999) naming of nature as a "soul's sanctuary" resonates with me. I have retreated often into nature and found an amazing calmness and peacefulness. Yet, standing on that dark, dirt road and thinking about the tense relation with the Other of nature, I wonder if nature grants its sanctuary

reluctantly. It might even be fair to say nature grants its sanctuary begrudgingly. After all, what have we done to deserve it?

Digging etymologically into “sanctuary,” I uncover “a sacred place giving immunity from arrest” (Onions, 1966, p. 786). As I reflect on countless hikes through the woods, I do find a place that protects me from the arrest, or capture, of the everydayness of crowded strip malls, lines of traffic snaking their way to work and jackhammers “making room” for new construction. Nature can provide immunity from a life sentence of what Heidegger (1927/1996) calls “uninhibited ‘busyness’” (p. 166). Yet, with further digging, we discover that “sacred” refers to a place “secured against violation” (Onions, 1966, p. 781). After years of stripping the land of its trees and gouging huge holes into its surface, we remove that security. Daily, we tear up the earth and pave over her skin. Thus, when the Other of nature offers us her sanctuary, she does so knowing that we are the very force that reduces her “sacredness.” We violate her. We commit “sacrilege” against her. On the altar of progress, we “sacrifice” her. Thus, in offering us sanctuary, she protects and empowers her own destroyer. By doing so, she seems to make the “ultimate sacrifice” of her own life.

Late at night, the arresting beauty of South Africa’s bush has been transformed into a much darker sanctuary. How can I not feel guilt knowing that I participate in destroying the very place in which I often seek sanctuary? Especially at night, why do we be-come anxious in the out-of-doors? Is it because we sense that the Other of nature might consider this an opportune time and place for seeking some revenge? In the shadows, do we recognize our own complicity

in the crimes committed against nature and fear that she might pass judgment on us? In the wind, do we hear the Other of nature's ethical call?

For Gadamer (1960/1989), "Beautiful nature is able to arouse an immediate interest, namely a moral one" (p. 50). In a world where we have "paved over" so much of the out-of-doors, I suspect that we often miss the moral imperative in a beautiful – or sublime – landscape. Yet, once we walk through her darkness and trust her power, then we stand a better chance of hearing her ethical call. After a bush holds us up, an ocean keeps us safe or a dark night lets us re-turn home, then we might come to accept that "we should feel guilty for failing to be stewards of the Earth" (Rossi, 1983, p. 13). Entering nature's darker sanctuary and trusting her power, I begin to accept the conclusion reached by two environmental philosophers: "To address environmental problems, we must revise our humanity; we must become different people" (Williams & Parkman, 2003, p. 459).

In the elephant reserve, as I move back down the road, the wind fails to muffle some-thing that follows. I listen to distinguish between the wind and the some-thing in the bush. Yet, the out-of-doors speaks in too many unrecognizable voices. I cannot translate. For tonight, I stop listening. I "re-turn" toward the comforts of the cabins, the artificial lights, the minivan and my students' voices.

To Sing Of The World

Re-turning to human voices and entering South Africa's townships, we find ourselves in Steve's "beautiful, poor places." Having walked the path into the beauty of South Africa's out-of-doors and found her power, we turn toward what

Casey (1993) calls the edges of “built places.” Along the edges where tin shacks meet mountains, Steve describes a wealth of spirit and tradition in the Other of South Africa’s people. Thus, before turning to the poverty, we spend some time with this wealth. While this wealth of human spirit presents itself in many ways, its presence-in-song speaks powerfully to us. In South Africa, the spirit sings its way through song. Just as we speak of the power of South Africa’s natural beauty, we speak of the power of her voices-in-song. In beautiful, poor places, in the encounter with the Other, these voices capture us.

Already in this study, song has made its presence known. In chapter two, Jessie describes an experience of being captured and leaving the itinerary behind. At sunset, surrounded by a soccer team that launches into a victory song, we linger in the moment and listen to the “passionately sung song.” Levinas (1961/1969) writes, “To see the face is to speak of the world” (p. 174). In a twist on his words, in South Africa’s townships and schools, to see the face is to *sing* of the world.

Hiding behind the mountains surrounding Cape Town, Hout Bay is a fishing village delivering daily on the local promise of brilliant sunsets. On our first evening in South Africa, behind our guesthouse, I stand outside on the patio. Reassuring by phone my students’ high school principal back in the United States, I breathe in the sea air and gaze at the sun as it takes a dip into the ocean. Scanning to the right, I see Hout Bay High School, surrounded by fences, sitting on the side of a hill. To the left, I make out the edges of an expanding informal settlement. Slowly stretching itself out across the hill, this settlement serves as the

specific inspiration for Steve's naming of "beautiful, poor places." Each morning, the students in the settlement walk down their hill, cross the formal town of Hout Bay with its guesthouses and small restaurants and ascend the Other side to attend school.

Wonderful voices. In the early morning, we begin our day at the school. In the late afternoon, we end our day on the Other hill with a visit to Hout Bay's informal settlement. In both places, we hear young people "sing of the world." In writing about the morning school visit, Joe remembers:

They had wonderful voices. This was the first time out of many that we heard the national anthem. Their national anthem gave me chills every time I heard it. It was sung in such beautiful languages and... the people there sung it with such pride and joy.

Later, in our conversation, Joe repeats that the national anthem made him "shiver a little bit every time I heard it." Listening to South Africa's national anthem, "*Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica*," gives Joe chills. Bodily, he reacts with a shiver that he associates with the pride and the joy he hears in the students' voices. In response to Joe's description, I smile and nod in a knowing-way. When you hear this powerful song, a bodily shiver and a chill startle you. I cannot imagine how "cold" you would have to be for this chill to go unnoticed.

Describing that same morning, Steve writes:

We were fortunate enough to get to hear the school choir, which still was one of the best, single moments on the entire trip. The kids had amazing voices and sang with so much heart and passion. Even better was when a few teachers joined in to dance with the students.

Voices-in-song reveal heart and passion and become "one of the best, single moments on the entire trip." At the same time, in a pedagogical dance, teachers

and students join one-an-Other. For Steve, the dance symbolizes “the strong relationship between teacher and student that I feel is so important in education.” Captured by this same moment, Christina writes, “While I don’t remember the words, I actually still remember the tune of the songs that they sang for us and sometimes find myself humming them.” One year later, Christina finds herself still humming, and thus, echoing the spirit of those students. She seems to understand what O’Donohue (1999) means when he writes, “Music strikes a deep and eternal echo in the human heart” (p. 55).

In 1995, Andrew Tracey was serving as the director of the International Library of African Music at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. That year, in the liner notes for the album from the South African musical group known as Amampondo, Tracey writes:

South Africa is traditionally a land practically without instruments. The People like to relate to one another more directly in their music, by using the great African instrument, the voice, singing in large groups and moving all together against the rhythm of the singing. (Tracey, 1995, liner notes)

After hearing the great African instrument, the voice, we do not forget. The voice gives us chills. Possibly, we shiver because these choirs celebrate the depth of the human spirit. O’Donohue (1999) warns us, “So much of modern music is but a distraught echo of our hollow and mechanical times” (p. 55). Listening to South African voices-in-song, perhaps, we hear some-thing deeper and more human. As Elizabeth writes:

Whenever I talk to my friends about my trip to South Africa, I always talk about this visit. The choir was so energetic and talented and the students had such beautiful and amazing voices. I had a smile on my face during the whole performance.

As well, we might smile because we are beginning to understand what Tracey means when he describes singing as a more direct way of relating to one another. In describing the beauty of music, O'Donohue (2004) writes:

Perhaps, more than any instrument, song can capture us because the human voice is our very own sound; the voice is the most intimate signature of human individuality. (p. 72)

Often, when we first encounter another, we speak hesitantly or even haltingly. "Small talk" pushes aside more meaningful dialogue. We stumble over our early words. We look for a connection. Yet, when our South African encounters include "the most intimate signature of human individuality," we feel an immediate bond. In the music, from the first notes, we hear pride, heart, passion, energy and beauty. We smile and shiver. Even a year later, we hum. Far from easily forgotten "small talk," these moments stay with us.

Awake. In hearing voices-in-song, Don writes, "Despite huge culture barriers, I felt the music bring us closer. It was very welcoming." I do not want to overlook Don's language. He gives music the power. The music brings us closer. It welcomes us. Levinas (1991/1998) claims that language "awakens in me and in the other what we have in common" (p. 25). Once that language is in four-part harmony, it has an even greater potential to de-distance us. In describing an evening *braai* (barbecue) in a township outside of Port Elizabeth, James writes, "The local school chorus sang and everyone danced." When the singing ended, James describes what happened: "It was the first time that we really got to talk to the kids." The chorus welcomes us, the singing brings us closer and then we *really* talk.

In the singing voice's power to welcome and to bring-close, we find a defense against the condition that Freire (1970/2000) calls antialogue. Through antialogue, "The vanquished are dispossessed of their word, their expressiveness, their culture" (p. 138). For too long, the oppressed have been silenced. Yet, song offers a means of re-possessing the word and culture that an oppressor buries. In song, if we listen closely, we might hear the lyrics, the rhythm and the passion of the Other of social justice. As Scott (1990) reveals, song might also act as an elaborate form of political and social disguise. In song, we might find protest and resistance against the oppressor.

The documentary film, "*Amandla*," a 2002 Sundance Film Festival winner, traces the influence of music in the South African struggle against apartheid. In the liner notes to the accompanying soundtrack, S'bu Nxumalo explains the power of song as an instrument of protest. In Other words, he describes how South African voices-in-song call for freedom. Reading his words, I begin to understand the revolutionary history of song in South Africa and why we might hear so much pride, heart and passion in our hosts' voices. In listening to voices-in-song, even if uncertain of the full political and historical significance, we might detect with a shiver the affirmation of the human spirit being delivered in the words and in the rhythm.

(A song's) capacity to convey messages and to inspire courage cannot be underestimated. Even more than the underground network of cadres that operated within the borders of South Africa, songs were encoded with the political imperatives of the day. They were integral to the victory of good over evil and are permanently etched in the collective memory of the people of this land, South Africa...

The future may struggle to find words that will draw clear pictures of this

country's absurd past. But songs will reach across time to relay the brave story of a people. (Nxumalo, 2002, liner notes)

As Nxumalo claims, songs reach across time. Similarly, they have the potential to stretch across culture, class and race. When we hear these songs, we feel the power in their harmony. Listening to "*Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica*," Joe describes the chill that runs through him. Even without knowing that "Singing it was a subversive act routinely punished by the security establishment" (Nxumalo, 2002, liner notes), we sense bodily its strength and its hope.

Surrender. Yet, within this historical context, Alison raises a question about that early morning concert in Hout Bay. While most of us remember the beauty, passion and welcome of those voices, Alison asks about one particular song. On wooden recorders, why did they play *Mary Had A Little Lamb*?

One of the things that really got to me is that they were singing *Mary Had A Little Lamb* to us. They sang a bunch of African songs and those were really, really amazing and we all remembered them. Like everyone had those in their heads for the entire time that we were on the trip, but *Mary Had A Little Lamb*? That kind of struck me just because it was like they just wanted to sing this one American song for us and it almost seemed pathetic to me that they were trying. It was like, Why are you even doing that? Be happy with your culture.

Leaving behind the great African instrument, the voice, and picking up recorders, the South African students perform some-thing that "almost seemed pathetic." For Alison, the piece hints at their unhappiness with their own culture. With such a beautiful and powerful repertoire of Other songs, why perform such an elementary, American standard? How does a rich tradition of music as a form of protest end up "surrendering" to *Mary Had A Little Lamb*? In our group conversation, Joe responds to Alison, "They were playing a standard song that

everyone learns. I didn't think of it like trying to be American for us." Yet, Joe's words leave me unsettled. When a student begins to play an instrument in South Africa (or anywhere in the world), why do we assume that she learns an American song as the "standard"?

Today, in South Africa, despite the influence of *kwaito* as a genuine African contribution to global hip hop, American rap and hip hop holler from radios and MTV jumps out at you from televisions. Around the globe, music seems to be bringing us close in an-Other way. Recycled and reproduced, American music and culture appear everywhere. The world grows closer because we see the same movies. We hear the same songs. We consume the same products. We breed an economic system that favors mimicry over cultural difference. In this context, does *Mary Had A Little Lamb* sing praises to cultural imperialism? On that morning in Hout Bay, does the sharing of that song warn us that Freire's (1970/2000) antialogue might accompany us still on our journey in South Africa? On the Other hand, perhaps, the students offer the song simply as a way to make us feel at-home. Seeing us standing in *their* place, they try to make us feel more comfortable.

In The Face Of Poverty

Despite an encroaching American influence, in a powerful and spiritual harmony, South African voices sing to the world. On the edges of "built places," alive with the spiritual beauty of the people, these voices echo across the sub lime landscape of mountains and ocean. A singing to the world under a blue sky calls us to a beautiful place. Yet, we should make no mistake about this setting.

Looking around, we see that beauty exists in the face of a desperate poverty. As James reminds us, “The beauty of the entire place was overwhelming. It was nothing like I had ever seen in America. The poverty was also unlike anything I had ever seen.” In these “beautiful, poor places,” in her own words, Elizabeth feels the punch when poverty “hits you hard.”

While the music represents a form of beauty singing through the face of poverty, it does not mask the scars of AIDS, hunger and violence. As the government fails to build promised houses, makeshift shacks stretch across the landscape. Just as Brazil’s *favelas* hollered at me, South Africa’s informal settlements call to my students. As Don writes, miles of huts force him to hear “the harsh truth of others’ daily existence.” Face-to-face, even in the simplest of activities, we encounter the Other’s poverty. Late one afternoon in an informal settlement outside of Port Elizabeth, James describes how what began as a “cool” use of a digital camera ends up speaking to him on a deeper level.

We walked around one (informal settlement) and took pictures of the kids With Steve’s digital camera. It was so cool to be able to show them pictures of themselves. None of them could afford cameras. It was weird because we had this piece of technology that is completely normal in everyday life to us, but is such a luxury and is worth more money than some of the kids’ parents make in weeks, if not months or years. It was amazing to me how people can live like they do. The houses are so small and they barely stand.

Coming from an upper, middle class student from the wealthiest nation in the world, words like “weird” and “amazing” begin to name our encounter with the Other’s poverty. These words speak to an encounter experience around which we have difficulty wrapping words. We ask simply, How can they live like they

do? Yet, as I listen to my students, the poverty in “beautiful, poor places” has a spatial element. It stands close. In front of us, it sits. In our face, it jumps.

Fear for. In chapter two, as Greg and Jessie describe wandering-out and up-close, a quote from Heidegger (1927/1996) describes how a coming-near can provoke fear:

As something approaching in nearness, however, what is harmful is threatening, it can get us, and yet perhaps not. In approaching this ‘it can and yet in the end may not’ gets worse. It is fearsome, we say. (p. 132)

Within the context of chapter two’s discussion of advertised and alienated presence when in close company with the South African Other, Heidegger’s language helps to open up our feelings of discomfort. Now, in my current students’ stories, I re-turn to Heidegger’s belief that we experience fear as a mood in the up-close encounter. In describing a walk along the beach in Durban, Don attests to the “fear” that coming-near provokes.

The one thing that really threw me for a loop was the kids sniffing glue. Running across them in Durban and it was just something that – at least to me – it is not supposed to be visible, you know? If you can see that then there are countless other things that you can’t see that are going on that are horrible... I never expected walking down the street and having this little kid shuffling past sniffing glue under his coat. It’s like - It’s like - I never expected that. At least to see it so openly - What got me was that - I don’t know. It was just sort of there.

As Don describes this experience, I find myself thinking about Brazil. As I have already written, the boys diving off of the rocks capture me. In that moment, poverty shakes its stick at me and it leaves my soul imprinted. Listening to Don describe kids shuffling by and sniffing glue, I wonder how long Don will remember this moment when poverty shakes its stick at him.

At the same time, I do not wish to equate Don's experience in Durban with my experience in Niteroi. In my case, I turn and I jog back toward the beach. I do not allow poverty to come too close. Yet, Don speaks to a visibility and an openness that involves close proximity. The kid shuffles right past him. In Port Elizabeth, "brushing by" people on the streets leads Christina to a similar place of close proximity.

I noticed it walking down the streets in Port Elizabeth how many people – I saw so many lesions on their bodies. This was so open and it sent a chill through me to brush by somebody. Not like it made me uncomfortable or think that I could not touch them. Just that it's there. It was scary. It is just so open and right there in front of you - and you just see it.

It is "just so open" and "right there in front of you." In our conversation, reflecting upon these observations, Alison names the experience in a matter-of-fact way when she says, "The bad things really stare you in the face." Thinking about her own experiences, Alison talks about the painfully direct message that she receives in our evening *braai* in a township outside of Port Elizabeth.

I was talking to the leader of the youth group and he said that half of these kids are going to die of AIDS. It is just so matter of fact... It's like the bad things really stare you in the face and you are confronted with them constantly.

Staring us in the face, "bad things" confront us. Yet, as we name the poverty in "beautiful, poor places," *fear of* the coming-near seems incomplete. Spending time with my students' words, I do not detect a deep *fear of* the Other's poverty. We see him up-close, "brush by" him and feel his stare. Yet, we do not seem to fear him.

Returning to Heidegger's description of our fear of the coming-near, I find an-Other possibility. He writes, "But fearing about can also involve others, and

we then speak of fearing for them” (1927/1996, p. 133). On a warm evening at a township *braai*, hearing that so many of our student hosts might die of AIDS, do we *fear for* their health, their future and their lives? Turning to glance at a seven-year-old as he walks by sniffing glue, might we *fear for* his safety, his neglect and his life? With the poverty of the Other staring us in the face, might we *fear for* the Other of social justice? As Heidegger (1927/1996) clarifies, “What is ‘feared’ here is the being-with the other who could be snatched away from us” (p. 133).

In South Africa’s “beautiful, poor places,” we locate poverty’s position. It stands close. It sits right there in front of us. With its face so near, it has the potential to sing to our conscience. We might begin to fear for the Other and for the ease at which she could be “snatched away” from her family and life. Returning to Don’s words, we fear for the “harsh truth of the others’ daily existence.”

Listening for the holler. Being in “beautiful, poor places,” we feel unsettled. At the same time, on some level, we might come to South Africa in order to hear her holler at us. While possibly ashamed to admit it, might we seek out poverty and misery? About his time in third world places, Geoff Dyer (2003) writes, “All visitors to the developing world, if they are honest, will confess that they are actually quite keen on seeing a bit of squalor: people living on garbage dumps, shantytowns, that kind of thing” (p. 37). Do we derive some pleasure from bearing witness to misery? Just as we slow down on a highway to view a car accident, do we journey across the world in order to view the accident of poverty?

On a first reading, I find Dyer's claim that we are "keen" on seeing poverty to be arrogant and uncaring. My distaste results from his bitter, matter-of-fact delivery. Yet, in his words, I recognize a truth. After all, I am "quite keen" on having my students witness poverty. As we roll out of Cape Town International Airport, on the road to the city, I sit back and wait. I know that the informal settlement approaches, but I choose to keep quiet. In their excited anticipation of being-in South Africa, my students look out of the van windows. On this beautiful morning, seeing Table Mountain in the distance, my students talk back and forth about the beauty. Then, rolling across the Cape Flats, we see them. As the van drives-by, they swarm around us. Metal sheet and old lumber nailed together reach up. Hundreds and hundreds of shacks straddle the highway. In the back of the van, behind me, my students sit quietly.

If they travel halfway around the world to South Africa and they do not see her poverty, then James and Joe claim that they would feel "cheated." While Dyer seems to want to see poverty in order to fulfill some hedonistic desire to witness an-Other's suffering, James and Joe offer a more pedagogic reason. They want to experience what they have studied and they do not expect censorship to intervene.

James: We learned about, and studied, the poverty and we knew...

Joe: Expected it.

James: Yeah. I don't know if I would be disappointed if I didn't see it. Disappointed is not necessarily the best word, but like...

Joe: Cheated. We talked about its poverty and because of what they are doing and because there are so many people who have so little and it is

such a big problem. So to go there and to see all these other aspects and to not see the poverty that we have talked about for so long, I would feel cheated.

Thus, we seek out poverty in order to witness first hand. Documentaries, news reports and teachers present a certain image of poverty and my students wish to confirm it. In the face of poverty, the scope of its scars and wrinkles overwhelms. It stands “right there” and every-where.

Similarly, when my students journey to South Africa, they seek to verify an-Other image. Before their journey, in Mandela’s autobiography, they read about a man who seeks to protect the people who imprisoned him. At the South African embassy in Washington, D.C., they hear about the resilience of the people. In viewing *Long Day’s Journey Into Night*, they watch victims’ families hear the truth about the last living moments of their fathers and sons. Then, they watch those same families turn and offer a hand in forgiveness. In my stories, they hear about South Africans who have welcomed me and gone out of their way in order to help me. Thus, before they ever see poverty’s face, a layer of “make up” has been applied.

Making-Over Poverty And Constructing Beauty

In 1998, when I first travel to South Africa with students, I do not recall hearing about AIDS. In writing about their experience, Jessie and Greg do not address the disease. Yet, with the current group of students, AIDS interrupts our daily itinerary. Everywhere, it taps us on the shoulder. With almost five million South Africans suffering from HIV/AIDS, once again, the nation finds itself being torn a-part. As Morin reports in a special Washington Post (April 1, 2004) piece

on South Africa, “By 2010, AIDS is expected to cut life expectancy in South Africa almost in half, from 68 years to 36” (p. A24). In the same article, quoting Sister Priscilla Dlamini, Morin humanizes the numbers: “Everywhere between here and there are empty houses. In the mountains, it is even worse. And when there are people in the houses, there are graves beside them” (p. A1).

At the same time, the governing African National Congress (ANC) receives increasing criticism because of its inability to deliver on housing promises and economic development projects. In a Washington Post (March 15, 2004) editorial, William Raspberry writes, “Blacks once excluded by law are now barred by economics... It is sometimes hard to see the difference a decade of ‘freedom’ has made” (p. A25). Violence sits at the desk next to many students and waits to erupt. Schools have become dangerous places. Between the townships and the city centers, gangland-style taxi wars kill innocent commuters. In bedrooms across the nation, rape casts horrible stains. Home invasion and murder capture daily headlines. Despite the undeniable power of *ubuntu* and hope in the people, after a decade with a new government, growing pains stretch thin this nation’s patience.

Announced in our itinerary, South Africa’s pains afflict us. At the University of Cape Town, we take our seats, the lights dim and we go “Behind Closed Doors.” In this play and in the audience and cast discussion that follows, the topic of rape addresses us. At the top of a beautiful, landscaped garden, we walk into an orphanage and hear about the youngest victims of HIV/AIDS. Leaving our van behind, we wander-out into townships and informal settlements.

In one morning, we visit a poor school that serves students from an informal settlement as well as a private school in Cape Town that serves our upper middle class, South African counterparts. Looking down at our feet, we recognize the contested terrain upon which we stand.

Unannounced in our encounters, as we spend an evening with a youth group in a township outside of Port Elizabeth, Alison listens as the leader of the group states that half of the group's members test HIV positive. Kenny, our host in the Hout Bay settlement, tells us that his young son died last week, but that his son was a good boy who never raped a woman or stole from anyone. When did a base expectation for being a "good boy" become associated with not raping or stealing?

