

CONTEMPORARY LAKOTA IDENTITY:
MELDA AND LUPE TREJO ON 'BEING INDIAN'

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores contemporary Lakota identity, as informed by the life story narratives of Melda and Lupe Trejo. Melda Red Bear (Lakota) was born on Pine Ridge (Oglala Lakota / Sioux) Reservation in South Dakota (1939-). Her husband, Lupe Trejo (1938-1999) is Mexican and has been a long-term resident of the reservation. I first met this couple in 1994 and developed an abiding friendship with them prior to our decision to collaborate in recording their storytelling sessions (1997-98). The recording and interpretation of the material evokes ethical questions about power and representation that have arisen with debates about 'as-told-to' autobiographies. Theoretical and methodological issues associated with cultural anthropology, literary criticism and oral history are part of the interdisciplinary intellectual work of this research and are discussed in the context of the project. The thesis follows an introspective, recursive methodology, where early research decisions are analyzed in the light of what I have learned in this process of apprenticeship to Lakota traditional thinkers.

The narratives reveal that contemporary Lakota identity encompasses colonial discourses, strategic responses to such impositions, *and* an autonomous indigenous system of beliefs. This epistemological tradition, that is, traditional Lakota spiritual beliefs, promotes an acknowledgment of relations as opposed to exclusive categories of cultural difference. Melda Trejo has substantial connections to the Lakota community and her marriage follows the traditional pattern of "marrying out." Lupe Trejo configures his Mexican ancestry in ways that align with the Lakota people while also acknowledging his difference in the

community. Melda and Lupe define themselves as Lakota through their spiritual practice in the Sundance as it reappeared in the cultural resurgence at Pine Ridge in the 1970s and 1980s. They situate themselves and their Sundance amid the controversies that surround authentic practices and the participation of outsiders in the ceremony. The thesis provides an interpretive framework, supported by additional life stories as well as critical and ethnographic material, for the analysis of selected stories.

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Chapter 1 - Intruduction: Understanding the Context for the Project

Chapter I - Introduction: Understanding the Context for the Project

Introductory Remarks

This thesis presents what I have learned about the process of recording the life stories of a Native/Mexican couple. I also explain what I have learned from their stories about Native identity. Melda Red Bear is a fifty-eight year old Lakota woman from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Her husband, Lupe Trejo, is a Mexican who has lived in the Lakota community for roughly half of his life. He died in April of 1999 at the age of sixty. In their forty years together, Melda and Lupe raised eleven children and supported themselves as migrant workers. Since 1988, they have held a Sundance ceremony on the Red Bear land, near Allen in South Dakota. In their life stories, they talk about their personal experiences as well as their knowledge of Lakota and Mexican history and culture. I was introduced to Melda and Lupe through a mutual friend in April of 1994. My interest in cross-cultural collaborative projects developed about the same time because postmodern concerns theories about representation and postcolonial concerns about the 'appropriation of voice' had apparently arrested precisely the kind of project that I regarded as crucial to promoting social justice. In this thesis, I describe our relationship and provide interpretations of their stories, which I recorded between November 1997 and August 1998. I acknowledge that all interpretations involve some form of bias. However, I take the stance that efforts to convey information are nonetheless beneficial and function to promote social change. I will demonstrate the process I have used to produce material of benefit to both Native and academic communities. I will also show that, through Melda and Lupe's stories, I have gained

insights into the role of Lakota tradition in the construction of contemporary Native identity.

In their life stories, Melda and Lupe emphasize the importance of the Sundance ceremony and convey their understanding of Lakota tradition to their relations. Melda says, "So this prayer, Indian way, is very powerful and it's good" (217).¹ *Mitakuye* 'oyasin or 'all my relations' is a Lakota prayer that refers to the belief that all of creation is related. Melda and Lupe speak about a way of knowing the world that is firmly rooted in Lakota cosmology, spiritual beliefs and traditional practices. They also, however, differentiate between 'Indian' and 'white' in ways that contest relatedness. In her life story, Melda positions herself as a Lakota woman by claiming a set of experiences that are lineal, cultural and political. She uses traditional discourses to resist colonial frameworks. Lupe, similarly, restructures dominant ideologies using indigenous claims. However, he negotiates a different set of experiences in claiming his ties, as a Mexican, to Lakota culture. I had anticipated Melda and Lupe's engagement with 'Indian pride,' but was surprised by their epistemological use of Lakota spiritual beliefs. They have constructed knowledge with a distinct religious understanding as well as through the strategic use of political discourses.