Beauty in poverty. In the face of poverty, again and again, we see hope and strength. Undeniably, South Africans, especially black South Africans, live their days with a perseverance, a patience and a hope that I find staggering. No one describes better this spirit of resilience than Desmond Tutu (1999) when he writes:

It is quite incredible the capacity people have shown to be magnanimous – refusing to be consumed by bitterness and hatred, willing to meet with those who have violated their persons and their rights, willing to meet in a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation, eager only to know the truth, to know the perpetrator so that they could forgive them. (p. 120)

Reflecting on his own time in South Africa, Carter (2002) describes numerous examples of the hope that he finds in the face of the people. At one point, when his host translates the word "hope" into her Zulu language, he begins to understand better the strength of black South Africa:

In Gogo's mind, she translated the word "hope" to the Zulu word *themba*. "Themba" means not only "hope" but also "believe." For Gogo, "hope" is not a possibility but a certainty.

Too often, perhaps, we lose hope because we fail to look for it where we least expect it – among poor black people in a South African homeland... (p. 277)

As we encounter South Africa's Other, my students witness *themba*. As

Elizabeth writes:

I remember walking through the township and witnessing the way of life that these people have and thinking how brave and inspiring they are. They are truly survivors. Every person that I met there was extremely nice and welcoming and would not be overcome by their very difficult economic situation. This visit was an empowering and inspirational moment in my life.

In South Africa, my students stretch beyond the idea of "beauty in spite of poverty." Instead, we begin to recognize that beauty exists in the face of poverty. We do not have to always "distort" poverty as "ugly." Poverty can be beautiful. In poor places, beauty exists. The spirit of the poor can inspire and empower. We can see the Other as beautiful. As Alison notes, she felt idealistic for the country because "everybody did share this one sort of 'oh-it-will-get-better'" mentality.

Pulling back her hair and seeing beauty in the face of poverty might well be one of the greatest gifts that we receive in South Africa. Aware of Carter's advice, we look for hope in unexpected places. Yet, I wonder if what we find is natural. Might we construct some of the beauty that we claim to discover? As I discuss in chapter two, at times, we seem to affix exotic masks to the faces of our hosts. Listening to my current students, I question if we might also apply a layer of make-up in order to hide some of poverty's deepest scars? While we might come in search of poverty, might its scope overwhelm us and lead us to look with

less scrutiny? Coming in search of *ubuntu* and hope, might we exaggerate these powerful realities in order to make-over poverty's most grotesque blemishes? In writing about our senses and our inability to always detect accurately what we encounter, Merleau-Ponty (2002/1945) points out, "Every sensation is already pregnant with a meaning" (p. 346). On some level, do we find what we *expect* to find in South Africa's Other?

Missing some -thing. In describing *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica*, the national anthem, Joe writes, "What made the song great was that we heard it from every group we met." Later, in our conversations, Joe makes a similar claim and most of us agree. The music captures us. Yet, in our conversation, David poses a question, "When did we hear it sung by the whites or the Indians? I only remember it being sung by blacks." We pause. We think. David is correct. In our visits to black schools and communities, they welcome us by singing to the world. In white and Indian places, we arrive in silence. Why have we been so inclusive in our discussions about music? From our visits in certain communities, why have we forgotten about the absence of this sound?

Returning to the kitchen in the Hout Bay informal settlement, Kenny announces his son's death. As he continues, we find inspiration in his outlook on death. In listening to my students, they walk away impressed by his hope in the face of death. Instead of grief and mourning, Steve hears pride and celebration:

Of course he was upset on some level that his son died, but he was also able to celebrate the time that he lived and it's not an idea that I had encountered. It is actually something that I think about now. I haven't had a close relative die, but I am really curious to know if someone really close to me dies how I'm – if I'm going to be able – because I really liked that idea of celebrating the time they lived. I want to see if I can do that.

James echoes this sentiment. He writes:

His son had died less than a week before our arrival, yet there he was showing us around, teaching us about his home, and until it was brought up, no one had any clue that he had just suffered that horrible loss. I remember he told us he wasn't sad that his son had died, but happy that he had lived. That one idea made a huge impression on me.

Standing in that kitchen and witnessing this man's courage, I do not want to diminish his strength or the message about celebrating life that he gives to my students. Yet, I wonder why we hear this part of the story so clearly, but miss the part about him being so proud that his son did not rape or steal? Have rape and crime become so prevalent that we do not want to hear that line? Still, his words do not fall on completely deaf ears. Christina hears some-thing. In her repetition, awkwardness exists. She has a hard time skating past the rape comment.

I was so touched. Do you remember? He was like, 'I was so proud of him. He was such a great kid. He didn't rape anyone.' He was proud of him because his son didn't rape anyone. 'My son was a hard worker.' The fact that it was a week later and he had already moved on... He was back on his feet. There wasn't a long grieving period like you see here.

Yet, Christina's emphasis on the rape comment is short-lived. She circles it once and then she, too, moves forward to focus on the father's strength.

About the townships, Steve declares, "No one in the township acted depressed or upset with their living conditions." As Elizabeth writes, "It was hard to leave the township as sad as I would have imagined because of the positive spirit and warm attitudes of the community members." Is it possible that we deflate our sadness by inflating our sense of the community's positive spirit? Do we look away from the anger in the eyes of the people who choose to ignore our visit? With a little eavesdropping, might we hear the pessimism in the voices at

the Other table? Instead, do we apply face-paint and create a smiling South African sambo?

I pose hesitantly these questions. They speak to a possible attempt on our part to “turn away” from the pain that afflicts South Africa. Along this de-tour, we seem to construct a degree of beauty in the face of poverty and in the face of the people’s increasing frustration. We seek to meet our own expectations about *ubuntu*. We also protect ourselves from the most “ugly” characteristics of the Other’s face. In the lobby of the theater, before attending “Behind Closed Doors,” we read South African stories of rape. These disturbing tales do not read like Mandela and Tutu. They speak to a violence with-in the Other. *Ubuntu* does not live here. As she read these stories, Elizabeth writes, “I remember reading them and just becoming speechless.” Seeing the deepest scars in the face of poverty, we go mute.

After first arriving in South Africa and seeing the informal settlements along the highway, in her speechless-silence, Alison tells herself a story: “I wanted to rationalize that living without electrical power and running water would be novel; an adventure, perhaps.” We attempt to “trick” ourselves into believing a fiction. We try to cope with an injustice on a scope with which we are unfamiliar. Perhaps, we construct a little beauty in order to “cover up” our historical complicity in what we see.

Of course, Other possibilities exist. Listening to me as their teacher, perhaps, the students echo my own passion for South Africa and my glorification of the people. As well, I cannot discount the short length of our stay. After all, in

two weeks, it is difficult to reach an informed understanding about a place and its people. Two weeks allows plenty of time to turn away from, but little time to turn-back-toward, the Other. I also recognize how our role as strangers limits our access to the stories of frustration and bitterness. Why should a young person living in a township tell a group of American day-visitors his true story? We might not apply the “make-up” at all. Instead, the Other might construct the beauty. They reveal only what they want us to see. As Alison asks, “Do you think because we’re white that they would hold back a little?”

In response, David affirms her suspicions. “Sure. Why not? And we’re strangers, first and foremost.” In our conversations, the students pursue this idea that we have missed some-thing. Possibly, responsibility rests on both sides. We see what we want to see and the Other exposes what she wants to expose. With some hesitation, David leads us down this path with a brave statement:

I felt that this idealism disgusted me a little, but I guess it is necessary. This sounds really bad. It’s just... It is great after apartheid... I don’t think it should be any other way, but I still... a little part of me inside wanted those blacks to just be angry and say fuck your... This is multiracial South Africa, but it is still very much divided. We’re not a bunch of different shades of colors holding hands. You always see the children holding hands.

For David, *themba* and *ubuntu* tire him. Standing in an informal settlement, he wants to see the community’s anger. Steve agrees. He asks, “How could they forgive?” Yet, the path snakes back and forth and we find it difficult to follow David. We remain convinced that we have seen hope. James flips scenarios and brings South Africa home. With few breaths in between, he declares:

I never saw any anger. I remember thinking that if the average American “run-of-the-mill-George-W.-Bush-voter” were to live his whole life

impoverished by these black people and then all of a sudden the new government comes along and everything is equal and there are more of them and they have been there longer and they have more rights to everything... I just see it would be horrible violence all over. There was violence, but only ten years later and things are still not that much better and people aren't angry. They're patient.

Seeing the oppressors. In South Africa, if we construct beauty for the Other, then we seem to reserve it for only *one* Other: black South Africans. We do not hold any such mirror up to the faces of whites or Indians. As Steve writes, "The white and Indian consensus that I received seemed to be that South Africa was going down hill and they were pessimistic regarding the future of the country." Before leaving for South Africa, Elizabeth meets a white South African at a party. She tells us the story and it draws nods of agreement from most of the students.

The most negativity that I saw toward South Africa was from South Africans in America before I even went and after I came back. I was at a party before I went and there was a girl from South Africa and I really wanted to meet her. I told her that I was going to South Africa and she was like, 'Why would you want to go there?' I told her because of the experience that I would have and the different culture. She said something like, 'I guess it is better that you are going now before the country is completely in ruins.' She was just so negative and she said that she would never go back.

Just as we might cast black South Africans into roles characterized as patient and hopeful, we leave the "beautiful, poor places" and encounter whites and Indians reading their own typecast scripts. Alison confesses:

Pierre, our guide, had such a friendly smile, and even though I knew him to be a friend of Mr. Garran's, I still thought of him as a white oppressor. It was almost like the instant I got off the plane, I sympathized with the black Africans and wanted to see the worst in white people.

Alison does not stand alone. Describing his arrival in South Africa as a Peace Corps volunteer, Carter (2002) writes:

When that plane touched down, I believed that every Afrikaner was a brutal policeman, and every black person a freedom fighter. Granted, the revolution was over, but in my mind the roles were still the same, and I knew whose side I wanted to be on. (p. 13)

We “sympathize” with black South Africans. We even see them as “freedom fighters.” Meanwhile, in our baggage, we carry nametags such as “brutal policeman” and “oppressor” and we pin them on whites. When we want to sympathize with the oppressed, we might not want to hear angry or pessimistic words. We find more comfort in seeing the “good guys” as optimistic and positive. Yet, we hear clearly the anger and frustration of the oppressor. It matches his biography.

More must be written about the issue of race and the roles that we cast. In particular, the place of Indians in South Africa’s script requires attention. We also should pay attention to our tendency to paint in broad strokes an American notion of black and white across South Africa’s canvas. Yet, for those discussions, I reserve space later in the chapter. At this point, I bring in the issue of Other races in order to illustrate two points. First, we do find anger and despair in South Africa. Yet, we seem to find these feelings located exclusively in white and Indian communities. Second, we put one hand forward to meet the Other while clenching tightly our preconceived notions in a fist behind our backs. These prejudices do not dictate what we see. Yet, at times, they argue persuasively. These prejudices and expectations can blur our vision. Thus, using Gadamer’s

(1960/1989) language, we must direct our “gaze ‘on the things themselves’” (p. 267).

As possible sculptors of some of the beauty that we find in the face of poverty, we should remember that we still use poverty’s clay. We might not possess 20/20 vision or hear perfectly, but we are far from being blind or deaf. We see AIDS. We hear about sexual violence. We watch children “shuffle by” and sniff glue. Poverty’s face captures us. We gaze “on the things themselves” and they surround us. At best, we “smooth over” some of their harshest lines. Yet, they still confront us. Perhaps, in order for us to cope, the “in-your-face” nature of South Africa’s poverty demands some “smoothing over.” If the people expressed desperation and anger, maybe we would find it too heavy a load? Perhaps, the people, too, would find the weight unbearable.

Hidden Back At Home: Our Own Beautiful, Poor Places

Before leaving the “beautiful, poor places” where Steve leads us, one more dimension of the landscape merits attention. The “in-your-face” nature of South Africa’s poverty shows us an-Other path. We wander through the beauty of the out-of-doors, hear the power in the voice of song, recognize the face of poverty and detect the beauty within that face. Still, one more turn awaits us. Walking around Port Elizabeth, as Christina points out, “You just see it. In the U.S., I just didn’t see that. I’m not saying that it doesn’t exist. I’m just saying that I didn’t see it.” Alison adds, “We (Americans) really do such a better job of hiding it.” In Christina and Alison’s words, the signpost becomes clear. South Africa’s “beautiful, poor places” direct us back home.

In writing about the poor, O'Donohue (1999) draws our attention to their invisibility in our lives:

We never read of them in the papers. We never hear of them in the news... Their voices would be slow and direct and would gnaw at our comfort and endanger our complacency. Most of us who are privileged live quite protected lives and are distant from and blind to what the poor endure. Out of sight, out of mind. What is absent from view does not concern us. (p. 250)

For most of my students, South Africa represents the first time that poverty has a chance to get close enough to shake its stick at them. In the privileged Montgomery County suburbs of Washington, D.C., as O'Donohue claims, we live protected lives. Back home, as Alison explains, "We really do such a better job of hiding it." Yet, wandering-out into South Africa's "beautiful, poor places," we begin to wonder about the movement in the shadows back home. In a Washington Post editorial (March 15, 2004) written home from Cape Town, William Raspberry claims, "The contrasts between haves and have-nots are starker here, but they call to mind similar contrasts back home in America" (p. A25). From a-far, we begin to see a-cross near borders. Looking at South Africa's gates, we see our own barriers.

Fences. Reflecting upon our morning school visit in Hout Bay, Don remembers the gates and fences that surround the school:

One of the things I remember most clearly about Hout Bay High School was all of the bars everywhere when we drove up. There were metal gates and we had to wait for them to be opened for us... When we went outside beyond the edge of the building there was that view of the bay with the chain link and the bars straight up. It was fenced in and protected, but at the same time, it was sort of jail-like.

As soon as Don finishes describing the fences and gates, Joe adds, “Every building was like that. Homes were all fenced in and so secure.” Their words take me back to my first trip to South Africa. On the first morning, in the Johannesburg suburb of Rosebank, I leave my hotel for a run. Jogging through the well-to-do neighborhood, I discover what Carter (2002) describes so well after his own walk through that same neighborhood:

In the morning, as I walked down the streets in Rosebank, I noticed that every single house was ringed with security fencing, concrete walls with razor wire on top. Many had signs warning about high voltage. These walls, Allister Sparks said, are a “cruel inversion of apartheid,” imprisoning the people within. (Carter, p. 232)

You cannot see the walls encircling schools and homes in South Africa and ignore the economic apartheid that continues to grip the nation. After my morning run, the visibility of the barriers hits me. Likewise, in Hout Bay, the school makes us think of a jail. Later on the same day, it does not help that we visit a school for primarily white, upper class students in Cape Town. As Don notes, “It is such a contrast going from one school to the other. You have these poor black kids shut up... The disparity between the two schools was tremendous.” No one would disagree. Yet, in our conversation about South Africa’s walls, Alison reminds us that we have similar walled-in places. “We live in a pretty insulated place where there aren’t bars on our schools, but if you went to South Central Los Angeles or East St. Louis, there are going to be bars on the schools.” Economic apartheid resides in America, too.

Jonathan Kozol brings us all the way home. In *Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s Schools* (1991), he reveals the apartheid in my students’

backyard. In describing where my students live, Kozol quotes a business leader who has just finished touring several Washington, D.C. public schools:

If anybody thinks that money's not an issue, let the people in Montgomery County put their children in the D.C. schools. Parents in Montgomery would riot.

The D.C. schools are 92 percent black, 4 percent white, 4 percent Hispanic and some other ethnics. There is no discussion of bussing with the suburbs. People in Montgomery and Fairfax wouldn't hear of it. It would mean their children would have to cross state borders...

Black people did not understand that whites would go to such extremes to keep our children at a distance. (pp. 184-185)

In the world of Montgomery County, we live a-cross the border from the poorer areas of Washington, D.C. and we ignore life on the Other-side. At home, as De Botton (2002) points out, "We have become habituated and therefore blind..." (p. 243). We do not see the fences and the poverty. Yet, when we travel, De Botton claims that we adopt a more receptive mindset. He writes, "What, then, is a travelling mind-set? Receptivity might be said to be its chief characteristic. Receptive, we approach new places with humility" (p. 242). Yet, after some-thing gets "in-your-face" in a distant place, I suggest that we re-turn home with a bit more unsettled mind-set. Our humility does not disappear overnight. In our suburban homes, we sit less comfortably. A-cross near borders, now, we see more clearly.

As well, my students speak to our power to hide poverty. In talking about South Africa's metal gates, David states, "We use security systems on our schools. I don't really see the difference." Joe clarifies quickly that we hide our security systems. "Yeah, but they are hidden. It is not aesthetically... It's silent

alarms and motion detectors.” Behind Joe’s words, we deal quietly with the poor. If they come close, machines detect their presence and announce them. The aesthetics of our schools and neighborhoods go unmarred.

Expanding horizons. During his home stay with the Indian community north of Durban, Steve recalls a conversation in which he told them that he had gone into a township. He writes:

I told them of our visit to the Cape Town township. They reacted with total shock, almost seeming surprised that we came out of the experience alive. When I inquired if they had ever visited a township or provided any service to a township to help it to improve, I honestly think they thought I was crazy. I was answered with a stern “no,” and then got a lecture regarding the “laziness” and “violent tendencies” of the black communities.

When I read Steve’s description, I nod knowingly. I have been in the exact same Indian community, told a similar tale of my entering a township, and received a comparable “lecture” about the errors of my way. On some level, Steve and I use the tale in order to show where we stand. We declare our loyalties. Yet, another dimension exists. In describing a conversation with a white, South African woman, Carter (2002) speaks to a potential hypocrisy that accompanies our proud declaration of having been in a township:

“No, it (apartheid) really wasn’t a part of my life. I never oppressed anyone,” she said defiantly. “I like black people.”

John had to go to the rest room to keep his tongue in check. While he was gone, she told me, “Yes, of course I felt bad for my maid, but what could I do?”

“Did you ever go to her house?”

“Our maid’s house? Her family lived in the township,” she said, as though it answered my question.

“Have you never been to the township?” I asked, knowing the answer.

“No, have you?” she asked, on guard against American hypocrisy.

“Yes.” (p. 248)

If the woman truly had been on guard against American hypocrisy, she would have asked if Carter had visited the poor places of America. As Steve writes, “While I was quick to criticize the Indian family for not being more open and visiting a township, I myself have never been to Anacostia or the other poor areas of D.C.” We go a-round the world in order to find “beautiful, poor places.” Yet, we do not cross our backyard and see our own poor places.

Still, wandering-out into South Africa’s “beautiful, poor places,” my students seem to have improved their sight back home. They speak to an expanded way of seeing Gadamer’s concept of “horizon.” For Gadamer (1960/1989), “The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point” (p. 302). I expand my horizon by going out into the world and placing myself “in the other situation in order to understand it” (p. 303). Distance plays an important role. As Gadamer (1960/1989) explains:

A person who has no horizon does not see far enough and hence overvalues what is nearest to him. On the other hand, “to have a horizon” means not being limited to what is nearby but being able to see beyond it. (p. 302)

Yet, from our encounter experience in South Africa, an-Other possibility exists in developing our horizon. I replace Gadamer’s “overvalue” with “undervalue.” A person who has no horizon does not see far enough and hence might also *undervalue* what is nearest to him. By being-in South Africa’s “beautiful, poor places,” we see better into our own “poor places.” By doing so, we stand better

prepared to detect a potential beauty that resides in our own “poor places.” When we can see beyond the near by going a-far, then it serves us well to turn around, to look back at the near, and to see it for the first time.

In de-touring through South Africa’s “beautiful, poor places,” we come home to see more clearly our own poverty for the first time. In chapter five, I address in more detail the notion of coming-home. (In that chapter, actually, I argue homecoming inadequately names the experience. “Homesteading with my-Other self” captures better the essence of that structure of the encounter experience.) Yet, before turning to home, as we wander-through “beautiful, poor places,” an-Other structure of the encounter experience taps us on the shoulder and we feel summoned-by guilt.

Being Summoned-By Guilt And Facing Responsibility

When I was walking through the township, I had a bottle of water, sandwich, shoes on my feet and Steve had a digital camera. No one there had ever seen a digital camera. He was taking pictures and showing it... You’re like, Wow. This is just a toy and you guys will never see this again and look at the sandwich I have. You could not eat tonight and I am eating a snack. That’s what makes you feel bad when you have something and take it for granted and then you realize that there are so many other people that you’re just looking at that just don’t – It’s not even an issue to you that you’re going to have a bottle of water when you’re thirsty, but their water is dirty and they don’t have that. (Joe)

Walking through a township drinking bottled water and eating a sandwich, Joe feels his privilege, his wealth, his white-ness and his first world-ness. What grips us when we see “so many Other people that... just don’t” have access to the taken-for-granted, everyday possessions of our own lives? As we eat a snack surrounded by children who might not find a meal tonight, how do we digest that reality? Instead, might that reality “eat away” at us? As O’Donohue (1999)

declares, in facing poverty and injustice, we “feel a haunting guilt that should eat into our complacency and render our belonging uneasy” (p. 110).

Following Joe’s words, we walk into a township where guilt begins to “eat into our complacency.” Coming from the first world where we hide poverty, my students’ eyes open up and they begin to encounter the Other of South Africa’s poverty. In the process, guilt gnaws at them. As Alison confesses in our conversation, “One of the huge feelings that dominated my mind the whole time we were on the trip was guilt... I don’t know if anyone shared the same sentiments, but feeling horribly guilty a lot of the time.” In response to Alison, each student admits to receiving a summons from guilt. Exploring this summons-by guilt, my students’ words, the voices of Other authors and an etymological journey reveal the depths of this structure of the encounter experience. Historical privilege exposes us. We sense the deepness of our pockets. We recognize the luxury of being able to move between worlds. We scold ourselves for our prejudices. Digging deeper, guilt summons us as we pull back the curtain and detect our own power. In our encounter with the Other, do we continue to practice a form of “colonial extraction?” Digging even deeper, can we face-up-to our guilt and be-come responsible for an-Other? At this depth, might guilt offer a de-tour toward a coming-together with the Other?

Before unearthing some of the meanings of guilt in my students’ experiences, I feel compelled to share a personal concern. I suspect that this structure of the encounter experience might create an initial hesitation on the part of some readers. “Guilt” has become a word tossed easily around the dialogue

surrounding race and class. In particular, “white guilt” seems to appear uninvited in every discussion of race, racial identity, reparation and reconciliation. Thus, prior to any exploration, the word itself might cause some people to form pre-judgments. I ask simply that people wait and follow where my students lead.

At the same time, during the trip, my students were seventeen and eighteen years old. While I have wrestled with the place of guilt in my life as a privileged, white male for some time, my students stand near the starting line. They remind me of myself when I was seventeen and stood in the Brazilian city of Niteroi. Looking up, from all sides, I saw the *favelas* creeping down the hills toward me. I wondered about poverty and wealth. Riding the bus home, buzzing in through the gate, walking by the pool into my host family’s home, I found it difficult to leave the images behind me. The Other of social justice had whispered to me.