Life story narratives provide critical insight into how claims to legitimacy are made. Instead of insisting on clear definitions of identity and tradition, I acknowledge the 'partial truths' implicit in contemporary explication. My task is not to define the 'real Indian,' but to elicit meaning from Melda and Lupe's efforts to construct their social

¹ The page numbers that I am using to cite Melda and Lupe's material are from my transcripts of their storytelling sessions. Ten ninety-minute tapes were recorded and the transcripts are 259 pages long. I transcribed them myself, they have been approved by Melda and Lupe and they are not edited in any way.

lives. I use interpretive frameworks to interpret their accounts. Contextual information serves to provide, as detailed by Arnold Krupat, a “real engagement with the epistemological and explanatory categories of Others” (*Ethnocriticism* 113). Extensive fieldwork and research have affected my awareness of Lakota spirituality and cultural practice. I will not, however, describe details of Lakota ceremonies or spiritual beliefs because this thesis is not an ethnographic study of Lakota spiritual practices. I am providing information that is meant to provide context in the understanding of Melda and Lupe’s stories, rather than cataloguing information for the ethnographic record. To that end, the information provided about Lakota culture and history is explanatory rather than exhaustive.

The Lakota Context²

The Lakota (Teton) are often called the Oglala Sioux and are part of a larger group, which includes the Dakota (Santee), Nakota (Yankton), and other Lakota bands, that are known popularly as the ‘Sioux Indians.’³ The Lakota have been referred to as “the archetypal Indian in the American imagination” and have been popularized in many

² It is difficult to define Indianness when the vocabulary itself is contested. ‘Indian,’ ‘Native’ and ‘white’ are all terms that have political connotations. ‘Lakota’ and ‘Sioux’ similarly have a political history in that settlers used ‘Sioux’ to refer to the Lakota people, much like the term ‘Indian.’ I have found that ‘Indian’ and ‘Lakota’ are the most common terms in use on Pine Ridge Reservation at present. In accordance with my own habits and in acknowledgment of both Native and non-Native audiences, I use both ‘Indian’ and ‘Native,’ but employ the designation of ‘Lakota’ rather than ‘Sioux.’

³ For further discussion on the meaning of Sioux, Lakota and Oglala, see the following: Janet Campbell Hale, *Bloodlines: Odyssey of a Native Daughter* (New York: Harper, 1993) 54; Russell Means, *Where White Men Fear to Tread: The Autobiography of Russell Means* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1995) 209; Ruth J. Heflin, *Examples for the World: Four Transitional Sioux Writers and the Sioux Literary Renaissance*, diss., Oklahoma State U, 1997, 2; Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, *Completing the Circle* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1995) xii; Beatrice Medicine in *Reinventing the Enemy’s Language: Contemporary Native Women’s Writings of North America*, eds. Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird (New York: Norton, 1997) 208; Julian Rice, *Before the Great Spirit: The Many Faces of Sioux Spirituality* (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1998) 6, 77; and Severt Young Bear and R.D. Theisz, *Standing in the Light: A Lakota Way of Seeing* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1994) 18, 84.