Despite their education and their open-minds, my students live in the world of well-manicured lawns where the Other of social justice goes rarely. Knowledgeable about the world, they maintain the comfortable distance provided by CNN. Yet, in South Africa, for one of the first times in their lives, they go face-to-face with the third world Other. I locate their words and their stories in this context. I see them positioned at the starting line. While I might view “guilt” as a re-packaged and re-worked topic, they name it for the first time. They understand some of the rhetoric surrounding the word, but they also speak honestly about their feelings. In South Africa’s townships, they stand on the Other

side of the CNN cameras. They cannot hide in a comfortable living room. In South Africa, they begin to wrestle.

Exposed

I felt guilty that I was so young and my parents paid for everything and I live with my parents and I have all this nice stuff and none of it is mine. These people see me and they know that this guy is just a kid here on vacation – just a poor little rich kid whose parents paid for everything. He has no idea what our life is like. I felt guilty because of that. (James)

James' words open up an essential element of the guilt structure. As he states, "These people see me and they know." In chapter two, Jessie and Greg speak about feeling an advertised and an alienated presence. They, too, feel "seen." Yet, James takes us in a different direction. For James, they see him, but they also know some-thing about him. He does not feel advertised or alienated. He feels exposed. They know that he is a "poor little rich kid." Later in the conversation, he returns to this idea when he says, "I was so young and I have all of this and everything was given to me. These people work so hard for their whole lives and they still pretty much have nothing compared to what I have." In these words, he describes the Other's hard work and how that work fails to translate into privilege. In Other words, he speaks to the inequity between his life and the Other's life. A connection exists. His privilege stands in opposition to the Other's lack of privilege. When he and the Other go face-to-face, he turns red because he knows that he has a "comparative advantage." His being born into a white, first-world, privileged family has given him everything. As Levinas (1961/1969) points out, "The welcoming of the Other is ipso facto the consciousness of my own injustice" (p. 86).

Levinas (1961/1969) commands us to leave “the being at home with oneself where everything is given to me” (p. 76). James’ use of these very words, “where everything is given to me,” speaks to a discomfort with his life. For James, being-with the Other of South Africa’s townships unsettles his “inherited” privilege. Imagining the Other’s disapproving shake of the head, he feels guilty. In a sense, he asks, How did I “earn my spot” as a first world, white, upper middle class student? For one of the first times, he questions his “place under the sun.”

Ignorance revealed. At the same time, James’ words reveal an-Other reason for his feeling guilty. He claims that the Other looks at him and responds, “He has no idea what our life is like.” Thus, for James, his ignorance of the Other stands exposed. In this sense, we can add to Levinas statement and suggest that “The welcoming of the Other is ipso facto the consciousness of my own injustice” and of my own ignorance. Out in the world, we begin to see what we did not see before. Face-to-face with the Other, we sense the deficits in our own sheltered knowledge. A potential exists for us to catch early glimpses of what Freire calls “education as the practice of freedom”:

Education as the practice of freedom – as opposed to education as the practice of domination – denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world; it also denies that the world exists as a reality apart from people. Authentic reflection considers neither abstract man nor the world without people, but people in their relations with the world.
(1970/2000, p. 81)

In South Africa, we cannot turn off the news or close the textbook. Standing in front of the Other with our digital cameras and bottled water, we look down at our own hands. We see our possessions. The Other’s empty hands are not “abstract, isolated, independent or unattached.” Especially when they reach out to grasp our

own hands and we have to shift our belongings. Unlike our own physically brief handshake, a black South African in a township will engage you in a hand-embrace. From the initial clasp, hands and arms slide upward into an embrace of two fists. Then, they fall back down to an extended grasp. At this point, more than once, my host has covered our two hands with his second hand. In an almost blanket-like way, he holds our hands together. Of course, I cannot reciprocate because inevitably my second hand holds some possession.

In shaking hands and in seeing the Other, Levinas (1961/1969) writes, “The Other – the absolutely other – paralyzes possession, which he contests by the epiphany of his face” (p. 171). In reading Levinas and listening to James, I recognize that guilt serves as a symptom of the oncoming, possible paralysis inflicted by the Other’s face. Early on, guilt pains us. It accompanies Freire’s “authentic reflection.” Yet, I do not want to miss what James ascribes as the reason for his guilt. Looking closely, his words expose his privilege and his lack of awareness of the Other’s life. For these characteristics, he feels guilt. Yet, for James, his guilt develops just as much from the act of exposure as from what ends up being exposed. Guilt washes over him as he imagines disapproval by the Other. In South Africa, he feels guilty because of the perceived visibility of his privilege and his ignorance. He wears them on his sleeve. He cannot hide them here. The people will see. The people will know.

None of you are black. Similarly, our white faces make us stand out. As Dave states in our conversation, “Of course we should feel the weight of our skin color.” Yet, I wonder if we feel racial guilt because of the historical power of

whiteness to “color over” the Other or because we stand exposed. After all, in white suburbs, we walk relatively guilt-free. We live well. Yet, in Durban, while meeting with a journalist, Christina remembers the sting of his words when he examines our all-white group. She writes, “We said that we were from D.C. and he just looked at us and was like, ‘Wow. None of you are black.’ That’s the kind of thing. All of us were well-to-do, white people from a suburb of Washington.” Outside of those suburbs, our white privilege announces us. It takes a white, South African journalist to hold up a mirror and make us look at ourselves. Guilt comes from exposure. When brought out into the Other’s world, we come to grips with all that we have and all that the Other lacks. In facing the Other, our white skin blushes because our “secret” has been revealed. For years, we have been enjoying quietly the privileges of race, class and first world-ness.

Earlier in this chapter, I share Steve’s description of how his Indian host family responds with shock when he tells them the story of our group’s visit to a township. Yet, Steve admits that he has never been to Anacostia. He writes, “I am just as guilty as the Indian family I earlier accused of being ignorant because I was just as guilty as they were of doing absolutely nothing to help.” Back home, we live unexposed. Without looking into the face of the Other, we prevent guilt from visiting us. Yet, in South Africa, guilt summons us. We have to admit to what we possess and to what the Other lacks. In her townships, schools, AIDS orphanages and informal settlements, we find it more difficult to remain isolated and unattached. We recognize that our complacency bears a resemblance to complicity. As Steve does, we have to stand accused of our own inaction in the

face of injustice and ignorance. As Levinas (1991/1998) claims, “Proximity... undoes me and puts me before an Other in a state of guilt” (p. 58).

Keeping The Change

Exposed “before an Other,” money represents the medium of inequitable exchange through which much of our guilt accumulates. We possess it. They lack it. On its most basic level, according to Heidegger (1927/1996), “being guilty” means “having debts” and it represents “a way of being-with with Others” (p. 260). Thus, recognizing guilt as grounded in debt, my students’ discussion of money makes sense. After all, in a capitalist world, we think of debt in monetary terms. In talking about his Indian host sisters, Steve describes the range of wealth that he finds inside South Africa:

Their mom gave them this allowance and it was a whole lot for them to go out and spend. I was thinking, “What could you possibly buy with that?” It was so little money and these are more or less well-to-do families... It was like here is this one spectrum where it is a whole lot of money for these girls and nothing for me and these are well-to-do people and then there is a class that is even so much lower. That made me feel really guilty. It put in perspective how much more money, how much wealthier we were and I guess it is like having that money and flaunting it. That makes you feel guilty.

For Steve, having so much money makes him feel like he is “showing off.” He “flaunts” his wealth. In our conversation, Joe agrees, “We bought something everywhere we went.” Alison finishes, “And we let people keep the change.” On these last words, I pause. Allowing the Other to keep the change makes us uncomfortable.

In describing the haircut that he receives in the Hout Bay settlement, James speaks to the discomfort that accompanies his decision to overpay and to

allow the young barber to keep the change. Similar to Steve, he feels that his decision might make him look like he is “showing off,” “flaunting” his money or “rubbing it in the Other’s face”:

I kinda felt guilty paying him so much – like rubbing it in his face. I also did not feel guilty because I was helping him out... On one hand, I’m giving him money and it’s good. On the other hand, I’m telling him I have money. I’m a stupid kid and I have all of this money. I can just afford to give it to you without even thinking twice about it. That’s how rich I am. That’s what made me feel guilty.

Flaunting our money, we buy something everywhere and we allow the Other to keep the change. By doing so, James suggests that the students announce to the Other that they are “stupid kids” who can give their money away “without even thinking twice about it.” As compared to seeing the act as generous, we question whether or not our change might insult. With money in hand, we fear that we “rub it in his face.”

Quantifying humanity. Levinas provides some insight into why we might feel so unsettled with our “generosity.” Levinas illustrates the tension surrounding money. He names monetary exchange as the “quantification of man” (1991/1998, p. 37). Thus, when we offer a few extra *rand* to a person, in a sense, we place a value upon that person. We price him. With wads of bills, we announce our wealth and our power. We declare our higher worth. By allowing the Other to keep the change, on some level, we “flaunt” our power and we “rub it in his face.” How could we not feel guilty about participating in such a blatant display of power over an-Other? In this sense, our guilt represents the discomfort that we feel with the quantification and objectification of the Other. We feel uncomfortable paying this debt with dollars.

At the same time, I recognize that I possess wealth inside of a system that oppresses the Other. Thus, when “stupid kids” can just give their money away, they sense the injustice. Looking at the privileged who stand with the poor, Freire (1970/2000) describes the inherent contradiction within the generous act:

(T)hese adherents to the people’s cause constantly run the risk of falling into a type of generosity as malefic as that of the oppressors. The generosity of the oppressors is nourished by an unjust order, which must be maintained in order to justify that generosity. (p. 60)

Perhaps, as we wrestle with the guilt associated with helping the Other, we catch a glimpse of the systemic injustice. James sees it in his deep pockets. Steve sees it in the allowance given to his host sisters. Alison sees it in the change left on the counter.

Jason Carter (2002) confirms some of our guilt when he refuses initially an-Other’s offer to buy him a beer. Taken as an insult, the Other responds:

I know that you are rich and white and from America... And I know that I am poor and black and from Africa. But I can buy you a beer. I know that you are rich, and that I am poor. I knew that when I offered to buy your beer. I know how much money I have, and I know that I have enough to buy you a beer. Do not disrespect me. Allow me to pay for it because I want to. Because I want to sit here as equals and share our beer. (p. 10)

In allowing a person to keep the change, do we challenge his self-respect? Do we tell him that he cannot sit with us as equals? Our proximity exposes our privilege and our money and we feel guilty. Yet, we also feel guilty because in allowing him to keep the change, we direct him to sit at the small table in the back.

In describing a donation to a soccer program for children in the Hout Bay informal settlement, Christina echoes similar feelings. Yet, she reveals an additional possibility that we fear being miscast as insincere. She writes:

Since I enjoy soccer and know what it is like wanting to play, I decided to make a donation towards the transportation of the team, so I gave Ken some money. To this day, I still have uneasy feelings about my gesture. I am happy that I was able to help the soccer team, but at the same time, I keep having this feeling that I came off as the “well-to-do American” trying to show that I could afford things and donate to the less fortunate; and since I only donated that one time, it seems as though it wasn’t really sincere.

In her words, I detect uneasiness because she fears being miscast as insincere. In allowing someone to keep the change and in making a donation to a cause, do we worry that the Other perceives our action as disingenuous? On the Other-hand, swallowing deeply, might we fear our own motives? Christina continues, “One of my biggest regrets is that I didn’t get an address or any information so that I could continue to support the soccer program.” Does she feel uneasy because she questions her own sincerity? When we make the one-time donation or allow someone to keep the change, does our guilt surface because we recognize the limitations of our act? If we truly wish to help the Other, a few *rand* does not satisfy the debt.

Dancing around for change. We know that our money spells out our power and we struggle with the reality that we can make such big words. Yet, we share few letters with Others. Outside of the shops and stalls where we allow the Other to keep the change, on the streets, we face an-Other dilemma. As James writes, “Everywhere we went there were little boys begging. Some would play trash can or bucket drums while their little brothers danced for money... I’m never going to forget some of those kids dancing around for change.” Elizabeth describes a similar moment that captures her and does not let her go. She writes, “Walking along the waterfront in Durban was the first time that someone ever

pulled my shirt and begged me for food. The fact that it was a child made me even more upset... I still think about this event.”

In these encounters, outstretched hands reach for us. In America, we are familiar with the man standing at the traffic signal or sitting on the corner. His sign asks for help. Yet, in South Africa and in many third world places, much smaller hands pull on your shirt. Small boys bang on buckets while their little brothers dance for change. I agree with Elizabeth when she writes, “The fact that it was a child made me even more upset.” South African poverty has an ugly and honest way of displaying its youngest victims. In packs, they roam the boardwalk in Durban and they dance between cars in Port Elizabeth. Interestingly, in Cape Town, where white, Colored (mixed race), and a growing number of black, upper middle class South Africans maintain a rather solid grip on the waterfront area, children appear irregularly. When you do spot a boy or girl looking for money, a police officer or a businessperson quickly chases them away. On the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, South Africa presents its first world face and does not want the tourists to see its third world scars.

For James and Elizabeth, these children capture them. As Lingis (1994) writes, with “the momentary glimpse of the slum child in the street... I can feel arrested in my own intentions, contested” (p. 28). In these encounters, we feel contested over our response. When you have wealth in the midst of children who have so little, as Alison states, “Feeling guilty is pretty easy.” Yet, the guilt does not mean that we choose to help. Instead, oftentimes, we turn away from these children. We pull our shirt free from their small hands and we avoid their dance.

With the child pulling on her shirt, Elizabeth writes, “I didn’t give him anything... I just told him I had nothing and walked away. I still think about this event and wonder if I should have handled it differently.” Avoiding the dance, James explains, “It’s so sad and I want to help them, but at the same time... there’s nothing I can do.” Willing to leave our change on the counter, how do we justify walking away from hungry children? What does James mean when he says that there is nothing that he can do?

Excuses. Elizabeth offers an answer. In our conversation, unsolicited, she returns to the encounter with the little boy pulling on her shirt. It still captures her and she revisits her feelings. In doing so, she reveals an overwhelming sense of helplessness. For behind the young boy tugging on her shirt, a line forms. In an odd reversal on Levinas’ idea that money quantifies man, these children *qualify* money and expose its limitations. They humanize the abstract headlines of poverty, unemployment and hunger. For Elizabeth, the children’s faces present an overwhelming need that her money cannot address. Believing that the line extends too far, she feels unable to address the need. She cannot make the choice between one child and an-Other. Too many stare up at her. She freezes:

The child ran up to me, tugged my shirt and begged for food and I just froze because I did not know what to do. I saw all these other kids over there and for a split second decided that I couldn’t give it to him because then I would feel like I have to provide it for everyone else and if I just provide it for him then I’ll feel guilty leaving all these kids without any food, but then I was like, If I don’t give it to him and I – but I couldn’t – and I still think about that now and I still don’t know what I would have done if I had been approached with that at a different time, but it was difficult and I just had to – and the first thing that came to my mind was to just say sorry and to just walk on.

She claims that she just said “sorry” and she just walked on. Yet, in reading her words, Elizabeth did not just walk on. In some ways, she still stands there. The boy still tugs at her being. She wonders about doing it differently. She claims that she would have felt guilty if she had made the choice. Elizabeth writes, “I would feel like I have to provide it to everyone.” She feels indebted to the entire line and so she chooses no one. Yet, captured by this experience, she incurs a debt with either decision.

In wrestling with the magnitude of the problem, a risk exists that we will allow despair to overcome us. Faced with this sense of being unable to help, we retreat. We turn away and we do not look back. Alison describes this possibility:

It’s so hard because you can help one person, but then you have this overwhelming feeling you’re drowning in a sea of things that you could do. It’s almost like an overwhelming feeling of knowing there are only so many things that you can do or you can choose to sort of let it leave your mind. Let it be six months. Let it be nine months. Then, oh wait, what was I thinking about again?

Alison speaks to despair, but as I look carefully at her words, I see hope too. After all, she writes that we are drowning in possibility. We do not stand without options to help. Instead, there is “a sea of things that you could do.” Yet, she follows this claim with an apparent contradiction that “there are only so many things that you can do.” She confronts the line of children and she recognizes that she can do a lot to help, but not enough. Faced with this guilt, she suggests that we “let it leave our minds.” Over six months or nine months, we “let it be.”

Yet, if Elizabeth stands as an example, “letting it be” does not make it disappear. Instead, as Heidegger (1927/1996) suggests, “letting some-thing be” (p. 79) can open up its meaning. Lingis also informs us that once we have seen the

Other's face, we have a difficult time replacing her in textbooks and behind abstract data. He writes:

It was to put another kind of distance between yourself and him... Your mind takes up numbers and dates and places computed on the different axes of these ecological, sociological, economic, geopolitical and cultural spaces; your mind reproduces within itself the taxonomies and the grammars, the principles and the conclusions... but his face marked only by the brush in the swamps and the winds in the cloud forests, his hands mishandled by the land such that they barely have the dexterity to turn the pages of a newspaper, his rawhide shoes one with his fields and mountains, have afflicted you. (1996, p. 37)

Having had her shirt tugged upon by a child, Elizabeth remains afflicted. The image may fade some, but it stays etched in her mind's eye and it produces a guilt that leaves her uneasy. Could she have done it differently?

Thinking about doing it differently, an-Other possibility appears. What if we use the length of the line of children as an excuse? After all, drowning in a sea of possibility, regardless of which one we choose to help, our action improves a person's life. The choice unsettles us because we cannot help everyone. Yet, we can help some-one. In South Africa, we witness poverty on a human scale for which no abstract unemployment number could prepare us. Still, having made the decision to help someone, an-Other's life should improve. So, why turn away?

O'Donohue (1999) provides an answer that might sting:

We feel overwhelmed and then hopeless. It is important to remember that a proportion of our numbness is convenient. We avoid the harrowing images or allow ourselves to be immediately overwhelmed. Most of us continue our privileged lives within our complacent cocoons. (p. 265)

Do we avoid young boys dancing for change because we seek to preserve our own convenience and complacency? Are we afraid that the little boy might tear our shirt? Freire suggests that we look even deeper. After all, despite our best

intentions, we benefit from a system that rewards being white, first world and upper middle class. We visit the oppressed, but we live with the oppressors. For these oppressors, Freire (1970/2000) declares, “There exists only one right: their right to live in peace, over against the right, not always even recognized, but simply conceded, of the oppressed to survival” (p. 58). Reflecting on our time in South Africa, we owe it to the Other to reflect authentically on this possibility. More than anyone else, as Steve describes how he witnesses my own action as his teacher, I have to reflect critically on my own complicity and hypocrisy.

Teaching Guilt: Facing My Own Shortcomings

In the following passage, Steve describes a walk in South Africa. As a group, we look for a place to eat. In telling the story, he hesitates often. This hesitation does not come from a lack of memory; instead, it speaks to his desire to make me feel less uncomfortable. For good reason, it does not work. I feel extremely uncomfortable. Unknown to me until our group conversation, on that walk, he witnesses me “brush off” a small child’s request for money.

I remember distinctly the situation. We were looking for a place to eat and we were just walking down the boardwalk and we were sort of taking everything in and the ocean was on our right side and all of these stores and whatever else were on our left. What you did specifically with that kid, I don’t know because I remember one specific child, but I don’t – I just sort of remember when he came up. I don’t know what I would have done, but I used you as an example and you were just like – Honestly, at first, I was like that’s – I mean it’s a little cold that you could so easily – When it’s obvious that this kid, I mean, no matter what he is putting that money into, whether it is food or glue or whatever, it is obvious that he is poor. Sometimes there is a debate in America when you see a homeless person on the street or some dude bumming for money. It is like he might actually be doing alright and he is just bumming for money, but it is so obvious that these kids are poor and he is, like, a four year old kid without a parent and that, in and of itself, just says there is something very wrong with this situation. At first, I thought it was a little cold, but when you

think about it, it's like you can't give money to all of them... So, I don't know what to do, but my initial reaction is, like, it's a little cold, but in hindsight, it's probably the wiser thing to do. (Steve)

In chapter one and throughout these pages, I position myself as a social justice educator. On this page, I recognize myself in the words that Freire uses to describe the teacher-as-hypocrite. He writes:

What are serious students to think of a teacher who for two semesters spoke passionately about the necessity for popular movements to struggle for their autonomy and who today, denying that he has changed, indulges in pragmatic attacks against these same popular classes...

There is no right thinking that can be separated from a kind of coherent, lived practice. (1998, p. 40)

It pains me to think of my "pragmatic attack." In a brief moment, unaware of being watched, I push by a child. Having spent months with these students advocating for justice for the poor, I lose credibility with one sweep of a hand. My lived practice voids my right thinking. I fear the consequences. When Steve concludes that brushing off a child's need is "probably the wiser thing to do," guilt slaps me. When Alison adds, "Don't you think we all sort of look at you as – I know that when we first got there that we were all a little unsure of how to act in those situations and so I definitely took the hint." Reeling from having given such a hint, I feel the heat of guilt spread across my face.

As guilt spreads beyond indebtedness, it directs us to be responsible. I have a responsibility to my students. As Levinas (1991/1998) writes, "To discover oneself always-in-debt" means to "discover oneself responsible for the other" (p. 114). Heidegger, too, recognizes that guilt-as-indebtedness does not conclude the story. Beyond "having debts," he describes being guilty as a state of "being

responsible for,” and “being responsible to,” Others (1927/1996, p. 260). Tracing “responsibility” toward its meaning, I find it positions me as “answerable to another for something” (Onions, 1966, p. 760). Thus, guilt makes us answerable to the Other. If we play inside of the word, “responsibility,” then we discover an “ability-to-respond.” Thus, guilt leads us toward being able-to-respond. Yet, along the way, we falter. When I ignore that child and Steve feels the chill of my “coldness,” I trip.

Captured by the Other’s face, Levinas (1961/1969) claims that I discover my freedom. Speaking of this freedom, he writes, “In its guilt, it rises to responsibility” (p. 203). Yet, Levinas speaks of a philosophical ideal. In my reality, I am not yet free. In my guilt, I do not always rise to responsibility. At times, I sink back to an irresponsible depth. As a watched-teacher, echoing James’ guilt of being exposed, I stutter as I seek to respond to my hypocrisy. Without any of Elizabeth’s doubt, I *know* that I should have done it differently. Years after seeing those boys jumping off the rocks in Brazil, I continue to turn away. I still do not always respond-responsibly.

As Steve talks about the encounter, I feel even worse because I have no memory of the child. I shiver cold at my ability to see past an-Other. Yet, from my first journey to South Africa, a night on that same Durban boardwalk lives with me. After midnight, with an American Fulbright colleague and one of our South African hosts, I walk back from a bar on the beach toward my hotel. Out of the darkness, a young boy runs toward me. While not in English, I know for what he asks. Taking my shirtsleeve and wrist, in a gentle hold, he walks with me.

Despite attempts to keep my eyes averted, I look down and his face stares back. His head leans back, his eyes try to catch mine and he repeats softly the same request, again and again. With his short legs, in order to keep up, he scuffles and runs alongside of, but just behind, me. I search to see from where he came. I see a woman sitting back in the shadows with several sacks of belongings gathered around her feet. She has sent him on this mission. Her son stands a better chance of convincing this white man to hand over a few *rand*. At this time of night, how can she let him be outside?

I keep saying “no.” I tell myself to avoid his eyes, but I keep looking down and they find me. I keep the contact short. Still, I see him and I know that he sees me. I think about shaking him loose, but I hesitate. My colleague walks out in front. He wants nothing to do with this encounter. He puts distance between us. Yet, my South African host, a white woman, seems genuinely amused. She wants to know what I am going to do. She smiles knowingly. The liberal American with whom she has spent weeks debating is about to concede. She wants to witness it.