of the Indian stereotypes associated with the 'Wild West' (Bucko 34). The popular conception of the Plains warrior, with horse and headdress, has been reproduced in any number of forms, from the photographs of Edward Curtis to coffee table books and such films as *Dances With Wolves*. Lakota tradition continues in the Lakota community through the continued beliefs and practices of the Lakota people. At the same time, Lakota history and religion are remembered and sustained by a number of different audiences in both Native and non-Native communities. The interest in Native spirituality in the late 1960s and 1970s, in both Native and non-Native communities, fueled the reissue and writing of several popular books about Lakota culture. *Black Elk Speaks*, the collaborative life story of Nicholas Black Elk, was first published in 1932 but it grew in popularity with its reissue in 1961. The "bombshell discovery of *Black Elk Speaks* by a kick-over-the-traces generation of young Americans, both Indian and non-Indian" led to its subsequent printings in 1971 and 1979 (Josephy 26). The spiritual teachings of the Lakota holy man were popular at the same time as Carlos Castaneda's *A Separate Reality: Further Conversations with Don Juan* (1971) and "[t]he Black Elk material continues to have an enduring influence both on and off the reservation" (Bucko 53). Dee Brown's historical account of the Lakota people, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (1970), also achieved popular success at that time. Shortly thereafter, Richard Erdoes, an artist from Vienna, told the story of John (Fire) Lane Deer in *Lame Deer: Seeker of Visions* (1972).⁴ The book, along with many of the other popular Lakota narratives, continues to be used "by many readers as a point of access to and a guide for Lakota

⁴ For a discussion of the co-authorship of this text, see Julian Rice's "A Ventriloquy of Anthros: Densmore, Dorsey, Lane Deer, and Erdoes," *American Indian Quarterly* 18.2(1994): 169-196. The topic of collaboration is taken up in greater detail, in reference to other texts, in subsequent chapters.

ritual practice” (Bucko 72). In the 1970s, Frank Fools Crow, in collaboration with Thomas Mails, also provided what were well-received narratives about his practices as a medicine man. However, in 1979, Ruth Beebe Hill wrote *Hanta Yo: An American Saga*, which was a fabricated story about the Sioux in the 1800s. Dakota scholar Elizabeth Cook-Lynn notes that “[t]he Sioux considered the novel’s depiction of their lives and histories false and obscene, and surprisingly, they began to say so publicly — in the media, in academia, and everywhere in between” (*Why*, 65). I regard my collaboration as emerging from the subsequent dialogue that has taken place among Native and non-Native communities about ethical practices in writing Native stories.

In 1987, there were more than 50,000 Sioux in the United States and Canada, with roughly one half of that number living on reservations (DeMallie and Parks 7). The Pine Ridge Reservation, located in the plains of the southwestern part of South Dakota, is the second largest reservation in the United States with an estimated trust acreage of 1,783,741 square miles (Federal Emergency Management Agency: www.fema.gov).⁵ The Oglala Sioux population of Pine Ridge Reservation is now estimated to be between 14,295 (2000 U.S. Census: www.census.gov) and 39,734 (www.fema.gov).⁶ According to the 2000 census (see appendix B for figures), the Mexican population of the reservation is estimated at 140 (1%) and the white population at 969 (6.2%). Ninety percent of the population of Pine Ridge is under the age of 55, with an average life expectancy that is approximately thirty years lower than the national average (Churchill

⁵ See maps in appendix A.

⁶ In *Building the Nation Back Up* (1997), Mikael Kurkiala says that the census represents a “serious undercount and may reflect a widespread uneasiness among the Oglala to cooperate in the taking of census as well as the relative instability of the population itself [for example, migration for employment purposes]” (91).

40). Of the ten percent of the population aged over 55 years, 440 people are estimated to be between the ages of 55 to 59 (2.8%), 388 people are between the ages of 60 and 64 (2.5%) and the remaining percentage aged over 65 (4.8%). The reservation is divided into nine districts, based on historical cattle issue stations, averaging populations of approximately 1,460 in each district (Kurkiala 88). The Red Bear land, located in Bennett County, lies in the area of Pass Creek, which is comprised of Allen Village (the closest housing district), Bear Creek, Yellow Bear, North, and Corn Creek (see maps in appendix A). Available census data indicates a population of 714 in the Pass Creek district, but more recent data is likely to indicate a higher population because of the overall increase in 2000 census population figures (Kurkiala 88). The Red Bear land is currently outside the reservation boundary, subsequent to leasing of neighboring parcels of land, but the only access road is via the reservation.