At some point, I stop walking and I look down at the boy. He barely reaches my waist. I shake my head, “no.” He chants on with his request. Yet, he does not raise his voice. I start to lift my arm. He maintains his grip and I fear lifting him off the ground. Why does he not let go? I turn and walk on. He pulls a little now. He sees me slipping away. He might lose my *rand*. He might have to walk back to his mother with his head down. I sweat a little. I have to get out of this place. I want to break “free.” I throw a look of “help me” to my host. I must

look pitiful. While she would probably like this to go on all night, she intervenes. She curses at him and moves toward us. She carries a tone with which he is familiar. He stops walking, but he does not let go. As our arms stretch between us, I walk slowly because I do not want to “yank” him forward. Just as she reaches out to break the chain, his hand slides off of my wrist and he runs back toward his mother.

I find it difficult to write so openly about this encounter. The guilt returns quickly. In all honesty, it pains me. Yet, I hold such a lucid image of this night in my mind’s eye. Why did I not give him a few *rand*? As Steve declares years later as he witnesses me avoid such a physical engagement with an-Other, how can I live in such a cold place? I respond traditionally with a statement that so many people use. I do not give money to people on the street because I do not trust how they will spend it. Yet, Steve rattles this response when he says, “But it is so obvious that these kids are poor and he is, like, a four year old kid without a parent and that, in and of itself, just says there is something very wrong with this situation.”

In looking deeper, I recognize the hypocrisy with which we all walk at some time. On that boardwalk, it accompanies me closely. Yet, as a watched-teacher, my inability to respond with that child teaches my students to consider responding in a similarly irresponsible way. In our conversation, when Steve finishes, my face reddens. I look around the table and the tape recorder captures my one response: “I am not proud of what I did.” Palmer (1998) describes how teachers must “abandon our self-protective professional autonomy and make

ourselves as dependent on our students as they are on us” (p. 140). Sitting at the table in that conversation and writing through my guilt, I realize that my transformation as a teacher and as a human being depends on Steve. On that night and subsequently, by forcing me to dwell with this encounter, he has taught me. Being seen by him, I see myself.

Living Head And Shoulders Above

Hypocrisy reveals itself and creates guilt in more than one way. In going to South Africa, we seek to encounter the third world. Yet, daily, we run “home” to first world comforts. In the van between township shacks and beachfront guesthouses, guilt rides with us. Our mobility speaks to a power around which the Other in poverty cannot wrap words. Unlike many developing countries, South Africa’s third world pushes straight up against her first world. They live side-by-side. In chapter two, I speak briefly about this proximity when wandering-out into these two worlds. Yet, in my students’ experience, I find the “crossing-over” and the “moving in-between” evokes a sense of guilt. In thinking about where we sleep, Don speaks to our guilt:

We were living it up. In your preparations, you made a point to not have us stay in these British-owned, five-star hotels, but at the same time, we’re living head and shoulders above all of the rest of the people – the majority of the people that we came in contact with. That’s an incredible feeling where every interaction places you on unequal footing.

For Don, every morning and every evening, we come “home” to privilege and to comfort. We “live it up.” Regardless of where we are, we “hop” in our van, close the door and drive back to queen size beds, showers and air conditioning. Yet, we know that the Other with whom we just spent the last few hours has no

van. We know that they do not have the luxury of being able to leave. With the first world standing just around the corner, they cannot go there. They can look in the window, but we sit inside and toast our good fortune. As Joe admits, “I felt guilty for enjoying in the luxuries of the country while living amongst people who made as much money in a month as I spent on lunch.” Leaving the people behind, we enter restaurants and hotels where we dine and sleep with the inequality of South Africa. We do not require fancy definitions of “inequality.” When we pull away from a township, it rears its ugly head in the back of the van. It laughs and tells the Other that she cannot follow. At night, it tucks us in our beds. In the morning, it feeds us breakfast. Expanding on Don’s words that we “live heads and shoulders above the rest,” Alison describes how that can make you feel superior:

You’re looking at all of these things and then we go back to Pierre’s (our host) house. Each of us has a bed. We wake up the next morning and they would cook us bacon and eggs and then you would bring your plate to the black person in the back of the house and they would insist that they would come and get it. They would feel weird if you brought it to them. I think it is perfectly logical and normal to feel like you are a cut above the rest in that country.

Inequality insists that we cannot bring our dishes to “the black person in the back of the house.” It tries to convince us that we “are a cut above the rest.” It tells us, You can go home to a warm bed tonight, but they have to stay here. As Carter describes, in South Africa, the inequality gets in your face because luxury stands so close to survival. They share the same street corner, but they remain apart. The guilt of partaking in the luxury while looking at the poverty summons us. Carter (2002) writes, “In South Africa, I was cursed with the option to run to strikingly familiar surroundings... The proximity made the temptation difficult to

resist” (p. 206). In one section of his memoir, Carter writes about his decision to stay amidst the luxury for a little while longer:

“Do you want to grab some breakfast,” someone asked. “I heard about this place that has eggs Benedict...”

“Yeah,” I said. “My site is really far away. I don’t think that I can make it today anyway.”

I was embarrassed when I had to face the people in Lochiel after wasting so much money, having blown the equivalents of monthly pensions on single dinners. (2002, p. 233)

Similarly, our ease of mobility between places of wealth and poverty embarrass us and place us on “unequal footing.” If we did not have access to such luxury, would less guilt travel with us? How might our experience have been different if we had no van? What if we had stayed in a township? Would we sleep with less guilt? Alison writes, “So here I am trying to come out of my comfort zone and take a look at extreme poverty, while these people don’t have the vaguest idea of what a comfort zone is.” Inequality marks off our comfort zone. The closeness of luxury and poverty works well in preserving the distance between the two worlds. The proximity allows for the shortest of excursions into the places of the Other. With little difficulty and in a short span of time, we can leave home, enter the township and return home. It makes for pleasant day trips. Reflecting on our privilege, we breathe a sigh of relief. We think, It’s a nice place to visit, but we would not want to live here.

Whether talking about a visit to a township or the entire visit to South Africa, wealth fuels our movement. Curtis and Pajaczkowska (1994) describe our “historically constituted privilege of visiting” (p. 201). In Levinas’ world of

totality and in Heidegger's everydayness, we stockpile our privilege. In looking at the Other, we feel guilty because she cannot "visit" us. She does not have the power to leave one world for an-Other. By entering South Africa in order to become more aware of the world and its people, we see our own power and it unsettles us. As Alison states, you start to feel like you are "a cut above the rest." Leaving an informal settlement and returning to a beachfront guesthouse, our comfort weighs on us. We know that the Other inside the township does not make day trips. While we ride in our private van, they leave before dawn and take cramped *koombis* (vans that serve as taxis between the townships and city centers) in order to reach work. Then, they make us bacon and eggs and we let them pick up our dishes.

The Guilt Of Filth And Lice: Scolding Our Prejudices

I guess that it was, like, the things that I would observe and be like, 'Oh, my god.' One thing that I brought up, I remember, and Mr. Garran and I have discussed it before, was when you guys were getting haircuts and me thinking, 'Oh, my god. My mom would not approve of this. They are going to get head lice and that kind of stuff.' I'm thinking this stuff in my mind, 'Oh poverty, poverty, bad, bad, bad.' And that made me feel horrible about how sheltered I am here. (Alison)

Standing in the Hout Bay settlement and watching James and David receive haircuts, Alison reveals a prejudice about the poor. Placing the blame on her sheltered life, she defines poverty as "bad, bad, bad." In her writing about the same event, she states, "Two of the guys in our group got haircuts, and I just knew my mother would not approve. She and I alike would worry about the filth and lice in the scissors and tools. I scold myself for feeling this and I feel guilty for my privilege to feel this way." She claims that her mother would disapprove

and she questions whether or not she shares that stance. In looking into that makeshift barbershop, she envisions that poverty must involve filth and lice. With such a prejudice, she places distance between herself and the Other. With such a pre-judgement, she marks the Other as dirty. With clean hands, she steps back.

In describing an evening *braai* in a township outside of Port Elizabeth, Alison shares a similar experience. Having been told by our guide that many of the young people have AIDS, she wonders about the boy who has taken hold of her hand. She writes, “He holds my hand and I become aware that he may have AIDS. I worry that I have open cuts and I feel ashamed for being so sheltered.” Yet, on this night, she does not step back. She continues to hold his hand. By the end of the evening, as we depart, she turns to him and she hugs him. Still, she feels ashamed of her thoughts. Her sheltered life and her privilege place poverty and AIDS over-there. Now, face-to-face, she feels the guilt that comes from living at such a distance. As she imagines the Other’s hand with open sore holding scissors with lice, guilt summons. She knows better. She questions, what is wrong with me for feeling this way?

In his autobiography entitled *Honky*, Dalton Conley writes about the connection between silence and class. Describing his school playground in New York City, he writes, “On the day to day level of the schoolyard it was the less powerful who spoke more, clamoring to be heard by the reserved, better-off kids, who seemed to quietly pass judgment” (2000, p. 78). As my students and I journey through South Africa, we must remember our privilege and our sheltered lives. My students are the “better-off kids” and they live in a privileged place

where people “quietly pass judgment.” For Alison, she describes honestly how she carries some of those quiet pre-judgments into the townships and settlements. Yet, she also describes an immediate guilt. She does not like the way she feels. In some way, as she turns and hugs a young man after spending an evening with him, she becomes quietly less able to pass judgment. She confronts her guilt, her debt and her responsibility.

Power-To Put Something Back

Hiding behind the words chosen by Alison, power stands quietly. Privilege, wealth and a sheltered life represent power. In the face of the Other, guilt summons us because we know that we possess power. Our possession of power afflicts us. Yet, power remains an ambiguous term. For this reason, we hide it behind other words like race and privilege. Yet, power demands a revealing. By doing so, we start to see from where our guilt summons us. In undertaking this task, Ricouer (1990/1992) helps. He distinguishes between three types of power: the power-over, the power-to-do, and the power-in-common.

The occasion of violence, not to mention the turn toward violence, resides in the *power* exerted *over* one will by another will... We termed *power-to-do*, or power to act, the capacity possessed by an agent to constitute himself or herself as the author of action... We also termed *power-in-common* the capacity of the members of a historical community to exercise in an indivisible manner their desire to live together... The descending slope (of power-over) is easy to mark off, from influence, the gentle form of holding power-over, all the way to torture, the extreme form of abuse. (p. 220)

Historically, in Levinas’ totality and in Heidegger’s everydayness, “power-over” dominates. Inside of South Africa, through apartheid, the white minority exerted its influence and its violence over the black, Colored and Indian

populations. At the same time, the majority of the people were denied their “power-to” and their “power-in-common.” They were divided, relocated and kept a-part from one-an-Other. Today, economic apartheid continues to deny people the “power-to” and the “power-in-common.” Yet, economic apartheid lives on a global scale. It resides in America as well as in South Africa.

Gathering intellectual ammo. In encountering the Other of South Africa, guilt washes over us as we see more clearly our “power-over” the Other. We fear this “power-over” the Other with whom we have spent time. We do not want to abuse our relationship. We do not want to “use” the Other. As David writes, “Was I actually interested in them or were they novelty? A specimen to be observed perhaps even with empathy only to be later used as intellectual ammo in future government classes.” In encountering the Other, do we “stock up” on David’s intellectual ammo? David’s suggestion causes me to look at my own research. In this study, am I exerting my “power-over” the South African Other? In the pursuit of my own intellectual ammo, do I abuse my relationship with my students? If so, what weapon do I load and at whom do I aim it? In exploring my students’ encounter experiences, do I deny the Other her proper place at the table? Might I stand on the edge of committing the crime about which bell hooks warns. In my writing-through of the encounter with the South African Other, I do not want to “reinscribe patterns of colonial domination, where the ‘Other’ is always made object, appropriated, interpreted, taken over by the those in power, by those who dominate” (hooks, 1990, p. 125).

In a sense, David describes a modern-day form of colonial extraction. We travel to South Africa, encounter the Other and take-away what will serve us well in our academic pursuits. David fears that he will use the Other as a means to his educational ends. Ricouer (1990/1992) warns us, “Treating others simply as means is already starting to do violence to them” (p. 266). It places us along the path where extraction has been the historical common-place of encounter. It points out a place where David does not necessarily want to go. It also represents a warning to me. Again, looking at my own teaching and research, do I “use” the South African Other as a means to educate my students? Do I objectify them and make them into my students’ living textbook?

At the same time, the Other does not stand still and powerless. While we hold more power, they have certain resources. If we see them as powerless, we position them in a passive place where we strip them of their ability to act-upon us. Instead, they, too, can find ways to “use” us as means to their own ends. In a Washington Post (August 28, 2003) article about “returning” to Africa, Teresa Wiltz concludes, “(T)o be a foreigner, even as an African American, is to stand out in sharp relief... Foreigners mean money. American foreigners mean a cash cow” (C1). David echoes this idea when he writes, “Was it me or my money?” He reflects on the situation in the Caribbean where entire island economies depend upon tourist dollars. Do our South African hosts see us in the same way? Are we cash cows?

In examining “power-over” one-an-Other, according to Ricouer (1990/1992), we visit the wellspring of violence and oppression. Yet, we might

misinterpret our guilt if we always trace its source to our “power-over.” We can examine our lives and find that we have not abused the Other. We have not twisted her arm or squeezed her throat. We step back and we claim that we are not guilty of any crime. In the past, our ancestors might have wielded “power-over” the Other and practiced oppression. Yet, we do not hold any direct responsibility. Thus, I ask, Why should I feel guilty?

In her study of racial identities among white students, Perry (2002) shares a rather common response by a young white woman to the idea that she holds responsibility for slavery. She writes, “They think that we did it. We didn’t do it. Our ancestors did it. That’s behind us. We are not like that” (p. 87). Yet, we benefit tremendously from its legacy. Levinas (1991/1998) writes, “The past of the other and, in a sense, the history of humanity in which I have never participated, in which I have never been present, is my past” (p. 115). Yesterday, I might not have participated in the historical extraction of life and wealth. Yet, today, I benefit from it. It serves me well and I cannot deny a feeling of some guilt, debt and responsibility. As Ricouer (1990/1992) advises:

The notion of responsibility, however, also has a side turned toward the ‘past’... Recognizing one’s own indebtedness with respect to that which has made one what one is, is to hold oneself responsible. (p. 295)

My past positions me in a first-world place of power. In our contemporary world, standing on the backs of those who have come before, I hold the “risk of occupying the place of another, and thus, concretely, of exiling him, of consigning him to the miserable condition in some ‘third’ or ‘fourth’ world” (Levinas, 1991/1998, p. 149). Despite the limitations of a zero sum outlook, Levinas’ words

convince me. In a global game of musical chairs, my place unseats someone else. In South Africa, my students begin to see where the unseated-Other lives. Yet, in listening to my students, they lead me toward an additional source of their guilt. In this place, a more overarching guilt appears.

An inescapable obligation In questioning his guilt, David states, “It is how I felt too, but I don’t think I can explain it. I can’t back up feeling guilty logically. It is just a visceral feeling of guilt.” Captured-bodily by guilt, David lacks a logical explanation. Don agrees that our guilt “doesn’t make sense.” Yet, it journeys with us. Don continues, “It’s guilt without really responsibility. It’s not your fault necessarily, but I can’t personally help feel like it’s something I feel responsible for to aid, to get involved, to put something back into what I’m taking out.” In Don’s words, within the context of Ricoeur’s “power-to,” I begin to locate the source of our guilt. Don continues, “It’s not like I’m feeling guilty for some crime that I committed. I’m not putting people down. I’m not oppressing people necessarily – at least not directly – but there is guilt.” Instead of exploring our “power-over,” Don takes us toward our “power-to” and he provides the tag line. In his words, we have a “power-to put something back.” In talking with my students, one year after our trip to South Africa, I detect a current guilt. It involves their failure, or perceived failure, to use their “power-to put something back.”

Elizabeth represents the group’s feelings well when she writes, “Since my return from South Africa, I feel as though the country has done more for me than I have done for the country.” On this level, I find an overarching guilt that lives with my students. It does not necessarily consume their waking hours, but it

unsettles them. James writes, “Since my return, I have done very little with South Africa.” In an even more self-accusatory manner, David writes, “I have done nothing with South Africa.” Thus, de-touring away from our use of our “power-over,” we find our guilt in our failure to use our “power-to put something back.” We do not feel guilty for some-thing that we do, but for some-thing that we leave undone.

In the lyrics to his song, *Stay or Leave*, Dave Matthews (2003) writes about the world’s influence on us:

Wake up naked
Drinking coffee
Making plans to change the world
While the world is changing us. (Matthews, 2003, track 8)

For my students, while they might like to change South Africa, at a much faster pace, they discover that she changes them. In response, they experience guilt for receiving South Africa’s gifts without giving a gift in return. Don writes, “As for returning the favor, I believe that it may take many years for me to fulfill my end of the bargain.” They feel a debt to South Africa. They feel a responsibility to “fulfill their end of the bargain.” They know that South Africa has given them more than they have given her. In a similar vein as Dave Matthews’ lyrics, Merleau-Ponty (1945/2002) reminds us, “We choose our world and the world chooses us” (p. 527). South Africa chooses my students.

For several of my students, meeting a young woman at the Amy Biehl Foundation shows them what they could be doing in order to use their “power-to put something back.” Christina writes about meeting Ashley:

What I remember taking out of that experience was that Ashley, the American girl who spoke to us, had such dedication to the country. Like us, she traveled to South Africa for school, and now, only a couple of years out of college, she decided to up and move to the country to work with this organization. She is so young and she is taking on such powerful things; it was inspiring to see and hear about.

Seeing Ashley, we feel inspired, but we also see where our dedication falls short.

In our conversation, Don announces, “Remember when we went to the Amy Biehl Foundation. Here was that volunteer from the United States and she came over for a year. That’s the kind of thing you’re supposed to be doing.” Thus, we feel guilty for not doing what we are supposed to do. We are supposed to be using our “power-to put something back.” Alison adds, “You come home and you have poverty in your backyard and there is something that I should be doing at home too.”

Early in their lives, my students ask, To what degree should I serve Others? For Don, he describes it as “a selfish battle with myself to get involved.” He asks the group, “If you’re not helping someone else, what’s the point?” Returning from South Africa, as Levinas (1991/1998) suggests, we have gained a “consciousness of an inescapable obligation” (p. 94). We feel obliged to help. We feel obligated. We have seen the Other’s face. As Elizabeth writes, “The country has provided me with so much that I... have to try to give back as much as I can.” Yet, we do not know how to respond. Our inability to respond leaves us feeling guilt. Aware of our “power-to put something back,” we wrestle with the translation of Freire’s (1998) right thinking into right action. Looking at their lives, my students wonder where their guilt will lead them. They wish to move beyond their guilt, but they tremble a bit at the thought of what they might have to

sacrifice. Do they have the strength to “put something back?” In order to do so, will they have to “take something out” of their own comforts and privileges?

Guilt As A De-Tour Of Possibility

If we do not follow guilt to its end, then we risk becoming stranded in a place of debt and obligations. As Heidegger (1927/1996) points out, “Guilt is still necessarily defined as a lack, when something which ought to be and can be is missing” (p. 261). Possibly, for this reason, many people associate “guilt” with a negative place. Perhaps, for this reason, David has such a difficult time naming his feelings as guilt. Clearly, for this reason, Joe declares that he is tired of talking about guilt. In our conversation, he states, “Wait. For this whole hour, we have talked about these feelings of being guilty, uncomfortable... It kind of surprises me that we haven’t once in this discussion talked about the stuff that we enjoyed rather stuff that was kind of awkward.”

Yet, in the face of guilt-as-responsibility, I see hopeful eyes. In a de-tour of possibility, I turn back and I find an-Other etymological path. Following this trail, from inside the word itself, we find clues to what we lack. Starting at “responsibility,” it leads us toward a “reliable” place where one is “answerable to another for something” (Onions, 1966, p. 760). Being “responsible” means being “reliable.” Thus, I turn toward this “reliable” place and I find a site where we “gather together and trust” one-an-Other. Guilt, through responsibility, takes us toward relying upon, being “devoted to,” and “binding closely” with, each Other (Onions, 1966, p. 754). It has the potential to bring us together. Similarly, guilt-as-being-indebted places us “under obligation” (Onions, 1966, p. 469). Being

“obligated” to an-Other leads us down a similar etymological path toward a state of “being bound to” (Onions, 1966, p. 620). Thus, far from bad places, guilt brings us to community. It does not divide us. It “gathers us together.” It suggests a “trust” and a “devotion.” It leads us out to a place where we can be “bound closely with one an-Other.”

Earlier in this section, when we leave change on the counter, I explore the guilt that we feel. Now, I re-turn to that experience. Yet, in a township outside of Port Elizabeth, arrived at through one man’s touch, Christina speaks to a very different possibility.

When we bought art in that same township, I bought a really cool plate there. I gave them a bill and there was definitely change involved and I just kind of gave it to him and then wanted to just sort of walk away because I did not want him to give me my change. I did not want to say, Keep the change. When I started walking away, he turned to me and he touched my arm and he said, “I understand what you are doing and I thank you.”

In a touch, the man allows Christina to know that he understands her offer and he thanks her. I wonder if he knows that Christina also thanks him for comforting her guilt. He takes action. He asserts a form of power in the relationship. He makes his own offer. He comforts her.

In allowing someone to keep the change, we make a small offer to help that person. Yet, guilt accompanies the transaction because we recognize the power of our “exchange rate.” We do not want to “rub it in his face,” but we want to help. We want to avoid insulting anyone. For Christina, with a touch, the Other comforts her. In the Other’s action, the exchange becomes more equitable. Both sides receive some-thing. He says, “You have not insulted me.”

In order to move with, and then beyond, our guilt, we de-tour right into its flesh. We cannot run away from it. In reading Levinas (1961/1969), we should expect guilt. After all, he tells us that “The face summons me to my obligations” (p. 215). Thus, as Christina suggests, we should touch guilt and be touched by it. We should live with it. As Matthews (1983) advises, “When I face my guilt... my conscience is awake and begins to function” (p. 7). De Salzmann (1983) adds, guilt helps to “put ourselves into question” (p. 48). In encountering the Other, guilt shakes our hand. In doing so, it wakes our conscience and it leads us to question ourselves. When Don recognizes that we have to “put something back,” he “puts himself into question.” He asks, What do I value? How will I live with Others? Can I go back home and be comfortable living the way that I did before coming to South Africa?

In her play entitled *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, Anna Deavere Smith (2003) introduces Maria. As juror number seven in the Rodney King trial, Maria talks about how one day the jury members confront their guilt. After weeks of hiding their guilt and denying their guilt, they “face up to it.” They yell. They holler. They threaten. They accuse. When it settles down, Maria explains the outcome:

But what happened was everybody came out of their prejudice
their feelings about the defendants,
their guilty,
whatever they thought inside that was guilty,
that they had on their minds,
I'm saying that peoples personal guilts
their personal beliefs
got put aside.
And it was washed away.
Once they took that away

we were able to look at the evidence,
the testimony,
without bringing up what happened to my sister
a long time ago.
Right after that,
We came to the verdict like that. (Deavere Smith, 2003, p. 164)

After “facing” their guilt and being-with it in a lived way, then the jury “washes it away.”

In South Africa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission offers a model of how humans can “face up” to their guilt, in honest ways, in order to move toward reconciliation. In South Africa, the idea of *ubuntu* leads us to the same place as guilt’s etymology. As Tutu (1999) writes, “The central concern is the healing of breaches, the redressing of imbalances, the restoration of broken relationships” (p. 55). We come together. In facing our guilt about our power, we seek forgiveness. Tutu (1999) defines forgiveness as “drawing out the sting in the memory that threatens to poison our entire existence” (p. 271). In touching Christina’s arm, the man draws out some of the sting of her guilt. In our honest encounters with the Other, our guilt awakens our conscience and we hope to reconcile our “power-to put something back” with our fear of losing our privilege. We seek to reconcile our wealth with the poverty of Others. In wondering where guilt will lead us, we hope that it brings us to a place where we feel “the strange happiness of reconciliation” (Levinas, 1961/1969, p. 283).

Yet, we should not lose sight of the place that guilt’s etymology directs us. If we are going to feel the “strange happiness of reconciliation,” then it will take place where we “gather together” and are “bound to one-an-Other.” In the lived

relationships with the Other, we see hope. In describing the generosity of her Indian host family, Alison speaks to this possibility:

I knew that they really couldn't afford it and I think that two weeks ago, I would have felt really, really guilty, but then, I just felt really, really grateful that these people were doing this for me... The barbecue that they threw for us at the end, it was so nice and you couldn't feel guilty. You had to feel good that these people cared so much that we were there.

From the beginning steps of our experience, less guilt walks with us when we encounter our middle class Indian hosts than when we enter the places of poor, black South Africans. Still, Alison speaks to an-Other way of being-with, and possibly moving beyond, guilt. She names a feeling of being grateful and it does not come from a barbecue, but from the Other "who cares so much" about us. Coming-together with the Other, in laughter, in dance and over food, we see that they care for us. In receiving this gift, according to Alison, "you couldn't feel guilty."

The etymology of guilt and Alison's recognition of care in the face of the Other bring us closer to the Other. Yet, up-close, we detect the complexity of the Other's face. As we lean toward her, she blinks. Startled, we sit back. She sees us too! As we begin to realize that we do not simply look-out at Others, but they look back, then we stand ready to de-distance. Slowly, an-Other structure of the encounter experience appears. We begin to recognize ourselves as Other.

Being-Seen: Initial Sightings Of Ourselves As Other

As I follow my students' words toward an-Other structure of the encounter experience, I wish to disclose my difficulty with finding where their words lead. In beginning to see ourselves as Other, we catch only quick glimpses. With only

two weeks in South Africa, time frames my students' lived experience. In regard to the thematic structure of recognizing ourselves as Other, being in South Africa for only two weeks limits our vision. More time and less novelty might very well move us beyond an introductory encounter with the Other to a more sustainable engagement. I suspect that in a deeper engagement, we might come to see more clearly that we, too, are Other. We also might begin to see more clearly that the Other is a self.

Still, in the two weeks that we spend in South Africa, we make initial sightings of ourselves as Other. Thus, I describe this structure as a *beginning* to recognize our own Otherness. Along the path, as compared to the previous thematic structures, my students do not provide as many "twists and turns." Still, they lead me toward a significant place. Thus, while the depth of this structure might seem shallow compared to the previous structures, skimming our hands along the surface and examining the ripples makes sense. In order to begin that process, I extend my hand and I wait for my South African host to welcome me as an-Other in her home.

The Welcomed Other

O'Donohue (1999) writes, "The visitor is one who belongs somewhere else, but is now here in your world of belonging" (p. 42). When we arrive in South Africa, we stand in someone else's home. Knocking on the door, we represent the stranger and the alien. We understand that we do not belong and that we must be welcomed. The choice to welcome or to close the door in my face

rests with my host. Thus, at a core level, I see myself as the one who does not belong. The baggage in my hand announces me as Other.

Still, we walk out of the airport and we plant a flag and declare South Africa to be the Other. Just as Kearney (2003) warns us, we join a long historical tradition where “we refuse to acknowledge ourselves-as-others” (p. 5). In the notes at the end of his book, Kearney (2003) shares an excerpt from an unpublished paper written about the place of welcome in the encounter between two groups. The author of the paper describes the Pilgrims’ landing on the shores of Massachusetts and their encounter with the Pequot Indians. Despite the fact that the Pilgrim was the foreigner and the stranger, the Pequot was cast in these roles. The author argues that power exists for whomever controls hospitality. When you welcome some-one, then you declare, This is my house. When you are welcomed by some-one, then you admit that you do not own the house. You are a visitor in this person’s place. You are the Other here.

Hospitality is always bound to a power of welcoming and shunning. The struggle between the Pequot and pilgrim, in terms of hospitality can be seen as a struggle over the question, ‘Whose house is it anyway?’ (Mills-Knutsen, as cited in Kearney, 2003, p. 242)

Both sides want to be in the powerful position of being able to welcome the Other. When you can welcome some-one, then it means that you own the house. The Other wears visitors’ clothing. As we disembark from our plane and step onto South African soil and feel our hosts’ welcome, despite possible protestations, we know that we have entered their house. We see ourselves as the guest, the visitor, the foreigner and the stranger. On a basic level, we begin to

sense our own Otherness. We also begin to fear that our host might shun us. The welcome might not come.

Prior to her homestay with an Indian family, Elizabeth addresses a feeling of discomfort shared by most of the group. She worries about whether she will be a welcome, or unwelcome, Other. She writes, “I was anxious about how I would be welcomed within their family.” After all, as Kearney (2003) writes, “The laws of hospitality thus reserve the right of each host to evaluate, select and choose those he/she wishes to include or exclude – that is, the right to discriminate” (p. 68). As the Other, standing at the door of our host, we fear discrimination.

Wanting to belong and to be welcome, we worry about exclusion. Elizabeth feels anxiety about being exclusively cast in the role of stranger. When that happens, Sarup (1994) warns us about the potential outcome. She writes, “There is cultural exclusion of the stranger. S/he is constructed as a permanent Other” (p. 102).

During our journey, with few exceptions, our fears and worries go unrealized. Our Otherness seems to lack permanence and it changes in the face of a welcome. As Elizabeth notes, “Once we got to Durban, I knew that I was worrying for nothing.” We find our hosts to be “ridiculously nice.” In Durban, James recalls his family’s welcome:

I remember that our family was ridiculously nice. The mother would not stop giving us food. I was not hungry and she was making more food. It was horrible that they were so nice to us. Our family wanted to keep everyone and to have the whole group stay with them.

Through her generous cooking, an Indian mother welcomes James into her home.

Etymologically, “welcome” means to feel “pleasure at a person’s coming”

(Onions, 1966, p. 998). Split and reversed, I rearrange “wel-come” and find “to

come well.” Looking at “come,” I “move towards” an-Other (Onions, 1966, p. 193). Thus, when James’ host mother offers her welcome and he receives it, they feel pleasure as they move towards one-an-Other. Closer to each Other because of the welcome, they have the opportunity to go face-to-face. Over a table of good food, Merleau-Ponty (1945/2002) describes the possible result:

Once the other’s gaze fixed upon me has, by inserting me into his field, stripped me of part of my being, it will readily be understood that I can recover it only by establishing relations with him, by bringing about his clear recognition of me, and that my freedom requires the same freedom for others. (p. 416)

Thus, just as we gaze at the Other, she gazes back and we strip one-an-Other of a part of our being. Into her home, she welcomes our Otherness. Thus, despite the fact that my knocking at a host’s door announces me as Other, my host’s welcome can invite me into a belonging. Gazing at each Other and entering into conversation, the host has the power to make me feel “less Other.” Christina speaks to this power of the welcome. She writes, “After only an hour of being in the house, Ruveshnee’s mother expressed how she felt like she had known me my whole life.” To be known for one’s whole life declares that one belongs. In the welcome of the Other, Christina’s host mother reduces her sense of being an outsider, visitor and stranger. Her host mother soothes Christina’s alterity.

Thus, our host introduces us as a welcomed Other. In the welcome, our Otherness does not lead to exclusion, shunning and discrimination. Instead, the welcome has the power to reduce our sense of difference. The welcome can make us feel like we belong. Possibly, our Indian hosts extend such a welcome because of their own experience with exclusion. Historically, the British in South Africa

imported Indians as labor for the railroads. Much like the Chinese experience in America, Indians faced discrimination and shunning. No welcome awaited their arrival. Prior to his historic anti-colonial and non-violent movement inside of India, Gandhi began his activism in the anti-pass demonstrations against the South African government. As Indians slowly created a better life for themselves, they remained a notch below whites on the racial hierarchy of apartheid. They benefited from being above blacks and those of mixed race, known as Coloreds, but apartheid still kept full economic and political freedom beyond their reach.

Today, some Indians feel trapped in a similar cage. They believe that blacks benefit from the leadership of the African National Congress and that Indians still remain a notch below an-Other. Many Indians abhor the affirmative action policies of the new government. In their opinion, the policy does not welcome them into the new South Africa. Instead, along with Coloreds, the policy shuns them. In a recent Washington Post article (2004, March 31), Morin states, “Colored and Indians say they were disadvantaged under apartheid – and are now ignored by the new government seeking to expand opportunities for blacks” (p. A17). For Indians and many Coloreds, apartheid has not gone away. It has simply been turned on its head and they remain as an unwelcome middle group.

At the same time, Elizabeth describes how Christina’s host mother speaks to an additional shun that Indians receive. Elizabeth recalls:

My feeling is that they felt very stuck in the middle. They fought so hard and once it was over their things weren’t resolved. Also, Christina’s mother was saying how they are still trying to prove themselves. ‘In South Africa, everyone considers us Indians, but if you go to India, everyone considers us South Africans.’

For Christina's host mother, wherever she turns, she does not belong. She is unwelcome. For this reason, maybe, she tells Christina that she feels like she has "known me for my whole life." Facing the pain of being an unwelcome Other, Ruveshnee's mother opts to welcome Christina's Otherness.

At the same time, our black hosts in the townships and informal settlements extend their hands as well. In his reflective writing, Steve describes being-with black South Africans. He claims, "I felt very at home with everyone that we met and the places we visited. We always seemed so well accepted and everyone was so nice that the issue of 'being different' all in all seemed to disappear." Again, at least on some level, the power of the welcome allows our sense of "being different" to "disappear." When three young guys invite two of my students into their makeshift barbershop for haircuts, the welcome bridges a divide. The host and the welcomed Other have the potential to de-distance themselves. We know that we face each Other as strangers in this place, but as Steve says, our host makes us feel at home. They accept us. In these moments, we discover the authority of the welcome to write a new chapter in the "I-thou" and "us-them" relationship. As Kearney (2003) writes optimistically, "For if each of us can accept that we are the stranger, then there are no strangers – only others like ourselves" (p. 77). In the welcoming of our own "strangeness," we avoid becoming Sarup's (1994) permanent Other. If being a stranger accompanies everyone, then it reduces the distance between us. At the same time, our experience with our own Otherness challenges us to examine how we treat the Other. When we glance at the Other, do we offer our welcome or do we choose to

shun and to exclude? My students describe feeling more welcome at Hout Bay High School than the wealthier, white high school in Cape Town. If a group of South African students entered our school, how would we extend our hands?

Historically, the welcome has been reserved for a few similar Others. In South Africa, despite the overwhelming kindness of so many of our hosts and their ability to make us feel that we belong, at times, we find ourselves feeling less welcome. As Don thinks back on his time in Durban, he confesses, “I felt really isolated during my homestay.” Without the welcome that many of his peers receive, Don’s Otherness remains burdensome. It leaves him stranded in an isolated place. Similarly, on different occasions, our Otherness “gets in our face.” From less comfortable positions, when we catch our hosts watching us, we face our own alterity.

An Aberration In The Mall: White Other

When bell hooks (1990) writes about most constructions of the racial Other, she claims, “Race is always an issue of Otherness that is not white; it is black, brown, yellow, red, purple even” (p. 54). In her study of a school that looks much like the one from where my students and I hail, Perry (2002) describes how limited face-to-face contact with students from different races and ethnic backgrounds allows white students to see themselves as normal. Therefore, on some level, Others become cast as abnormal. Yet, in walking through an Indian mall north of Durban, Christina, Alison and David experience an aberration in this concept of racial Otherness. Far removed from their white school in America, in Chatsworth, they stand out as the white Other. Yet, until her Indian host points

out the stares of the people in the mall, Christina remains unaware of her own Otherness.

I didn't really notice anything and then Ruveshne turned to me and was, like, 'Wow! Don't you notice all of these people staring at you?' I was, like, Staring at me? I looked up and noticed that as we were walking people would look. The mall was extremely Indian. She was, like, 'That's because white people don't come here.' She was, like, 'They are staring at you because you are white.' That's what she said to me and I was, like, Wow!

Beginning to notice the stares. Ruveshne does not mince words. She does not hesitate to declare Christina's white skin as an attraction in the mall. Possibly, so conditioned in the world about which hooks and Perry write, Christina requires some-one to turn to her and to point out that she is being watched. At that point, Christina "looks up" and takes "notice" of the glances coming from the passers-by. She had not recognized her minority status. At the same time, she had not noticed the majority status of the Indians. When she looks up, she realizes the "mall was extremely Indian." Ruveshne has to make Christina aware that she has left behind her white world.

Similarly, it takes time for Alison to recognize her own Otherness. In trying to buy a sari with her Indian host family, one of the saleswomen points out that Alison is the first white person who has ever come to the shop in order to try on saris. At that moment, as if for the first time, Alison looks down and sees her skin color. In our conversation, she admits, "I didn't even notice it until that day and then I thought back and the entire time that I have been with these people I have only encountered Indian people." Just as we can turn away and avoid seeing

the Other of the people, the Other of poverty and the Other of social justice, we can turn away from our own Otherness.

Reflecting on an afternoon in the same mall, David speaks to his feelings of being the minority. At the same time, as if the circus has come to town, he describes himself as a spectacle.

I felt like a minority. I felt marginalized. I was the minority. I was the only white person in the mall and I got the feeling – not that I was novelty, but that I was a spectacle. I was in the mall and it's true, I was a spectacle. Here is this tall, skinny, white guy who is walking through an all Indian mall. I didn't have a problem with it. I didn't feel uncomfortable...

I thought it was fun. People didn't give me – They weren't glaring. I was like an aberration to them. What's this guy doing here? I expected to feel a lot more uncomfortable. Perhaps, if I had been in an all black mall... but since I was with my Indian family and I was with Ranushka and we were just hanging out like kids do. I didn't feel scared. People smiled at me.

For David, he stands out as an aberration. Parading through an all-Indian place, a “tall, skinny, white guy” catches peoples' attention. Claiming that he does not feel uncomfortable, he cannot bring himself to claim comfort either. With his hosts, he does not feel fear. Despite placing himself on the margins, he does not seem to speak to power. At the end of the day, people smile at him.

David names himself as an “aberration.” As a white person in an all-Indian mall, he follows the etymological path of an “aberration” as he “goes astray” and “deviates from the normal” route (Onions, 1966, p. 3). People ask, What is he doing here? At the same time, in seeing himself as the Other to the majority, he stands out as an-Other type of aberration. With Alison and Christina, David “deviates” from our traditional, American, suburban view of racial

Otherness. Alison, Christina and David are supposed to be “normal.” Yet, now, they appear as spectacles. They stand-out as different.

For David, he emphasizes that his experience in the Chatsworth mall involves Indians. He contrasts the experience by wondering if it would be different in an “all-black mall.” Would he feel less comfortable there? After all, in many ways, the Indians with whom we stay resemble us. They live in middle class, suburban homes. Many of them have relatives in the United States. They drive nice cars and they spend Saturday afternoons in shopping malls.

For my students, an afternoon on their own in Port Elizabeth represents the closest experience to being alone in an all-black place. Whenever we spend time in schools, townships or informal settlements, we stand together as a group. Together, we do not feel our Otherness. It seems to tap our shoulder when we are alone or split apart into smaller groups. On that afternoon in Port Elizabeth, my students split in different directions and explore the city center. In this place, Steve speaks to a need to be on guard for some-thing:

In Port Elizabeth, to be perfectly honest, I had my hands in my pockets and maybe even I had that wallet strap on just because I was protecting myself... We weren't in a group, but we stuck out and I felt like I needed to be on guard for something.

When he “sticks out,” as something Other than the black faces around him, Steve says, “I was protecting myself.” From whom does he protect himself? On one level, Steve guards against the possible criminal who threatens his money. On an-Other level, he recognizes his status as a racial Other to the majority of faces. As an aberration on their streets, he guards against being different. As an

aberration in his traditional positioning of himself as “normal,” in the face of his own being an-Other, he guards his sense of self.

As the Other, we can also feel the hatred reserved for those who “stick out.” During her homestay, on the receiving end of a volley of racial jeers, Christina stands shocked:

This van came up and there was an Indian in the van and I forget what he said because I think that I wanted to forget. I totally froze up because he stopped the van, stuck his head out the window and just started yelling all these racial slurs at me. It made me very uncomfortable and I think Ruveshne tried to not hear it and kept talking through it. I was, like, This guy is screaming at me right now and can we go into a store? I don't even know what he said, but it was definitely... I just wanted to get into a store immediately.

As my students see them-selves as Other, for the most part, they do not experience fear. Otherness unsettles them, but it does not scare them. In Christina's case, her Otherness identifies her as a target. In wanting to get into a store immediately, fear speaks to her. On this day, she walks along the path traveled by so many Others. Using Kearney's (2003) words, she finds herself cast into the traditional role of Other as sacrificed alien, scapegoat and monster. We are not used to occupying this space.

Privileged Otherness. Our status as an-Other represents a temporary excursion. When ready, we can purchase a ticket and re-turn quickly to a white world. Unlike many people, we have a significant amount of control over our Otherness. For this reason, we find it easy to name our Otherness as an aberration and a spectacle. When you represent the Other who holds power in a place of powerlessness, your marginalization stands in sharp contrast to the border-life of the less privileged.

In his memoir of growing up white in a black, inner city neighborhood, Dalton Conley (2000) speaks to the privilege that his racial Otherness grants him. Yet, just as my students describe their guilt, Conley finds himself imprisoned by his privilege. As he begins to attend school, he describes how he runs home feeling ill every day. He begins to twitch compulsively. In trying to find out what is happening to her son, his mother goes to the school and talks with the principal. In trying to find an answer, his mother questions whether or not the teacher hits her son. Hearing the principal's reply, she understands immediately. He announces, "Oh, no... Dalton is the only student that is not hit" (p. 47). As the only white student, he possesses a privilege that protects him. Yet, at the same time, his privilege labels him an outcast and wreaks havoc with his physical being. As he writes, "We had no idea that we belonged to the majority group, the privileged one. We merely thought that we did not belong" (2000, p. 42).

As the racial Other, we walk through South Africa in possession of privilege and wealth. On one hand, the privilege reduces our sense of not-belonging because we can escape easily to a place where we do belong. Yet, guilt begins to walk with us. Wearing the shoes reserved for the minority Other, we begin to question ourselves. In some way, as Conley did, we feel that we do not belong. We stand alone. Our guilt distances us from the lives that we led before coming to South Africa. Thus, the very privilege that reduces our Otherness also exacerbates it. It begins to make us Other than the families, friends and lives that we led prior to our journey.

Gadamer (1960/1989) points out, “If we put ourselves in someone else’s shoes, for example, then we will understand him - i.e., become aware of the otherness” (p. 305). Gadamer places us in the Other’s shoes so that we can understand his Otherness. Yet, at the same time, I suggest that standing in the shoes of the Other helps us to begin to understand our own Otherness. Freire (1970/2000) directs us that “Solidarity requires that one enter into the situation of those with whom one is solidary” (p. 49). If we expect to enter into a face-to-face relation with the Other, then we have to enter into the experience of being an Other.

Yet, as we be-come aware of our Otherness, we drift slowly away from those who do not see that they, too, are Other. We find our-selves unsettled in an in-between place. With a growing solidarity with the Other, we drift away from those driven by the ego-self. On some level, we be-come homeless. As Steve reflects on his experiences in South Africa and his bearing witness to poverty, he recognizes that he is changing. In the process, he is be-coming Other than his friends back home. He admits, “I know that a lot of my friends, it is not something that they would even care about – much less do.”

In its novelty, at first, my students find their Otherness to be an aberration. David names it as fun. Yet, at times, we feel that we must guard against our being Other. In the face of our own transformation, we feel a need to protect our-selves. Using Jackson’s (1995) words, our experience of being Other causes us to leave behind our friends who see “the human figure standing out against a background rather than being-in-the-world” (p. 171). We begin to understand the importance

of being-in-the-world-with-Others. Yet, at the same time, we question what we lose by being out there. O'Donohue (1997) explains that as I come "to respect my Otherness," I break through the ego's "protective crust" (p. 88). I begin to lose my-ego-self.

Especially when we are mis-understood, we might question our place as an-Other in the world. We worry about moving away from the comforts of being-at-home with the ego. On occasion, we shake our heads at how our hosts perceive us. They view us from a-far, but they do not see our faces. At these times, as the announced Other, we face the stereotypes of those who do not know us well.

Having Masks Affixed: *American Pie And Varsity Blues*

We often run the risk of making the story of the Other become what we wish or need it to become, not necessarily what he or she wishes or needs it to become... We hear the Other as we wish and need to hear him or her, not as he or she may wish or need to be heard. We make the Other become what we want him or her to become, but not what he or she necessarily may wish to become, in a process of engagement one might call an act of disaffirmation. (Cottle, 2002, p. 536)

In chapter two and earlier in this chapter, when affixing exotic masks and constructing beauty in the face of the Other, I describe how we disaffirm her presence. We unpack the stereotypes and the prejudices that we carry in our baggage. On some level, we objectify the Other. Yet, in reading a few more pages from Cottle, he takes us to an inter-active place. We do not stand alone in our objectification of the Other. Naming it a "dance of disaffirmation," Cottle describes how the Other, too, can make us become what he or she wishes us to become (2002, p. 536). They can affix their own exotic masks to our Otherness. Just as we objectify our hosts, they objectify us.

During our visit to a predominantly white, upper-middle class school in Cape Town, my students divide into pairs and visit classrooms. Taking advantage of this respite from young people, I spend some time having tea with the headmaster. As I sit and enjoy my time with someone over eighteen, my students shuffle uncomfortably in a “dance of disaffirmation.” From one side of the hall, James writes, “They thought it (America) was like the movies and imagined American life being like *Varsity Blues*.” From the opposite side of the hall, Christina finds herself cast in a similar role. She writes, “They said that they knew all about American teenagers because they have American movies and they tried to compare me to *American Pie*. Let me just say for the record that I do not view myself anything like the characters from *American Pie*.”

In *Varsity Blues*, my students are cast in the role of Texas football jocks who battle a corrupt coach. In *American Pie*, my students become mid-Western teenagers who make a pact to have sex before they graduate from high school. From behind their masks, my students shake their heads and field other questions. Elizabeth writes, “They asked numerous times if I lived near any movie stars and one girl asked me if I have ever seen a Native American.” In a conversation about the encounter with these South African students, Steve shares how it feels to wear the mask:

In regard to what Don said about them being rude, I got the same sort of attitude from the kids. Some kids were just sitting back like they didn't care and some were just asking – It's not like they were actually trying to get to know us. It was just, ‘Do you live next to a movie star?’ I mean, whether I did or didn't, it didn't matter. At least, it is not the type of question that I would ever ask them.