The territory of the Great Sioux Reservation was established with the revision of the Fort Laramie treaty in 1868.⁷ Pine Ridge Reservation is historically associated with chief Red Cloud. In 1874, gold was discovered in the Black Hills and tensions arose from settler competition for the land that led to armed conflict. The Black Hills were inevitably lost to the Lakota and are the present site of Mount Rushmore. On June 25, 1876, General George Armstrong Custer and his entire command were “wiped out” by Lakota and Cheyenne warriors at the famous battle of Little Bighorn (Greene 10). In 1877, Crazy Horse surrendered at Fort Robinson. He was renowned for his skills as a warrior and was killed upon his surrender at the fort, presumably for political reasons. The Lakota people began living inside the boundaries of the reservation primarily in the

⁷ See appendix C for a timeline of the historical events, 1780-present, in chart-form.

1880s, although the order for Indians to return to tribal lands was issued in 1876. In 1887, the General Allotment Act (also known as the Dawes Act) legislated that land be divided into private allotments to be held in trust for twenty-five years. Pine Ridge Reservation was divided into nine districts and allotment was postponed until 1904, but erosion of the land base pervades the history of the reservation (Kurkiala 58).

The late 1880s are associated with several religious, cultural and political shifts on Pine Ridge Reservation. Government officials and the reservation community negotiated relations within the confines of the reservation, with resulting conflict and adaptation. In 1889, the Ghost Dance became popular on the reservation. The Ghost Dance is a messianic religious movement meant to initiate a cataclysmic event to restore the pre-colonized world. Its practices led to tensions between the Native and non-Native populations. On December 29, 1890 the Seventh Cavalry killed three hundred Indians, many of them women and children, at the massacre of Wounded Knee. Wounded Knee has become emblematic of several Indian massacres that took place in American history and holds deep significance for the Lakota. It represents injustice and loss as well as resistance and endurance. In the subsequent years, the Lakota people have struggled with impoverished conditions on the reservation. Ranching and farming were promoted through largely inadequate government programs; cattle were first issued to enrolled tribal members in 1891. Church and school programs proliferated. Most of the prominent Dakota and Lakota ethnographies started being published at the turn of the

century.⁸ The early 1900s are associated with what is now characterized as modern anthropology and Melda and Lupe's parents were born at this time.

Lakota spiritual practices represent a complex history, both mythic and material. Core religious beliefs and practices developed before the start of the nineteenth century: the use of the pipe, the ceremonial Sundance as the "focus of religious ritual" and a belief in *wakan* (power, the sacred) as the "basis of the Lakotas' culturally distinctive theory of existence" (DeMallie and Parks 8). The pipe continues to be used "to remember White Buffalo Cow [Calf] Woman and serves as a medium of purification and prayer" (Bucko 55). The Sundance involves making a commitment to dance for a four-day period for four years in a row. During the Sundance, the dancers continually gaze at the sun while dancing and fasting. The Sundance is meant to provide strength for the relations, and each year the dancers individually make a pledge to dance for 'the people' or for specific individuals in need. There are seven sacred rites in Lakota tradition: the sweatlodge (*inipi*) or purification rite, the funeral practices or 'keeping of the soul,' the vision quest or 'crying for a vision' (*hambleceya*), the Sundance (*Wi wanyang wacipi*), the adoption

⁸ James W. Lynd, "The Religion of the Dakotas," *Minnesota Historical Collections* 2 (1864): 150-174; Gideon H. Pond, "Dakota Superstitions," *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society* 2 (1867): 32-62; Samuel W. Pond, *The Dakota or Sioux in Minnesota as They were in 1834* (Minnesota, 1908); Alice Fletcher, "Indian Ceremonies," *Report of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology* 16 (1884): 260-333; Stephan R. Riggs, *Dakota Grammar, Texts, and Ethnography* (1893); James O. Dorsey, *A Study of Siouan Cults* (1894); James Mooney, *The Ghost-Dance Religion and The Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (Chicago, 1896); George Sword, "Dakota Texts from the Sword Manuscript," trans. Ella Deloria 1896-1909; James R. Walker, *Lakota Belief and Ritual*, eds. Raymond J. DeMallie and Elaine A. Jahner (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1980[1896-1909]); James R. Walker, *Lakota Myth*, ed. Elaine A. Jahner (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1983 [1896-1909]); James R. Walker, *Lakota Society*, ed. Raymond J. DeMallie (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1982 [1896-1909]); Clark Wissler, "Societies and Ceremonial Associations in the Oglala Division of the Teton-Dakota," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History* 11 (1912): 1-99; Charles A. Eastman, *Indian Boyhood* (New York: McClure, 1902); Frances Densmore, *Teton Sioux Music* (1918); Ella Deloria, *Dakota Texts* (1932); George Bushotter, *Teton Myths*, ed. and trans. Ella Deloria (1937); Eugene Buechel, *A Grammar of Lakota* (St. Francis, S.D.: Rosebud Educational Society, 1939).