Being-examined as the American Other, Steve agrees with Don that the students seem rude. They have an “attitude.” Some of them do not care. They ask questions that Steve would never ask. They do not try to get to know us as an Other. While frustrated with the students’ questions, Steve also recognizes from where they might come.

It was almost ridiculous how “off” they were... I just assumed that they would be a lot closer to how it is in reality for us. That really made me think, What is the perception of Americans throughout the world? What do they honestly think about us? How do they think we live? Is it just the music industry and the movie industry that gives them an idea or what?

Cultural imperialism constructs our masks. As a Dutch woman lectures Jason Carter during his Peace Corps stay, “Americans are so insensitive and so blind that they do not see anything that is happening outside their borders, and still their culture presses in everywhere” (Carter, 2002, p. 236). Then, when our cultural stereotypes come back at us in a series of student questions, we become frustrated. We export our popular culture and then we wonder how the recipients can be so “off” in their perceptions.

Yet, as the Other in front of a classroom of Afrikaaner students, our frustration at being mis-understood raises a question. If they hold such stereotyped views of our lives, then might we hold similarly mis-construed views of their lives? Sitting in a classroom at the school, Alison writes, “I am appalled by the kids’ apparent disregard for the shit that is going down in their country.” How do we know that these students hold a disregard for the condition of their country? In fact, by making such an assumption, do we place these students

behind masks built out of pre-judged notions of Afrikaners? With such a statement, do we continue the dance of disaffirmation with each-Other?

Instead, sitting as the mis-understood Other inside of an Afrikaner classroom, my students hold the potential to see where they might impose similar stereotypes upon their hosts. In our conversation, David asks us to think about this possibility. He levels a charge at the entire group and encourages us to look at our own practice. He accuses the group of posing the following question in our different visits: “Look at our perception of South Africans. Everywhere we went, we asked, “How do you feel about your AIDS situation here?” In seeing how we-as-Other are treated, we might think twice about how we treat an-Other. Seeing my-self as an-Other, I might also begin to understand the Other as a self.

Beginning To See The Self In The Other: Trying To Read The Other

Sometimes I felt that I would try to read you - what your intent of the different things that you had us do on the trip - what your intent was - what you tried to teach us (pause)... or if you were satisfied with the way that we were having the experience. Like when you took us to the township. Did you want us to be asking all these questions? Did you want us to be in tears? Should we be angry? Should we come away shocked?

It hit me really when our plane landed, touched ground, in D.C. I was just looking around and we all said, “Thanks for taking us on the trip.” Did we fulfill your expectations? (David)

In South Africa, my students encounter multiple faces of the Other, and mine is one of them. Listening to their words about my presence with them, I detect an additional possibility to move away from the “I-thou” and “us-them” relationship. When David talks about “trying to read me,” I wonder how he positions himself before turning the pages. As my students begin to see their own Otherness, they also catch the earliest glimpses of the Other as a self. In noticing

the Other's complexities and in worrying about what the Other thinks of them, they avoid the "dance of disaffirmation." They move away from objectification of the Other and they begin to see two subjects. In this intersubjective place, transformation holds the potential to be reciprocal. In their description of the objectification of a Creole subject by historical writers, Arshi, Kirstein, Naqvi and Pankow (1994) ask, "Is transformation reciprocal? Can it occur only within a scopical arena ('what he sees')? ...There is something extremely worrying about this considerate liberal denial of agency to the Creole traveller" (p. 236).

In many ways, this study limits the agency of the Other. After all, it focuses on the lived experience of my students. Recognizing the traditional denial to listen to student voices as legitimate sources of feedback on educational practice, I turn to their stories. Yet, with this focus, I do not examine the lived experience of the South African Other with whom we engage and encounter. As a result, I "stretch and strain" to avoid presenting a one-dimensional Other. Without collecting her lived story, a three-dimensional image escapes me. At best, my students present second-hand accounts of their hosts' stories.

What the Other thinks. Yet, listening carefully to my students, I detect where they begin to see the complexities of the Other. In these moments, when they care about what the Other might think and when they notice her deeper scars, they begin to see the Other as a self. Thus, just as they start to see themselves as Other, they begin to recognize the Other as a self. Freire (1970/2000) describes the possibility hidden inside of these moments:

He also knows that the "thou" which calls forth his own existence in turn constitutes an "I" which has in his "I" its "thou." The "I" and the "thou"

thus become, in the dialectic of these relationships, two “thous” which become two “I’s.” (p. 167)

Because of my being Other to my students, as they face me, I wonder about their positioning. David tries “to read me.” Despite my role as Other, David cares about what “I” think. In this caring, as Lingis (1994) suggests, he begins “to see the other as another one like I am” (p. 127). In our conversation, Steve elaborates on David’s point:

I think what David is asking is (a) did you go in and get what you wanted out of it and, (b) do you think that we get out of it what you wanted us to get out of it, or is there even something that you wanted us to specifically get out of it?

As a teacher, using the world as my classroom, I do not post my objectives on the chalkboard. The absence of clear objectives leaves some of my students wanting to know what I expect of them. As the Other, my intentions make them curious. Yet, beyond curiosity, they care about what “I” as Other think. As Steve points out, he cares about what “I” as Other take away from the experience. They do not want to disappoint me. David speaks to this desire to “not let me down”:

Because we all had personal relationships with you, if we experience something in the wrong way – and this doesn’t really make sense – that we would let you down in some sort of fashion... (pause) Like if I had been totally ambivalent when we were at the township or if I didn’t really care about anything or wasn’t taking anything in. Wouldn’t you have been disappointed?

In worrying about my possible disappointment in him, David flashes a clue as to why he cares. He worries about what “I” as Other think because we have a personal relationship. So often, with the Other, we lack this element. My students and I have already seen each Other. As Minh-ha (1994) states, “To see and to be seen constitute the double approach of identity” (p. 23). For David and

me, we have walked toward one-an-Other for a while. Therefore, despite being Other to my students, I have been welcomed by them.

Alison and Steve reveal an additional element to why they care about what “I” as Other think. As the teacher-Other, I stand in a unique location. As their teacher, my pedagogical stance speaks to them. As Alison notes, in my teaching, I expect my students to give me some-thing “real”:

For those of us who had you as a teacher, for me, you were the first teacher that really did expect something real out of my work. You couldn't just bullshit it and I think that maybe that is what David is getting at. I just felt like you really wanted us to take something real out of the experience... You expected a lot out of us academically and so maybe David is wondering if that same attitude translated into being in South Africa and there were certain things that you expected out of us.

David responds quickly, “Not expectations, but hopes.” They wonder what “I” as Other hope for them. For Alison, she suggests that I hope for “some-thing real” for – and from - them. Aware of my high expectations, she does not want to “bullshit” the teacher-Other. Similarly, Steve positions himself in front of the teacher-Other and “reads” my hopes:

When you were our teacher, it was the first time that grades came second to actually getting something out of the work and you had high expectations of us and I had high expectations of myself and it was work that I wanted to do well on and the grade wasn't the most important thing. It was writing a good paper and getting the ideas and concepts and really thought provoking topics out. To compare that to the trip... we had these same expectations. I really wanted to think about all of this stuff and really get the ideas out and I think that is what you wanted too because that is what you had taught us.

As the teacher-Other, I am “read” as hoping that my students “really get the ideas out” and “take away something real.” Thus, when my students miss an opportunity, they imagine that “I” as Other feel disappointment. In reflecting on

one aspect of the trip, Don suspects that they “let me down.” He confesses, “Before we would go to things, you would tell us, just try to ask questions, don’t be shy. Before everything we did or where we talked to people, it was like, ask questions and be curious. And when we weren’t, it was like, oh whoops!”

My pedagogical stance as their teacher and the awareness that my students and I have already seen each-Other de-distances my alterity. I belong with them as a co-traveler wandering-out into South Africa. Thus, I hold a unique position. Yet, my students do not reserve all of their “worrying about what Others think” for me. They deposit this worrying in South African laps as well.

De-alienation In Port Elizabeth, on a late afternoon, our van drives to a township. Seated in the back with the students, Nelson awaits their questions. He lives in the township and he has helped me to make the arrangements for our *braai* tonight. Christina remembers well this evening drive and her anxiety about what Nelson thinks:

So Nelson was sitting in the back with us and you were in the front with Keith driving. You turned around a little bit, but I really felt like this was an opportunity for us to ask questions to Nelson and for us to get an idea and it was very quiet. It was these long, awkward pauses and then somebody would come up with a question and I remember Nelson saying, “Wow! For Americans, you guys are extremely quiet.” There were points like that when I felt that I should be coming up with these great questions. And then at Robben Island the tour guide was like, “I’m not going to waste my time if you guys” – and it’s so true. Why should he sit there if these people are going to be silent and I was trying so hard to come up with these meaningful questions.

In the face of the Other, Christina speaks to an awkward silence. She describes a desire to “come up” with some-thing meaningful. She worries about Nelson and the guide at Robben Island and how they view these quiet Americans. She

searches for the meaningful question that will impress the Other. She does not want to disappoint our hosts or herself.

For much of our trip, Pierre accompanies us. As we travel through South Africa, he serves as our primary host. For the first three nights, he invites us into his own home. As Elizabeth describes, she hopes that this Afrikaaner-Other will like us.

As we were leaving, he was like, “Wow, you guys are a really bright group of kids and I’m glad that I got to meet you. You know, don’t change. Keep going on this path.” I don’t know, but that made me feel really good. I was like, he likes us.

O’Donohue (1999) writes, “To be human is to belong” (p. 2). It should not surprise us that we seek the Other’s acceptance and approval. Again, as an-Other myself, I look for my host’s welcome. In the welcome, for me and for her, I begin to care about what hopes the Other holds. Steve asks two questions that reveal our desire to belong. Focusing on my hopes for their journey, he inquires, “Why else would you take us? Or why else would you choose us?” In wanting to be chosen by the Other, we declare our desire to belong with the Other. We wish to de-distance the space between us. As Kearney (2003) suggests, in this effort, we stand ready to “de-alienate the other” (p. 80).

In this “de-alienation of the other,” I see her face. It occurs when I realize that “I am a self before another self – brother, sister, neighbour, citizen, stranger, widow, orphan: another self who seeks to be loved as it loves itself” (Kearney, 2003, p. 81). When I care about the Other’s feelings, I “de-alienate.” At those times, I begin to understand that “The other is not an object of thought but, like

me, a subject of thought” (Ricoeur, 1990/1992, p. 332). In our intersubjectivity, the objectified Other be-comes endangered.

Yet, at times, my students suggest that they do not desire this intersubjective de-alienation of the Other. Instead, they prefer to remain at a distance. In this study, I mention often the “turning away” from the face of the Other. For me, it begins back on a beach in Brazil as I turn and run from the boys at the edge of the rocks. Yet, my students’ stories allow me to see a little deeper into our “turning away.” On the beach, my own fears of what the Other of poverty means drives me back. Yet, seeing the Other as a subject, too, we recognize that she drives us back by her own actions and beliefs. My students avoid a glorification of the Other that chains her in a passive place. Instead, at times, they look closely and they discover that they do not respect the Other. After all, as I begin to see the Other as a self like me, I recognize that she can possess the same fears as I do. Just as I can, she has the potential to do “wicked things.” In my host, I find a host-ile potential.

Beginning To See The Self In The Other: Host As Host-ile Other

Despite being welcomed by his Indian hosts, Steve finds himself in a less welcome place. Sitting with his host parents, racism rears its ugly head. In a self-imposed silence, he attempts to quell the discomfort that he feels.

I remember them saying the blacks create noise pollution and the blacks create violence. It was just so ridiculous, but I had no place in saying anything in response because I was staying in their house. I didn’t want it to be uncomfortable... I didn’t feel that was my place and I just sort of absorbed what they had to tell me instead of putting my own reactions into it.

Steve looks around and realizes that he does not stand in “his place.” He sees his Otherness. As a guest, he chooses to sit quietly. In his hosts’ house, he “absorbs” their prejudice and their racism. Glancing over at his hosts, he sees their hostility. On some level, he also feels hostile towards their ignorance.

Reflecting on the work of Derrida on the Latin *hostis*, Kearney (2003) informs us, “The Latin root for both hostility and hospitality is the same. And the term ‘host’ may in fact be used to designate one who welcomes or one who invades” (p. 68). Thus, despite an initial welcome, a host might “invade” our sense of ethics and justice. Empowering the Other as a self, who authors her own story, we recognize her potential for hostility. Just as we see our own potential for prejudice, racism and violence, the Other-I can hold similar proclivities.

In Levinas’ (1974/1998) phenomenology, my openness to the Other and my responsibility for the Other includes bearing “even responsibility for the persecuting by the persecutor” (p. 75). Thus, according to many contemporary thinkers, Levinas’ ethics of the face calls for Steve to reach out to his Indian hosts. The hostility represents a moot point. I hold responsibility for all Others. For some writers, such as Kearney, this stance asks too much of my ability-to-respond. In following Levinas’ reasoning about responsibility for the persecutor and the persecution committed, Kearney suggests:

To be absolutely hospitable to the other is, it appears, to suspend all criteria of ethical discrimination. And in such non-discriminate openness to alterity we find ourselves unable to differentiate between good and evil... If there is a difference between Jesus and Jim Jones, between Saint Francis and Stalin, between Melena and Mengele, between Siddhartha and de Sade – and I think most of us would want to say that there is – then some further philosophical reflections are needed. (2003, p. 72)

For Kearney, Levinas' refusal to name the face into which he looks as good or evil represents a philosophical shortcoming. As I listen to Steve's words about his host family, I agree with Kearney. As a teacher, how can I ask my student to offer his hand to those who denigrate Others? After all, the racism of his Indian hosts builds a wall over which he cannot see their faces. As Steve describes, his hosts' prejudice blocks encounter and causes an immediate de-tour:

I was really turned off by the parents. The first conversation was the one where they mentioned all of the stuff about the blacks and over and over they were emphasizing this negativity towards blacks. Right away, I knew these parents are racist and this is not something that I can at all relate to or that I at all want to encounter. I was almost afraid to engage with them because I didn't want to experience them talking about that anymore. It bothered me to an extreme point.

In the encounter with the "persecutor," Steve feels "turned off" and unable to relate. He wishes to avoid encounter, experience and engagement. Bothered to an extreme, he is fearful of their racism. Later in our conversation, Steve admits that his host parents "intimidate" him. Thus, in the face of the Other, we can see scars that we do not respect. How can Levinas expect Steve to accept responsibility for racist-Others?

In one of the final interviews before his death, Levinas clarifies his stance on evil. In his comments, he describes those persons without a face. In these Others, my responsibility receives an exemption.

I separate myself from the idea of nonresistance to evil. If self-defense is a problem, the "executioner" is the one who threatens my neighbor and, in this sense, calls for violence and no longer has a Face. (Levinas, 1991/1998, p. 105)

The faceless Other and the faceless self call for violence. When encountering them, resistance represents an appropriate response. In a sense, my responsibility

demands resistance. Thus, looking in the mirror, I wonder if Steve feels any shame in his in-ability-to-respond. After all, in the name of comfort, he “absorbs” his hosts’ host-ility. He offers no resistance.

When he does not respond to his host parents’ stance, Joe suggests that Steve plays an even more host-ile role. He asks, “Steve, do you think your family thought that they were trying to connect with you when they were talking about being racist - thinking this kid is probably racist too – this white guy?” Just as we position ourselves to meet the Other, the Other-self takes a stance in order to meet us. How often have we said what we expect an-Other wants to hear?

Still, of their racist remarks, Steve’s failure to respond does not absolve his hosts. Having encountered similar prejudices among Indians in South Africa, I doubt they choose their words in order to “connect” with Steve. Yet, in the complexity of beginning to see the Other as a self, Steve and Joe wonder about responsibility. In listening to their words, I recognize the limitations of their South African experience. After all, at the end of chapter three, I share van Manen’s (1990) pedagogic concern that we “always wonder whether we did it right.” As the final words of chapter three, I promise to keep this wondering alive. As I listen to my students, I question the short length of the experience. In two weeks, we can wander only so far. Yet, in these glimpses of the self as Other and of the Other as self, I detect tremendous possibilities for encounter to move toward engagement.

In an engaged coming-together, my students might see more clearly the complexities of the Other. Instead of painting on the canvas of South African race

relations in an American shade of black and white, they might reveal the divisions between the growing middle class of black South Africans and their brothers and sisters left behind in the townships. Given the time to travel to a rural area, they might begin to see that the divide between city and country extends a much greater distance than the physical miles. Given this type of opportunity, my students might see more clearly what happens when class invades and divides race. As bell hooks (1990) describes, poor blacks “are often as much an ‘Other,’ a threat to black people from privileged backgrounds who do not understand or share our perspectives, as we are to uninformed white folks” (p. 148).

As I turn slowly toward the pedagogical implications of the encounter experience, seeing the limitations of the encounter experience and the tremendous possibilities, I follow my students’ voices a little farther down the path. Throughout this chapter, my students lead me back through the places of South Africa. Along with the help of so many writers, their stories allow me to name structures of their lived experience of encounter with the South African Other. Now, looking toward the horizon, I detect two “final” destinations.

Mapping The Horizon Of My-Other-Self

In the next chapter, I tap into my “final” structure of the encounter experience. In the beginning of this chapter, I share a quote from Kearney (2003) where he claims that “The shortest route from self to self is always through the other” (p. 189). Thus, we re-turn to self and we explore what South Africa has done with us. About their relationship with students, Clifford and Friesen (2003) write, “We also promised with the deepest possible commitment to stick with

them as they – and as we – lost our selves together” (p. 191). As a social justice educator, these words speak to me. In South Africa, these words name how I see my being-with students. Together, we lose our selves. Now, in chapter five, I uphold my promise to “stick with them.” Yet, we do not simply board a plane and re-turn to self. We cannot go back to the same self. Using Don’s words, South Africa “fractures” us. Thus, in chapter five, we examine our “fractured selves.”

While chapter five explores what South Africa has done with my students, I also use those pages to keep the “wondering alive” about my pedagogy and about my being-with students. In doing so, I explore how this phenomenological experience has “fractured” me as a teacher of social justice and as an-Other with students. I ask, what has the meaning making experience done with me and what will I do with it?

CHAPTER FIVE:

FRACTURING INTO MY-OTHER-SELF:

TRANSFORMATIVE HOMESTEADING

A Final Re-turn To Follow Student Faces: An Encounter With The Other-Self

The voyage out of the (known) self and back into the (unknown) self sometimes takes the wanderer far away to a motley place where everything safe and sound seems to waver... Travelling can thus turn out to be a process whereby the self loses its fixed boundaries – a disturbing yet potentially empowering practice of difference. (Minh-ha, 1994, p. 23)

In reflecting upon his South African experience and upon the year since our return, Don speaks to the voyage back into an unknown self. With fixed boundaries lost, he writes, “My own identity has seemed to fracture.” After wandering-out into South Africa, for my students, the safe and sound wavers. The Other touches them and they feel contested. As Steve writes, “When I went to South Africa, I experienced my world being flipped.” Thus, coming-home presents challenges. Home is no longer where we left it. Relying upon Don’s naming of the experience, South Africa “fractures” us and we have to put ourselves back together. Yet, with the world flipped, in putting ourselves back together, we recognize an-Other-self. Having seen the Other’s face, I lose sight of my-self. In particular, I begin to lose sight of my-ego-self. When returning to look in the mirror, I begin to see the outlines of my-Other-self. Less egoist, the new self questions my place in the world and my relationships with the multiple faces of the Other.

In this chapter, I explore the “fracturing” of my students. In this “final” structure of my students’ lived encounter experience, I dig into the question of what South Africa has done with my students. How has their wandering-out across the Other’s landscape transformed their own in-scapes? With the world flipped, Casey’s (1993) concept of homesteading directs me to a metaphorical place where my students go in order to put themselves back together and to cultivate a new self. Using my students’ words, I map out this place and describe what it looks like as my students stand on the frontier of transformation. Finally, before concluding the study, I turn to my-self as teacher. What has this phenomenological experience done with me and what will I do with it? After making meaning of my students’ lived experience, as a pedagogue, where do I homestead?

Wandering-Away From The Ego-Self

In chapter one of this study, I describe a sense of homelessness that accompanies the encounter with the Other. As one crosses borders and sees an Other world, the security of home slips away. At these moments, as Heidegger (1927/1996) writes, I must accept a feeling of “not being at home” (p. 177). Similarly, Levinas (1961/1969) encourages me to leave “the being at home with oneself where everything is given to me” (p. 76). Wandering-out into South Africa, we begin to feel the angst and the anxiety about which Heidegger and Levinas write. Aho (1998) makes the connection between this homelessness and our wandering-away from our ego-self:

Homelessness is a precondition for a host of pathologies, not the least of which is anxiety, or as existentialists prefer, angst. Angst is not

apprehension about a particular thing such as a growl at night, a shadow in the street, or a specific pain... It is the alarming sensation of the pettiness, emptiness, irrelevance of ego's existence. (p. 99)

As my students' "fracture," they step away from their ego-self. In the face of the Other, they recognize a deeper obligation. On the frontier of their own transformation, they begin to see themselves differently. Yet, before turning to my students' lived experience of being "fractured," I must make philosophical amends with Levinas. After all, Levinas' philosophical contribution took us away from the ontological focus on self. As the philosophical foundation of this study, Levinas builds a path toward the Other. How dare I use chapter five in order to bring us back to the self? Yet, in listening to my students' voices, I have no choice. At the end of our journey, self awaits.

Levinas positions his philosophy as an ethical response to what he perceives to be an ontological egoism. Levinas declares that it is not all about me or all about my being. As I describe in chapter three, philosophers cast Levinas as the person who smashes Heidegger's mirror. No longer gazing at oneself in an egoistic manner, one looks around and sees the Other. Ethics trounces ontology. Yet, as I point out in chapter three, this reading of Levinas and Heidegger does a disservice to both men. While Heidegger emphasizes a more reflective and solitary path toward authenticity, authentic being involves still a being-with-Others. While Levinas emphasizes a turn toward the Other, he reserves a place for self when he claims, "Being for the Other is not the negation of the I" (1961/1967, p. 304). For both thinkers, the self and the Other live together.

Still, in building a bridge between these two men, I recognize the distance of the “in-between” over which the bridge stretches and sometimes strains. Despite his recognition of self, for the most part, Levinas deposits us out in the Other’s world. Yet, my students’ stories prevent me from leaving them there. We have to locate the self. Yet, in listening to their voices, I cannot bring them home either. Thus, without coming home, how do we reach home? Without re-turning to self, how do we find self?

Homesteading In A Rondavel: My-Other-Self

In his phenomenological study of the place-world, Casey (1993) describes the experience of homecoming. In chapter three, I use Casey’s description of homecoming and homesteading as metaphorical places where I locate my research. Now, I turn to these places again as a way to open up my students’ detour from the Other to the Other-self.

After moving between places, in a homecoming, Casey describes how “I return to a place which I can be said to know for the first time” (1993, p. 293). After traveling, my experiences re-shape me, and thus, I come-home as a different person. While this language speaks to transformation, it fails to capture my students’ experiences. After all, Steve claims that South Africa “flips” his world. The notion of coming home and seeing it anew for the first time does not address adequately my students’ “world-flipping” experience. Thus, I turn to Casey’s description of homesteading. In that place, I hear my students’ voices.

In returning from South Africa, at eighteen years of age, my students look forward. They speak to the future direction in which South Africa points them. In

the present, they feel homeless. They feel “fractured” and “flipped.” Yet, their words point toward a place where they begin to construct and to cultivate a new home and a new self. Similarly, for Casey (1993), a “homelessness obtains in homesteading, where there is no home *as yet*,” but there is “a home *to be*” (p. 299). In homesteading, I find my students’ homelessness and their focus on the future.

Etymologically, in breaking a-part home-stead, “stead” locates us at a “site for building” (Onions, 1966, p. 865). Playing with the word, “stead,” directs us to a “position” that we can combine with “stead-fast” to reach a “fixed position” which is “not easily disturbed” (Onions, 1966, p. 865). Hence, we find ourselves in a stead-y and stable place. Homesteading implies that you will build, construct and cultivate a place where you will stay. Yet, I seek to shake it up. South Africa positions us in a less-Western place. Thus, in homesteading, I step beyond the Western bias of seeing a homestead as a fixed building site.

In Jackson’s (1995) phenomenological and ethnographic study of the notion of home, he takes us beyond the Western borders where home fixes itself in a place. In examining the Aborigines’ experience of home, Jackson describes that “a sense of home is grounded less in a place per se than in the activity that goes on in a place” (1995, p. 148). Thus, Jackson focuses on what happens in the place of home. He writes, home was “a place where one triumphed over adversity” and where a person “met hardship head on, had been tested, and had endured” (p. 99). Just as Casey describes home as a lived place, Jackson connects it to the Other when he states, “Home is always lived as a relationship, a tension”

(p. 122). The tension speaks to home as a place of transformation. As Jackson writes, “Homeplaces are the spatial correlatives of the moments that have changed our lives” (p. 135). Thus, as we homestead in a less steady place, we cultivate a new self and we build a place where we recognize the lived relationship with the Other as a lived experience that changes our lives.

For my students, the re-turn to the United States places them on a life-frontier where they begin to build a new home. In this new home, they “meet head on, struggle with the hardship of, and endure” the experience of having seen the Other’s face inside of South Africa. Stepping beyond South Africa, they homestead reflectively. Back in America, in building “a home to be,” they experience moments when their lives and their outlooks change.

Having seen the South African face, my students homestead in a *rondavel*. (I thank Jeremy Price for helping me to extend my homesteading metaphor in a South African way.) With thatched, thick walls and roof, a *rondavel* is a traditional, round house. Often grouped into a community, they circle one-an-Other in stark contrast to the lines of rectangular, Western, cinderblock houses that South Africa’s cities, towns, townships and informal settlements contain. Located in the countryside, the *rondavel* rises from the face of the earth and stands with nature. As a place of black, African tradition being torn down in the face of modern, Western concrete, the *rondavel* announces itself as a dying home from where the Other comes. As compared to a place that separates people with gated homes and walled yards, it brings people together in a circle of community.

As a community place, the *rondavel* positions people to see one-an-Other's face. In its community, it ostracizes the ego.

In *July's People* (1981), a novel that describes a violent end to apartheid, Nadine Gordimer situates her characters within a community of *rondavels*. Having escaped to the countryside with their servant, as the country erupts, a white family finds the *rondavel* to be a place of refuge and a place of escape. In this place, the main character finds her-self. Similarly, my students homestead in a place where they escape from their ego-self. Fractured by the touch of the Other, my students seek refuge in a place where they can put themselves back together. With the world flipped, they seek to wrestle with what they have experienced and they begin to detect an-Other-self.

Building a new home, a *rondavel*, we use our hands in a less possessive way. We begin to see an-Other-self, a less egoist self that holds an awareness of the Other. This new self feels concern for the Other. Thus, homesteading in a *rondavel*, we do not contradict the essential message of Levinas. Instead, we recognize just what he means when he writes, "Being for the Other is not the negation of the I" (1961/1967, p. 304). After all, according to Levinas, "I am 'in myself' through the others" (1991/1998, p. 112).

Ricouer (1990/1992) believes in the existence of "a diversity of centers of otherness" (p. 318). At one pole of Otherness, we recognize the "relation of the self to the *foreign*, in the precise sense of the other (than) self" (1990/1992, p. 318). For most of this study, we spend time at this pole and we find the Other of nature, the Other of South Africa's people, the Other of social justice and the

Other of one-an-Other. Relying on continental philosophy, we understand the Other as that with which we lack familiarity. Yet, Ricoeur directs our attention toward an-Other pole of Otherness. At this second pole of Otherness, in the center of our community of *rondavels*, we find the “relation of the self to itself, which is conscience” (1990/1992, p. 318). Throughout this work, the second pole exists, but it stands at a distance. When South Africa’s poverty helps us to see better our own poverty back home, the pole appears. When guilt takes us inward, the pole serves as a landmark. When we begin to see the self as an-Other and the Other as a self, the pole marks our intersubjective space. As we “fracture” and find our outlook on the world changing, we discover that the encounter with the Other shakes us up. At the pole of the Other-self, we begin to see ourselves differently and we begin to re-construct a new self, an-Other self, that cares about being-with Others.

Homesteading on the frontier of transformation, my students begin to describe what their new self involves. They map out their *rondavel*. In this place, as Jackson suggests, the activity matters. Their words speak to the early steps of “a journey of metamorphosis and transformation, in which the self is changed by the experience of alterity” (Curtis & Pajaczkowska, 1994, p. 206). At eighteen years of age, after seeing the multiple faces of South African Others, my students speak to three defining characteristics of the new self. Guided by my students’ words and the ideas of several authors, I name within my homesteading students a border-self, an aware-self and an unfinished-self.

Border-self: Secluded in a corner.

I know I was really disappointed. I haven't had the experience where friends from home or school want to listen. Unfortunately, none of them want to hear my experiences. I had two roommates this year and I remember taking out my South Africa pictures and I showed them pictures and they both lost interest... Neither one of them ever saw my pictures and I was really close with one of them which kind of upset me because she took no interest in something that I cared about a lot... I just kind of gave up on them. (Christina)

In our re-turn, we wish to share the experience. Yet, Christina learns quickly that a photograph fails to relay the Other's face. In the replicated image, our friends look past the Other. They lose interest and this disinterest upsets us. In response, we give up on them. Having seen the Other's face, we re-turn afflicted. All of my students want to talk about South Africa, but few of their friends want to listen. In Alison's case, even her family does not understand. In our conversation, she confesses, "Sometimes, I don't know what to say to people. 'Why did you want to go? Why did you want to fly eighteen hours, even my mom, why did you want to fly eighteen hours to go there?'"

After having been to South Africa, our intentions and our experience distance us from Others back home. They do not understand why we went there and what we wish to share. On some level, having been to South Africa, we face a type of isolation. Afflicted by the face of the Other, Elizabeth talks "to anyone who will listen." Yet, as with Alison and her sister, she writes that she has "found it difficult to have meaningful conversations." Her friends "don't understand the effect that this trip has had on [her] and why South Africa is so important to [her]." We feel mis-understood and isolated. In trying to describe her feelings of guilt to people, Alison states, "You'll never understand because you haven't been

there.” Koch warns us of the sadness that can accompany an inability to tell our story. He writes, “There dwells in the heart of the experience a desire to be told. Of course, it probably can not be told” (1994, p. 141). Unable to speak of an experience, we end up feeling “a slight sadness of incompleteness” (Koch, 1994, p. 141).

At the same time, when we cannot tell our story, a sense of failure might accompany our “sadness of incompleteness.” After all, we feel an obligation to tell the Other’s story. As Elizabeth reminds us, “We were told many times by the South Africans to be ambassadors of their country when we got back to the United States. I have tried to keep that promise.” When our friends ignore our photographs, might we feel that we are not upholding our end of the bargain? Does our promise haunt us every time we detect a friend feigning interest?

As Giroux (1992) encourages, inside of South Africa’s beautiful, poor places, my students “cross ideological and political borders as a way of furthering the limits of their own understanding” (p. 33). Yet, in most cases, their friends and family remain on the Other-side. My students re-border the self and find that they wrestle with South Africa, but their friends remain spectators. McLaren (1993) claims that “To construct border identities is to refuse to adopt a single perspective linked to cultural domination” (p. 221). Instead, in wanting to share South Africa, my students seek to challenge the single perspective and to “speak to the lived experiences of oppressed people” (McLaren, 1993, p. 223). Yet, protected by border guards, back home, my students’ friends and families yawn and shuffle quickly through photographs.

McLaren calls for the “borderization of identity” (1993, p. 225). As my students stand with one leg on each side of that border, they seem torn between two worlds. In finding someone who shares a similar stance, they revel in telling their stories. After finding two members of her extended family who had been to South Africa, Christina writes, “At a family party, we kind of found ourselves secluded in a corner just talking about our experiences. We all had so much to say, and while we had our own experiences, we found so many similarities.” In her language, Christina describes how she and her family members find themselves secluded. Yet, in small numbers, they find an attachment and a connection. In sharing an experience of encountering the South African Other, they come together. Thus, while a border identity strands my students away from their friends and families, it also welcomes them into a small, new community of fellow border-crossers. Thus, when we find someone who has been there and who has seen the Other’s face, our shared affliction forms an immediate bond. In the corner, we feel connected.

Back in the United States, we seek ways to seclude ourselves in the corner. We look for connections and for ways to stay attached to South Africa. For several of my students, during their freshman year of college, they enroll in courses on Africa. Looking forward to their junior year of college, they contemplate a re-turn to South Africa with a semester abroad. For Steve, he attends a concert where a South African township band plays. In California, as a result of his experience, James declares a major. In our conversation, he tells the group, “Personally, now, I’m a history major and a large portion of that is because

of this.” Thus, back home where our friends and family do not understand, we seek to stay connected to South Africa.

South Africa also stays connected with us. Don describes how South Africa continues to call out to us:

South Africa has become a part of my mind set in such a way that whenever those two words are uttered, my ears prick up, or when I come across them in a headline or in a magazine, my interest is sparked, almost as if I were a fan of the nation.

As fans of the nation, we follow South Africa’s story. As Christina writes, “Ever since I returned from South Africa, the country seems to pop up everywhere.”

While we have left South Africa, she does not leave us. She “pops up” in the news, on television and in our interactions with people. Having crossed her borders and seen her face, she summons us still.

Therefore, along the border, the Other-self stands in a rather barren land where friends and family do not go. We feel misunderstood and we do not know how to talk to those people who have not shared the experience. We feel unable to fulfill our promise to serve as South African ambassadors. Along the same border, with those people who have shared a similar experience, we feel an immediate connection and an attachment. Even more so, we feel an attachment to South Africa. Thus, we homestead in a border place of isolation and connection.

Aware-self: De-attachment stolen Having crossed borders, as Levinas (1991/1998) declares, “The face of the other... awakens in the identity of the I the inalienable responsibility for the other man” (p. 187). As my students homestead on the frontier of their own transformation, they wake up. Awareness grips them. Using bell hooks’ (1990) language, they begin to construct a home “which

enables and promotes varied and everchanging perspectives, a place where one discovers new ways of seeing reality, frontiers of difference” (p. 148). In their *rondavel*, they hang their privilege on the wall and they re-attach with the lived earth and its people.

For James, re-turning from South Africa, his-Other-self holds an awareness of his privilege. In seeing the Other’s face, he understands that “this stuff is real.”

My whole outlook on life is different. The main thing that South Africa has done to me is made me realize how privileged I have been in my life. I appreciate the things in my life that I used to not even notice... I’m sure I still take things for granted, but I try to do so a lot less often... The people of South Africa have changed my outlook on humanity in general. When I look around at the greed and corruption of corporate America, I always get pissed off about how terrible society is. Then I think about South Africa, and it gives me hope. (James)

Confronted by greed and by his own taken-for-granted life, James expresses his anger and frustration. He sees his-Other-self as more aware of his privilege. It makes him more appreciative, but it also “pisses him off.” In order to find hope, he looks back to South Africa. Despite his privilege, they have some-thing that he does not possess. From their stories, he borrows hope.

For Alison, she goes beyond an awareness of her privilege. She writes, “The single most important change that I have noticed in myself is my newfound confidence in owning my feelings and opinions regarding poverty and my own financial standing.” She declares that she must “acknowledge the advantages that I have.” For Alison, she owns her feelings about wealth and privilege. She possesses them, and on some level, they possess her. As an eighteen-year-old, she has walked the divide between first and third world.

Having seen the Other's face, my students cannot ignore poverty. They also cannot hide their wealth. As Levinas (1961/1969) claims, "It is only in approaching the Other that I attend to myself" (p. 178). In attending to her-Other-self, Alison admits to her advantages. She finds herself in the position described by Levinas (1991/1998) where she has an "inability to take a distance toward oneself" (p. 59). In her own face, she becomes conscious of her place under the sun.

Increasingly aware of our privileged place under the sun, the Other's face summons us and we cannot forget. Poverty no longer resides in textbooks and it no longer hides in Anacostia. As David writes, "South Africa, it seems, has stolen my sense of de-attachment." For Freire (1970/2000), de-attachment signifies domination. Yet, when the encounter with the Other steals this sense, then we stand ready to feel attached authentically to one-an-Other in the world. According to Freire, "In these relations consciousness and world are simultaneous" (1970/2000, p. 81). Rid of abstraction, David describes that "South Africa has done with me something radical. It has stuck in my mind images and those feelings that I experienced while viewing them." Similarly, Alison states, "South Africa allowed me to put a face on AIDS, and in turn, it is something that I can treat with more compassion and understanding." The world and our consciousness merge. The Other's face gnaws away at abstract concepts. As Don writes, "South Africa has directed my outlook more than any other single experience." Afflicted by her face, we follow her lead.

In following her lead, the destination remains at a distance. Yet, as my students consider repositioning themselves in life, an early consciousness grips them. They speak to a desire to increase their awareness of the world, of culture, of politics and of difference. For my students, the new self holds awareness and admits to its privilege. It homesteads in a place where abstract notions of poverty, AIDS and the Other of the out-of-doors find themselves overwhelmed by the lived face of South Africa. As David writes, "I cannot for the life of me conjur up a different image when thinking of beauty than Table Mountain." Similarly, in thinking about poverty, we see the faces of the children that we met. In hearing about AIDS, we re-member the young people at the *braii* outside of Port Elizabeth. Attached authentically to the lived world, our aware-self has a much more difficult time turning away. As James says, because of South Africa, we know that "this stuff is real." Using Freire's (1970/200) language, we have begun "to see the world unveiled" (p. 39).

More aware of the unveiled world of the Other, as James claims in our conversation, I be-come conscious of the fact that "there is so much that I don't know and so much that I can learn and so much to experience." On the frontier, we open ourselves to the world. We begin to hear the summons. Yet, do we understand the call? As Heidegger (1927/1996) writes, "Understanding the summons means: wanting to have a conscience" (p. 265). While Heidegger does not place an ethical demand upon our conscience as good or bad, he opens the ethical possibility for our choosing. Attached authentically to the world, at the trailhead, I suggest that my students favor the path toward Heidegger's place

where “conscience reveals itself as the call of care” (p. 256). Yet, in their voices, I hear that the choice causes discomfort.

Unfinished-self: Being comfortable with our discomfort.

I like to be human because in my unfinishedness I know that I am conditioned. Yet conscious of such conditioning, I know that I can go beyond it, which is the essential difference between conditioned and determined existence. The difference between the finished that does not know anything of such a condition, and the unfinished who socio-historically has arrived at the point of becoming conscious of the condition and the unfinishedness. (Freire, 1998, p. 54)

In our attachment to the human face of the Other and in our awareness of our place under the sun, we arrive at the point of becoming conscious of our unfinishedness. Standing on a border, isolated from those who seem to be less conscious of our conditioning, we know that decisions must be made. We know that the world holds many gifts for us. In crossing borders, we can enrich our understanding of the world. Yet, at the same time, we begin to understand that we have an obligation. We owe South Africa and we owe the world. As Don writes, his experience in South Africa “has confirmed [his] ideological need to help end suffering.” He wants to make sure that “every action I take will be the correct one.” In reflecting on his encounter with the Other, he asks, “At least for me, well all these possessions or things you do, what’s the point? If you’re not helping someone else, what’s the point?” In our conversation, my Other students nod in agreement.

As I describe in chapter four, my students describe a sense of guilt associated with their failure to “give back” to South Africa. They believe that they have done little with, and for, South Africa. While agreeing with Don’s question,

they feel that they fall short when it comes to helping Others. Beginning to see the unfinished-self, my students wrestle with two opponents. First, they feel unsettled in their ethical stance. They feel a desire to help, but they question what they will have to give up. Second, they feel discomfort with homesteading. They do not know what their finished *rondavel* will resemble. Thus, they struggle with both the ethics and the being of unfinishedness.

Freire (1998) reminds us that “As unfinished beings, conscious of our unfinishedness, we are capable of options and decisions that may not be ethical” (p. 57). Aware of the options, in our first conversation, Don describes his desire to do volunteer work. He states, “It’s a selfish battle with myself to get involved with that sort of thing or to pursue my own interests.” On the frontier, from behind, we hear our ego-self and it calls for us to come-home. The selfish battle involves fear. As Palmer (1998) reveals, “We still face one final fear – the fear that a live encounter with otherness will challenge or even compel us to change our lives... Otherness, taken seriously, always invites transformation” (p. 38). For Don, the question is whether or not to accept the invitation. Do we possess the courage to open ourselves up to change?

Most of my students speak to a similar desire to get involved and to give back. Yet, on the homestead, the comforts of a past life tap them on the shoulder. Don’t they want to come-home? With the possession of so many privileges, why change our lives? Alison declares, “I refuse to let myself continue to feel comfortable sheltered by a veil of wealth.” Yet, the ego-self asks, “Why not?” On the frontier of transformation, my students’ future experiences can re-direct them

back toward the ego-self. At this early stage, they cannot determine their commitment to constructing a *rondavel*. Back in America and surrounded by three story houses, rectangular looks attractive.

Still, Cottle suggests that my students have already made a commitment. Their doubts and fears confirm that they have chosen an ethical path. Cottle (2002) describes how the asking of the question serves as the answer to the question:

If I do not respond to the words of the Other, thereby disaffirming him or her, am I fated to forever live with the knowledge that I am neither a good nor just person, or even worse, perhaps, not a fully human person? In a sense, the answer to this question is the question itself turned inside out. That I even ask it bespeaks my awareness at some level that in my own personal narrative, I have already begun to question my ethical posture... That I even ask the question, that I even move on in my life with a freshly born discomfort, must mean that my character, my humanness, has been called into question; I have called it into question. (p. 542)

In the encounter with the South African Other, my students have called their character and their humanness into question. They cannot put their old-self back together. The pieces will not fit.

At the same time, my students struggle with the unfinished nature of their human-being. Fractured by South Africa, they remain uncertain about what their reconstructed Other-self will resemble. As James writes, "I can't really describe how I'm different, but I know that I am." David adds, "I believe the ramifications of this change have yet to run their course." My students understand that homesteading requires time. It also presents uncertainties. We do not know what exists over the horizon. Thus, as Alison reflects on the journey's effect, she announces, "It was almost like the beginning. For me, it's the tip of the iceberg."

In the meantime, as my students cultivate their border-self, aware-self and unfinished-self, they move forward with a “freshly born discomfort.” Aware of their unfinished-self and imprinted by the South African Other, my students question their place in the world. The effect of South Africa has yet to run its course. In the meantime, while homesteading, Alison describes an overall sense of “feeling really comfortable in feeling uncomfortable.” In this place of comfort with discomfort, I leave my students and I turn toward my-self. I reflect on how the phenomenological journey with my students informs my pedagogical future.

My-Other-Teacher-Self And Finding The Most Beautiful Thing

In The World

We have all done so much thinking about it. To me, if I were a teacher, that would be the most beautiful thing in the world that we can sit down and write about this over a year after it happened and we can sit and have a two hour conversation about it. For me, if I was Mr. Garran, I would be satisfied. (Alison)

In chapter one, I share Gadamer’s (1960/1989) description of what it looks like when we “fall into a conversation.” He writes, “Thus, it belongs to every true conversation that each person opens himself to the other, truly accepts his point of view as valid and transposes himself into the other...” (p. 385). When Alison suggests that I might view our first two-hour conversation, our writing about South Africa, and our thinking deeply about the experience to be “the most beautiful thing in the world,” I nod in agreement. As a teacher, when I witness my students “fall into a two hour conversation” about South Africa, I revel in the moment. As I sit at the table and listen to my students open themselves to one-an-Other and accept each Other’s views, I am more than “satisfied.”

At the same time, as I reflect on this study, on these young people and on my digging in the dirt of their lived experience, I wonder why more educators do not get their hands dirty. Today, as a school-based administrator, I suffer a sense of loss with my diminished face-to-face, direct contact with students. In education, why do we promote adults away from students? As a high school teacher, each day, I met with five classes of students. As a department chair, I met with three classes. As an administrator, I meet with no classes. Still, being school-based, I have some opportunities to interact in a direct, lived way with young people. Yet, when I look to the future, I see the possibility of being removed entirely from a school setting. For the top policymakers and leaders within our school systems, they go days, weeks and even months without any direct contact with students. Tucked away in a central office, they see few student faces.

Re-located away from students, policymakers find it easier to ignore the voices of young people. In mandating tests, they construct barriers to genuine conversations. They simply ask, is it on the test? If not, then they direct teachers to re-turn to the curriculum. At the same time, some teachers prefer it that way. In their teaching “method,” they fail to encounter genuinely the student-Other. Instead, they teach by turning-away.

By turning-away from their students, teachers keep their classrooms sterile. They avoid getting dirty. As Gruenewald (2003) warns, “In place of actual experience with the phenomenal world, educators are handed, and largely accept, the mandates of a standardized, ‘placeless’ curriculum...” (p. 8). In the

“placeless” curriculum, Alison’s “most beautiful thing in the world” stands endangered.

At the end of chapter three, I share van Manen’s (1990) charge that we must “‘listen’ to pedagogy so as to be able to act in a better way pedagogically tomorrow” (p. 149). Through this study, pedagogy speaks and I hear two invitations. First, my students’ encounter experience reveals the importance of the pedagogical encounter between the teacher-Other and the student-Other. In Hout Bay, Steve writes about being impressed when “a few of the teachers joined in to dance along with the students, demonstrating the strong relationship between teacher and student.” Thus, I hear an invitation to the pedagogical dance between teacher and student. Second, my students’ experience calls out for the re-implication of pedagogy in the lived world. Inside of a sterile classroom or in a “placeless” curriculum, I cannot dance with my students. Thus, I hear an invitation to experience the world.