ceremony or 'making of relatives' (*hunka*) and the puberty rites.⁹ Other rituals, such as the *yuwipi*, are also practiced.¹⁰ Prayers are made to the four directions and each direction is associated with a specific color and set of symbols.¹¹

Along with older practices, many newer religious practices developed in the 1900s. The men's traditional dance of the contemporary powwow, with its associated regalia, is the popularly conceived image of Native ritual and should be differentiated from the Sundance. The Lakota adopted the 'war dance' or 'Omaha dance' (*Omaha wacipi*) from the Omaha Indians in the middle to late nineteenth century (M. Powers 121). Inter-tribal styles became popular during the 1950s and 1960s. The term 'powwow' also became popular at this time and comes from its usage in Oklahoma. In addition, Christian missionaries have been associated with the Lakota. The nineteenth century was dominated by Catholic, Presbyterian and Episcopalian missionary efforts. The Native American Church, established in the early 1900s, integrates Christian beliefs, the use of peyote and, in some churches, the use of the pipe. I have accompanied Melda and Lupe in the sweatlodge as well as to many different Sundance ceremonies and adoption ceremonies. I have also taken part in funeral rites, the closing of a Native American Church meeting, and I have attended powwows. For the purposes of this thesis, the details of these ceremonies matter much less than the ways that Melda and

⁹ Many ethnographies have been written on some or all of these rites. For Black Elk's description, see Joseph Epes Brown's *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux* (Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 1953). Julian Rice provides one of the most recent comprehensive analyses of Lakota belief and ritual in *Before the Great Spirit: The Many Faces of Sioux Spirituality* (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1998).

¹⁰ The *yuwipi* ceremony is a "Lakota ritual in which the holy man is bound in a darkened room and obtains release through the mysterious intercession of helping spirits. Employed in contemporary times for spiritual devotion and to find lost objects" (Holler 230).

Lupe discuss their relationships to these ceremonies. Additionally, revealing ceremonial details is potentially ethically questionable.¹²

Melda Red Bear and Lupe Trejo

Melda and the Red Bear family are connected to Lakota tradition both culturally and through family ties. Melda was born on the land owned by her family on the Pine Ridge Reservation. She continues to live there (2001). Melda's grandfather, Charles Red Bear, was born in 1869, the year after the Fort Laramie treaty delineated the reservation land. The Red Bear land was most likely parceled, with the Allotment Act, in the early 1900s. Melda grew up speaking the Lakota language, and she chooses to speak Lakota with those who know the language. She says, "[o]ur ancestors are medicine men" and she primarily associates her family with traditional Lakota spiritual practices (8).

Melda's great-great-grandfather was an Indian Scout for the United States Army and the third cousin of Crazy Horse (Kadlecek 139, 161). Philip Runs Along the Edge / Red Bear, Melda's great-grandfather, was born in the mid-1800s, prior to the birth of George Sword (1846 - 1910), who was the primary informant for Lakota ethnographer Dr. James R. Walker.¹³ Philip Runs Along the Edge Red Bear was influential in bringing peyote to South Dakota in 1904 and in establishing the Native American Church.¹⁴ Melda attended

¹¹ For a description of the four directions, see the account of Arlene Fire (Dakota) in Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird's edited compilation *Reinventing the Enemy's Language: Contemporary Native Women's Writings of North America* (New York: Norton, 1997) 300.

¹² See, for example, Devon Mihesuah's compilation of essays, *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indian* (1998).

¹³ Of Walker's ethnographic work, Julian Rice says: "Three recent additions of his [Walker's] papers, *Lakota Belief and Ritual* (1980), *Lakota Society* (1982), and *Lakota Myth* (1983) have become a compendium of tribal truth for both New Age entrepreneurs and serious scholars" (*Before* 10). Severt Young Bear also notes their usefulness to the Lakota people (99).

¹⁴ Being an army scout can be regarded as a privileged position as evidenced by the pride Melda shows when referring to her family history. Melda also states that her grandfather's brother, Howard Red Bear,

Native American Church meetings that were run by her father until she was sixteen years old. She prays using the pipe and attends sweatlodge ceremonies both on her own land and elsewhere on the reservation. She describes her own knowledge of Lakota tradition as a life-long process of learning from Lakota elders:

Because I know those old people pray real good and I learned a lot from old people. Pansy and my mom ... So I learn from way at the bottom, you gotta slowly work yourself up. (172)

Melda continues to ask older people about traditional ways when she doesn't know something, but she is also increasingly taking on the role of grandmother, or elder, in teaching her grandchildren about Lakota tradition.

Lupe's life has involved many shifts, migrations and negotiations. Lupe knows that some people might perceive him as an outsider to Lakota culture but, from my perspective as an outsider, he has lived as an insider. I find it difficult to characterize his identity because I only knew Lupe for five years. In those five years, he steadfastly held to Lakota spiritual practices. Nonetheless, Lupe identifies himself quite specifically as an Aztec Indian and he is always very clear about both of his parents being Mexican.

Lupe's father was nine years old when he came from Mexico, without papers. His mother was born in Texas and primarily spoke Spanish. Lupe was born in Coleman, Texas and he spent seven years, in his youth, training for the priesthood in a seminary. Lupe is proud of his Aztec heritage, as well as his Mexican relations, and he has visited his relatives in Mexico with his father. He worked on farms for much of his life and

was an army scout who saw the aftermath of the massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890 (220). I suggest that this is an important topic for further research; the role could be seen as carrying the status associated with being a warrior.

worked for one man on the same farm in Nebraska for almost forty years. He ultimately abandoned the Catholic faith and then met Melda in 1957. In the 1970s, Lupe turned to Lakota tradition after a medicine man healed his mother. Lupe began to Sundance in the early 1980s at Leonard Crow Dog's Sundance. These events are discussed in more depth in chapter five. Leonard Crow Dog is a medicine man actively involved with AIM (American Indian Movement).¹⁵ Melda recounts growing up in close association with the Crow Dog family and focuses on their formative years in her stories. Lupe emphasizes Leonard Crow Dog's spiritual status and focuses on their involvement together in Sundances. The Crow Dog Sundance, which began in 1973, was the first widely accessible autonomous ceremony since the Sundance was banned by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in the 1880s.¹⁶ Lupe later followed the teachings of Ruben Fire Thunder, a medicine man who was Lupe's adopted brother, in setting up a Sundance on the Red Bear land in 1988. The Sundance ran for twelve years, as a memorial Sundance for Ruben Fire Thunder. Lupe danced for nineteen years, roughly one-third of his life, and it is primarily about that part of his life that I am writing.

The Lakota generation that grew up in the 1940s, of which Melda is a part, was largely disconnected from the traditional community and only subsequently moved towards re-traditionalization. In 1934, the Wheeler-Howard Act, or Indian

¹⁵ AIM (American Indian Movement) is a pan-Indian national activist organization. For more information, see Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel and Duane Champagne, eds., *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1997).

¹⁶ AIM activist, Russell Means, describes the history of the Sundance in his autobiography: "As with many of our spiritual observances, Christian missionaries forced the BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] to ban it [the Sun Dance] in 1881. Our right to the sun dance was restored in the 1950s, but with so many restrictions that the ceremony was reduced to a mere shadow of what it had once been ... but a few Lakota secretly conducted the holy rituals in remote parts of their reservations" (186). John Collier repealed anti-religion laws in the 1930s. For a history of the Sundance, see Clyde Holler's *Black Elk's Religion: The Sun Dance and Lakota Catholicism* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse U P, 1995).