Pedagogical Dancing: Encountering The Student-Other

Early in the morning, we walk into Hout Bay High School. Our hosts sing, dance and welcome us. With little in regard to classroom resources, in their song and in their spirit, we find wealth. By late morning, we arrive at an exclusive school in Cape Town. Our hosts ask if we live near movie stars. They leave some of my students feeling “masked.” In an hour, we move so easily between two worlds. By the middle of the afternoon, we re-turn to Hout Bay and climb the Other hill into the informal settlement. Between hair cuts and handshakes, Kenny describes how his son died. Later that evening, we drive to the university and we

witness a play about the violence against women in South Africa. At eleven o'clock, we sit in Pierre's home. In a small circle, overwhelmed by our initial encounters with the Other, we "fall into conversation." We wonder if our clothing offends. We question the ignorance that breeds violence against young women. We talk about the children singing that morning. We confirm with one-an-Other what Kenny had told us about his son. For an hour, as a teacher, I sit back and I allow the conversation to lead itself. Together, in a pedagogical way, my students and I support one-an-Other. We remember Palmer's (1998) advice that "The human soul does not want to be fixed, it wants simply to be seen and heard" (p. 151).

Dancing with my students' encounter experience inside of South Africa, I hear my students' Otherness. In the journey to South Africa and in the phenomenological journey that follows, I see my students' faces. As Palmer suggests, to the extent that they reveal themselves, I "hear their souls." Through their writing and in their conversations, I begin to understand some-thing about my teacher-self. After all, "The other voice thereby becomes a moment in my own understanding and self-understanding" (Jardine, Clifford & Friesen, 2003, p. 176).

My transformation as a teacher-self depends upon my students. When Steve describes my dismissal of a child's request for help as being "a little cold," I stand exposed. When writing-through my students' experience of being an aberration in the mall, I wonder about my own status as an-Other. In these moments, my students teach me about my-self. In these moments, I recognize the

tremendous possibility in the de-tour toward a place where my-Other-teacher-self can proclaim its position as student. I learn from my students. They teach me. Far removed from tests, quizzes and lectures, we come together in order to transform our-selves, and possibly, our world.

Through this study's phenomenological journey, I find the human belonging of teaching and learning. In chapter one, I share a quote from Daniel Robb (2001) about the power of a teacher lending his presence to a child. As I reflect on this journey with my students, I see the Other-possibility: the power of a student lending his presence to a teacher. As Others-to-one-an-Other, teachers and students can go face-to-face and both can feel an obligation. Van Manen (1990) speaks to the pedagogical exchange and the adult benefit. He writes, "Adults themselves are challenged by the emancipatory interest of pedagogy to see their own lives as a potentiality, that is, as lives of oriented being and becoming" (p. 160). Our lived relationship with students can liberate us.

Unfortunately, oftentimes, educators avoid encounter. They remain imprisoned and face-less to their students. We affix "masks" and we turn our backs in order to write on the chalkboard. The face evokes an obligation to enter into a dialogue. Yet, with reams of curricula, we do not have the time for such obligations. Instead, from the front of the room, we direct the discussion. Technical knowledge about strategy, policy and classroom management style dominates in teacher preparation programs. As Henderson and Hawthorne (2000) remind us, "Many mainstream educators understand teaching as a relatively precise form of technical rationality" (p. 39).

In my work as an adjunct instructor in a graduate-level, teacher preparation program, I question this understanding. While I do not discount the importance of educators sharing practical strategies about how to teach, I attempt to construct a place for new teachers to consider their relationships with students. With a focus on being-with students, I ask these new teachers to reflect on their own student-hood and their lived relationships with adults. As Alison describes, from the perspective of a teacher and a student, I ask them to define “the most beautiful thing in the world.”

At the same time, as a school-based administrator, I struggle with finding opportunities to heed my own advice. Three years after leaving the classroom, I continue to feel a profound loss. During this time, while I have taken students camping overnight and across tree-top rope courses, I have felt like an outsider. We do not know each Other. I am a guest speaker. I am a substitute teacher. Despite spending hours talking with students in my current position, the directed discussions revolve around discipline and consequences.

In exploring my students’ experience in South Africa, I discover an even greater passion for the human be-longing of teaching. Yet, at the same time, in my professional life, I find fewer attachments. Without these connections, O’Donohue (1999) informs us, “With the belonging severed, you feel numb” (p. 241). Having uprooted my-teacher-self from the classroom, I know what I have lost. Yet, as I observe teachers in their own classrooms, I witness a more troubling phenomenon. In many classrooms, I find teachers and students who have never

cultivated any human be-longing. They cannot go numb because they have never felt alive.

Reflecting on the journey with my students to South Africa, I know that my pedagogy demands a being-with my students. In education, Heidegger's (1927/1996) "the against-one-another is at play" (p. 163). Yet, I cannot adopt that position. While the system promotes away from young people, I have to de-distance. Reflecting on my visit with the headmaster of an exclusive high school in Cape Town, I see a de-tour of possibility.

Inside of his office, with books crawling up and down the walls, we have tea and we talk about school leadership. Although I do not know it at the time, in various classrooms, his students cast my students in the lead roles of movies such as *American Pie* and *Varsity Blues*. As we talk, I describe my major responsibilities as a school administrator. A confused look crosses his face and he asks if I have forgotten some-thing. In my mind, I run back through the list of tasks that I have described. I shake my head. I have covered everything. Putting his tea down, he asks, What about teaching?

In hearing his question, I pause and I smile to my-self. He leans back and poses three additional questions. If you do not teach, then how do you have any legitimacy in leading a faculty? How do you stay on top of curriculum changes? And most hauntingly, how do you come to know your students?

Today, his questions show me how to de-distance. As an administrator, I can teach. No policy prevents this encounter. As a matter of fact, during the past semester, I took over an American history class for five weeks. From a scheduling

perspective, it created a lot of headaches. Blocking out an entire period of my day to be-with students led to canceled meetings and a few frustrated faculty who disagreed with my use of time in that manner. One teacher told me that she did not appreciate students being given priority. It limited her access to me! On one occasion, a bomb threat at the school forced me to “skip” class. Still, overall, I found a re-attachment to students and I felt a little less numb.

When dancing pedagogically with students, I feel alive. Conversations, thinking and laughing wash away the numbness. O’Donohue (2004) describes the potential of dance to free us:

In dance the human body reclaims childlikeness. When you can dance it is as though you do not have a care in the world. The body gives itself away playfully to the rhythm of the music; the burden of consciousness becomes suspended. (p. 120)

Metaphorically, the pedagogical dance connects students and teacher in a childlike freedom. Less inhibited, we fall into conversation and we let slip some of our burdens. Especially in transformative education, if students homestead with bordered, aware and unfinished selves, they feel uncomfortable. Yet, when teachers join them and share some of their own discomforts and their own questioning, students might feel a sense of care and comfort. At the same time, Levin’s (1985) discussion of the dance re-turns us to the roundness of our homesteads. In the circle of *rondavels*, with earth under our feet, teachers and students enter into the round-dance. For Levin (1985), “The round-dance... is our release from ego-centricity, and our experiencing of a synergic, trans-personal center of meaning” (p. 347). Thus, the pedagogical round-dance between teacher and student distances us from our ego-selves. Encircled by *rondavels*, the round-

dance positions us in the “trans-personal center of meaning.” In transformative education, we have to welcome students into this pedagogical round-dance. When we put students at risk of losing themselves, we have to engage in a round-way.

In the encounter between the teacher-Other and the student-Other, we discover a possibility to stretch and to strain in order to reach engagement. In chapter four, I describe the time restrictions on my students’ South African experience. Having only two weeks in the country limits my students’ ability to see the Other in the self and the self in the Other. Given more time and more opportunity to know one-an-Other, encounter might de-tour into engagement. Between the sessions held prior to our journey, my past classroom relationships with many of the students, our actual time in South Africa and our conversations one year later, I feel that “engagement” describes better my lived relationship with my students. Less tense, an “engagement” speaks to “a pledge, an attachment, an entanglement and an involvement” (Onions, 1966, p. 314). As an involvement, etymologically, we “wrap round” one-an-Other (Onions, 1966, 484). As an attachment, we “fasten and join together” with one-an-Other (Onions, 1966, p. 61). In this place, we no longer “brush up” against the Other. Instead, we lock arms and dance. Wrapped round and joined together, we see young people less as students and more as “emerging selves” (Clifford & Friesen, 2003, p. 21).

Engaged as “emerging selves,” my students share honestly and openly. In their voices, I hear their wisdom. They truly impress me and I agree with Alison that their engagement is “the most beautiful thing.” Yet, in listening to their reflections, I wonder about the absence of student input in the larger dialogue

about education. Why do we turn a deaf ear to the voices of our students? When it comes to pedagogy, how can we ignore their lived expertise? Who wants to avoid some-thing so beautiful? Throughout this study, I try to let my students' language guide my meaning making. As I step back from these pages, I realize that a void exists in educational research. We require student voice in order to fill that emptiness. Researchers have to cross that border or else we will continue to miss an essential part of the story.

At the same time, I discover a dilemma in sharing my students' stories. In writing-through the experience of their encounter, I allow some of my students to be heard more often than Others. I choose to use certain students' naming of experiences. I quote this student more than I quote that student. With these choices, I wonder about my students' reactions. Will someone feel marginalized? Do my choices speak to a certain personal bias? As a researcher, I feel comfortable with the integrity of my meaning making. As a pedagogue, I feel discomfort with the discrimination involved with my choices. In the end, perhaps, I have to reach Alison's mood of comfort with discomfort. Yet, in the meantime, I wonder how we can seek out student voice and then fail to acknowledge all of what we hear.

Despite the hurdles of fully inclusive conversation, as "emerging selves," teachers and students open up the possibility of a pedagogical round-dance. We can fill shelves with books about social justice and critical pedagogy. Yet, we require communities of engagement in order to wrestle with the ethics of "fracturing" students. Theorists can talk about the goals of transformational

pedagogy. Yet, after exploring my students' lived experience, I believe that we need human belonging in order to explore what students feel in the process of encountering the Other and the self. In order to "fall into a conversation" about feelings of guilt, isolation, homelessness and comfort with discomfort, we have to trust one-an-Other. In order to unearth meaning and understanding, we have to be willing to face forward and to see one-an-Other. As Clifford and Friesen (2003) remind us, we must promise "with deepest possible commitment to stick with them as they – and as we – lose our selves together" (p.191). In transformational pedagogy, we ask a lot of our students. We shake them up and their world can flip. Thus, we owe them our care and our concern. When they homestead and begin to put themselves back together anew, we also owe them a community in which they can heal.

Pedagogical Homesteading: Re-Implacing The Student -Other

South Africa provided me with an education that cannot be taught. It must be experienced. (Steve)

In response to the "placeless" curricula of the standards and testing movement, Gruenewald (2003) calls for a pedagogy that develops "an intense consciousness of places" that can lead to a "Freirean reading of the world" (p. 8). He wants us to "rethink the classroom as the fundamental site of teaching and learning" (p. 10). In Other words, he wants to re-implac students in the world where, as Steve says, they can "experience" life. As I claim in chapter one, the world holds a tremendous potential to be "in your face." Listening to my students and reflecting upon their South African experience, I believe passionately that

pedagogy has to re-implant students in the world. We have to take education out-of-doors into the beautiful, poor places of the Other.

As a social justice educator, I want my students to open themselves to the people and to the places marginalized by standard curricula. As McLaren (1993) claims, “By crossing cultural boundaries and negotiating new, hybrid identities” (p. 217), students enter the places where they can connect with Others. In these places, students develop the ability to “refuse to adopt a single perspective linked to cultural domination” (p. 221). The place of South Africa flips my students’ world. Historically, as a place that split people apart, South Africa now brings my students together with their teacher-Other and the Other of the people, the Other of nature and the Other of social justice. In this place, my students homestead and cultivate a self that speaks to difference.

Pedagogically, within our classroom walls, we can accomplish much by re-siting. Into the classroom-place, teachers can invite the texts of the Other. Through novels, guest speakers and film, the teacher can introduce the world to her students. Yet, going out into the out-of-doors and naming an-Other place as your classroom brings students into the lived experience of our world. The idea has been around for a long time. Delivered in a series of lectures in 1899 and later published in 1915, John Dewey (1915/2001) argues that schools are the worst place to gain lived experience:

School has been so set apart, so isolated from the ordinary conditions and motives of life, that the place where children are sent for discipline is the one place where it is most difficult to get experience. (p. 12)

While I have no intention of leading a campaign to burn down the schoolhouse, on occasion, I believe that we have to open the doors and step outside. Unfortunately, in the age of high stakes accountability, we seem to possess fewer and fewer keys to unlock those doors. After re-turning from the journey to South Africa with my students, a colleague approaches me with a comment that shakes me to the bone. Off the cuff, she says that with all of the focus on end-of-year assessments, she cannot imagine the system allowing me to continue to travel with students at this time of the year. While she aims her remark at the timing of my trip during the late spring, it burrows deeper. Already, in our educational system, the experience of traveling to an-Other country is rare. Yet, with the “placeless” curricula of standards and testing bearing down upon us, this type of journey risks extinction.

In order to protect the type of education that we “experience,” we have to recognize that “much of the pedagogical and political work of forming self and communities, by youth, takes place well outside the borders of schooling” (Weis & Fine, 2000, p. xi). While I name South Africa as a unique classroom, I should re-locate my students to Other places as well. After all, as my students point out, they have never been to Anacostia and that place sits just around the corner. Similarly, why do we not ask students more often to wander-out into their own neighborhoods? Especially in poor, local communities, as we did in South Africa, I would like to find ways to reveal the beauty in the poverty.

Having mapped out a goal to wander-out into local communities, I do not deny the special place of South Africa. For my students, South Africa begins a

conversation about power, privilege, race, class, beauty, guilt and desire to serve the world. *Ubuntu* and a spirit of hope spread through the handshake. Thus, even in the face of AIDS, poverty and broken promises, my students feel a sense of optimism. Afraid of leaving my students in the dark places that social justice introduces, I choose the beautiful, poor place of South Africa as a destination for re-implacing my students.

Whether building non-formal educational settings, encouraging international exchange programs or cultivating community service projects, we must open doors. For me, I continue to map out interventions for future students into the place of South Africa. After all, I want more young people to receive what Steve Biko calls Africa's "great gift" to the world:

We believe that in the long run the special contribution to the world by Africa will be in the field of human relationship. The great powers of the world may have done wonders in giving the world an industrial and military look, but the great gift still has to come from Africa – giving the world a more human face. (Biko, as cited in Carter, 2002, p. 264)

Pedagogical De-Touring: Listening To The Silences

As I consider mapping out interventions for future students into South Africa where they can encounter the "more human face," I ask, In returning to South Africa with students, what would the next trip be like? As I reach the end of this phenomenological journey, I cannot think of a better end destination than in the place of an-Other question. I listen to my students and I wonder if I did it right. In doing so, I am made aware of what I bring to the experience. I design the itinerary and I construct the curricular preparation. Thus, in reflecting on my students' lived experience, how might I change the map for future journeys?

In answering this question, I work the land of my own pedagogical homestead. I wonder what I could do differently in order to position my students to see more clearly the multiple faces of the Other. Yet, on this pedagogical homestead, I do not seek to repeat the experiences named throughout this study. The reader does not require a regurgitation of the themes and pedagogical stances revealed from within my students' lived experience. Instead, I propose a pedagogical de-tour. I aim toward the experiences that I do not find in my students' stories. I make space for the thoughts and the ideas that do not seem to reach my students' conscious awareness. I listen for the silences. I attend to what my students do not name. I step back in order to consider what I do not unearth in the digging in the dirt of my students' experiences. As Roderick (1991) points out, we must "think about the impact of strong silences which might also constitute beginnings and act as mainstays in some parts of our journeys" (p. 177). Van Manen (1990) reminds us, "The human scientist needs to be aware of the silence out of which and against which all text is constructed" (p. 112). Thus, I attend to the unspoken. I dance a-round with the Other that my students do not seem to notice out-there.

As the pedagogue who shapes the itinerary, I reflect on the faces of which we catch only the slightest of glimpses. In my students' written text and in the transcriptions of our conversations, socioeconomic class appears everywhere. My students speak to poverty, to economic inequality and to power issues surrounding wealth. My students see socioeconomic injustice in the face of the South African Other. Yet, they do not detect as clearly the skin color of the face and they seem

to miss entirely the gender of the face. They do not distinguish between those people with callous hands and those people with soft hands. In Other words, my students do not detect the differences between the people who live more traditional, rural lives and those people who shop and dine as a part of South Africa's growing modern, middle class.

In wondering why my students seem to capture only certain aspects of the face of the South African Other, first, I point my finger at the short time frame of the experience. Two weeks traps us in an encounter experience and we do not reach engagement. Second, I twist my hand around and point back at my-self. I consider my own role in placing a veil over the Other's face. As I prepare my students for this journey, I carry my own baggage full of readings, discussions and films that focus on socioeconomic injustice. As I map out our journey, I select destinations from where poverty can shake its stick at us. Reflecting critically on my constructing of the itinerary, I realize that I discriminate against issues of race, gender and the rural and urban dynamic inside of South Africa. I do not prepare my students to see these elements of the Other's face. Thus, when we do encounter these faces in South Africa, we do not recognize them. After seeing a play about women and rape, it is no wonder that my students fail to speak to the feminist issues surrounding women's power. When surrounded by blacks, my students do not write or talk about race, but they create volumes of text about poverty. Yet, when surrounded by Indians who share a similar socioeconomic caste, my students begin to see their own skin color more clearly.

In my students' South African journey, I recognize my role in constructing the pedagogical experiences. In seeing what my students miss and in listening to their silences, I awake to see where my-Other-self as teacher might go. On my homestead, I would like to build a place where my students can develop a more complete picture of the Other's face. In preparation for the next journey, I would like to find readings and films that reveal more clearly the Other of gender and race. For example, for the most part, I ignore the role of women in the anti-apartheid movement. In noticing my students' silence about gender, I realize that this omission borders on negligence. At the same time, in a more explicit way, I have to address rural and urban tensions. In today's South Africa, middle class blacks and rural blacks speak an entirely different language. In drawing my map for the journey, I have to expose my students to rural life. I have to attend to my own socioeconomic bias and open up my preparation and itinerary to include more viewing of the Other of race, gender and rural life. As I make this pedagogical de-tour, on the next trip, I imagine that the students will find a more diverse Other. In this discovery, from a research perspective, the lived experience of encountering the South African Other will demand more phenomenological digging, attending-to and writing-through.

Their Own Journeys Continue

Recently, I received an email correspondence from Greg. As a member of the first South African student group, the Other captured Greg. Today, he serves with the Peace Corps in Peru. Back out in the world, he has found a more diverse Other. He provides monthly health lessons to mothers and to children. He seeks to

unite two mountain associations (mule drivers and porters) in order to improve their work conditions and equipment. He works on a potable water project and builds latrines. At the same time, as Greg describes in his email, the Other's place captures him:

The funeral involves a slow procession from the deceased's house to the cemetery. Six pallbearers carry the coffin, stopping every ten feet while chants in Quechua are sung and Catholic prayers said. All above the slow beating of two bass drums. Everyone is drinking, some women are wailing and crying, some men are drunk and laughing. An interesting mix of celebration and mourning, but the town gets together and it's a nice ceremony of closure... Anyway, I was standing there, on a bright sunny day, with this bright white, faux marble wooden coffin shining on a little grassy plain with straw huts, extremely tall eucalyptus, and three snow-covered 5600m peaks glittering in the distance. Combined with the amazing bright colors all the women wear here, it was the most beautiful funeral I have ever seen. A pretty picturesque way to be laid to rest.

So life in Collon just gets more interesting by the day. What once seemed surreal has become daily, normal life and in two years, I am pretty much going to see every phase of these peoples' lives and so far I haven't been disappointed. (Greg, personal correspondence, April, 2004)

Greg receives an education that has to be experienced. While Other teachers hold more gifts than I do, I doubt still that anyone can teach what Greg describes. With two bass drums beating, sun warming your skin and snowcapped peaks on three sides, you have to live it.

As I reflect on the journey of this phenomenological study, I understand better that "Education, as a specifically human experience, is a form of intervention in the world" (Freire, 1998, p. 91). In order for students to intervene in all of their humanness, we have to clear pathways for them. As we suggest a direction to follow, we lend our presence. Then, we step back and we see where they go. Without us, their journeys continue. On occasion, they walk well beyond

where we imagine they will end up. When I read about Greg's continuing intervention in the world, pride taps my shoulder. Just for knowing him and for having played a small role in his re-implacement, I nod pedagogically in the way that only a parent or a teacher understands. Five years after his experience in South Africa, I appreciate seeing how his homestead is taking shape. While unfinished still, I like the round walls.

APPENDIX: INFORMED CONSENT FORMS

Cover Letter For Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant:

I thank you for your expressed interest in participating in my research. The study will explore your experience of encountering difference while you visited South Africa in the spring of 2002. Through four distinct activities, I plan to uncover this phenomenon. First, I will ask you to write a reflective and descriptive account of your experience in South Africa. Second, I will ask you to join with several other participants in two to three audio taped, group conversations about your experiences. Third, I will ask you to write a final, reflective essay about your experience. Fourth, via email, I will ask you to provide some short written responses to questions that develop as I analyze your writing and the group conversations.

As a follow-up to the activities mentioned above, a possibility exists that I will ask you to participate in one individual, taped conversation. The decision about this individual conversation will be made after we complete the group conversations. The group will make the decision about whether or not we hold individual conversations.

As a participant in this study, you have the choice about whether or not your first name will appear in the published findings. No last names will appear.

After I have completed the research, I will share my insights from the chapters dealing with thematic structures. At that time, I will encourage you to provide me with either written or oral feedback.

By signing the attached consent form, you can agree to join me in this research project. I look forward to our working together. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at (301) 929-2055 or (301) 891-6733. You can also reach me via email at christopher_garran@fc.mcps.k12.md.us with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Chris Garran

Consent Form

Identification of Project/Title	Encountering Faces Of The Other: A Phenomenological Study Of American High School Students Journeying Through South Africa
Statement of Age of Subject	I state that I am at least 18 years of age, in good physical health, and wish to participate in a program of research being conducted by Chris Garran in the Department of Education Policy and Leadership at the University of Maryland, College Park.
Purpose	I understand that the purpose of this research is to study the experiences of American high school students encountering difference in South Africa for the purpose of informing educational practice.
Procedures	I understand that I will write an initial reflective essay, participate in two to three group conversational sessions and write a final reflective essay. I also understand that I might be asked to participate in one individual conversational session. Each conversational session will last approximately two hours. The writing and the conversations will be about my experience in South Africa.
Confidentiality	I understand that my complete name will not be used in any public documents or oral presentations. I can give specific written permission to use my first name. Otherwise, a pseudonym will be used. I understand that I have the right to request that specific written information or conversation not be used in the study. I understand that I will be told of any tape recorders present during conversations and that I may ask to have those recorders turned off at any time.
Risks	I understand that there are no known risks to participating in this study.
Benefits, Freedom to Withdraw	I understand that this study is not designed to help me personally, but that the investigator hopes to learn more about the experience of high school students encountering difference in South Africa in order to inform educational practice. I understand that I am free to ask questions and/or to withdraw from participation at any time and without penalty.
Name/Address and Phone of Graduate Researcher	Chris Garran 6712 Allegheny Avenue 301-929-2055 (w) Takoma Park, MD 20912 301-891-6733 (h) Christopher_garran@fc.mcps.k12.md.us
Name/Address and Phone of Faculty Advisor	Dr. Francine Hultgren Department of Education Policy & Leadership University of Maryland 301-405-4562 College Park, MD 20742 fh14@umail.umd.edu
Name of Participant	_____
Signature of Participant	_____ Date: _____

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