Reorganization Act, was passed in the United States. It promoted elected tribal governments but, according to Raymond J. DeMallie, the system contributed to increased poverty in the 1940s (*Sender*, 130). The 1930s to the 1950s have been broadly categorized as the reorganization period. Many people left the reservation to find work during this time because of the poor conditions on the reservation (Krum 52). Additionally, after World War II, federal policies encouraged urban relocation as well as the termination of formal tribal-federal relationships. Melda, who was born in 1939, describes her family leaving the reservation to find work:

And in my generation . . . I was born here and I wasn't raised here. I went to school here for a while but I went mostly in Denver, Colorado and Scottsbluff, Nebraska. And we had to work hard because there was no foodstamps or nothing, no money coming in. So we moved from here and I was raised mostly in Nebraska. Scottsbluff, Nebraska and Denver, Colorado. We'd do a lot of work, like novelty work making dolls and all kinds of stuff. And that's how we'd support ourself. (1)

Melda does not specifically refer to the policies that encouraged her family to leave the reservation. She instead focuses on the economic necessity that required their leaving the reservation. Despite the dislocation and government efforts to acculturate, Melda grew up with continued ties to both the reservation and traditional practices. For example, Melda describes taking part in a powwow contest on Pine Ridge Reservation in 1957 when she witnessed the re-introduction of the BIA-sponsored Sundance. Melda is part of a generation that was encouraged to divorce from traditional practices but, nonetheless,

maintained tradition. Melda's family was dislocated from the reservation, but they sustained feasible ties to forms of tradition that persisted in the 1950s.

The Red Power movement of the 1970s was characterized by spiritual revitalization, political protests and demands for treaty rights. The activist movement grew out of the civil rights era of the 1960s and came to be associated with the re-introduction of spiritual practices:¹⁷

The current [1983] positive regard for Indian elders, by Indians and non-Indians alike, is due in part to the resurgence of ethnic identity begun during the Indian Renaissance of the 1970s. Laws passed since the 1960s have favored Indian sovereignty and self-determination, and young men and women, encouraged to be proud of their Indian heritage, have turned to the elders to learn more about tribal beliefs and customs, about being Indian. (Deloria and Lytle 16)

Melda and Lupe do not refer to the political activity on the reservation at that time. They associate the period only with its spiritual resurgence. In 1973, Lakota traditionalists and members of AIM occupied the site of the Wounded Knee massacre in an effort to protest federal, tribal and local grievances.¹⁸ Melda says, "I don't know what year, but Sundancing didn't really start until AIM people. In 1973. Wounded Knee and after that. Sundances started" (61). Melda and Lupe increasingly spent time on the reservation

¹⁷ See Joane Nagel's *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford UP, 1996). Dakota scholar, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn is clear in differentiating between civil rights and the Native efforts towards self-determination and sovereignty that are associated with being constitutionally-recognized nation(s) in the U.S. For a further discussion, see Cook-Lynn's *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays: A Tribal Voice* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1996) 141.

¹⁸ The occupation of Wounded Knee is described in Peter Matthiessen's *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* (New York: Viking P, 1983).

during this period and began attending ceremonies together. They had met at the Pine Ridge powwow in 1957, raised eleven children and labored as migrant workers. Their eldest child was born in 1958 and their youngest child in 1972. Melda's mother moved back to the reservation in 1972. As their children became more independent, Melda and Lupe spent more time involved in the traditional reservation community that was emerging in the late 1970s. Melda and Lupe's stories, and my interpretation of those stories, revolve around the spiritual revitalization of this period and their involvement in setting up one of the early Sundances on the reservation.

The Researcher: Larissa Petrillo and Ethical Relationships

Melda and Lupe's stories, and the project we have undertaken to record them, appeal to my own interests and prompt me in new ways of thinking. I am an interdisciplinary scholar, engaged in Native Studies, with primary interests in ethnography, oral history and Native literature. I am a young white woman who was raised with anti-racist beliefs; I was born in 1969. Feminist and postmodern theoretical frameworks inform my work and I perceive the entire project as being postcolonial. Using Ato Quayson's definition of postcolonialism as "a studied engagement with the experience of colonialism and its past and present effects," I follow his suggestion that "postmodernism can never fully explain the state of the contemporary world without first becoming postcolonial, and vice versa" (2; 154). The postmodernist re-imagining of subject positions, implicit with the West's crisis of consciousness, requires the elucidation of postcolonial formulations of knowledge and power to ultimately provide for agency. My primary area of interest is that of identity which has been prompted by feminist questions about how to act politically without using normalizing categories, such

as 'woman.' How do individuals derive agency, or act in their best interests, while also acknowledging that identities are multiple and constructed? I find 'being Indian' especially interesting given the ways such an identity is rooted in ideas of the past but negotiated in the present. Consequently, I am using Melda and Lupe's understandings of the past and present effects of colonialism to interpret contemporary Indian identity. Their local knowledge is both personal and political.

I am a non-Native scholar who is trying to collaborate cross-culturally. Thus, the project demands an examination of the politics of representation and the question of appropriation. How do I respond to the demand put forth by Lenore Keeshig-Tobias (Ojibway), among others, to "stop stealing Native stories"?¹⁹ I have no counter-arguments; I agree with Keeshig-Tobias's position. To accede to such a request, however, need not exclude non-Native academics from respectfully collaborating across cultures.²⁰ What it does require is an ethics of "*mutual recognition*," whereby I consider the positions of Melda and Lupe as well as my own position (hooks 241). I am aware that I have personal and cultural biases and that I can never ultimately know what qualifies as 'right' or 'wrong.' However, disclosure as to what I regard as 'right' or 'wrong' promotes cross-cultural understanding. In the following chapters, I describe my

¹⁹ See Lenore Keeshig-Tobias, "Stop Stealing Native Stories," in *Borrowed Power: Essays on Cultural Appropriation*, ed. Bruce Ziff and Pratima V. Rao (New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 1990), 71-73. The article was originally published in *Toronto Globe and Mail*, 26 Jan. 1990; for interviews with Lenore Keeshig-Tobias, Lee Maracle and Anne Cameron see Libby Scheier, Sarah Sheard, and Eleanor Wachtel, eds., *Language in Her Eye* (Toronto, ON: Coach House, 1990); for a description of the effect of the debate on a non-Native collaborator see Wendy Wickwire's introduction to *Nature Power: In the Spirit of an Okanagan Storyteller* (Vancouver, BC: Douglas and McIntyre, 1992); and Emma LaRocque provides an introductory overview in "Preface, or Here Are Our Voices - Who Will Hear?" in *Writing the Circle: Native Women of Western Canada*, ed. Jeanne Perreault and Sylvia Vance (Edmonton, AB: NeWest, 1990). These are some of the primary sources of the debate over appropriation in Canada; there are similar debates in the U.S.

efforts to disclose my practices to Melda and Lupe as well as to others. Accordingly, the thesis includes an extensive discussion about the process of collaborating as well as the choices that I have made about the resulting product. I cannot *conclusively* say that I have achieved an ethical project, but I know that I have contributed to an increased understanding of what is required to do so.

I am producing material that is meant to benefit the academic community as well as Melda and Lupe. This thesis is primarily intended for an academic audience and, inasmuch as I am part of an academic community, I also benefit from the material. I had originally wanted to produce a single document that would be useful to both academic audiences and the Red Bear / Trejo family. The result was largely material that was not focused on either group. I had thought that my project wouldn't succeed if I was not able to break down the boundaries between academic writing and non-academic writing. In maintaining that belief, however, I was failing to respect the differences among the intended audiences. Ultimately, I have decided to analyze selected stories instead of including the entire transcribed document so as to detail my interpretive framework and acknowledge my role in the construction of knowledge. This decision is discussed in greater detail in chapter 3. The analysis of Melda and Lupe's stories begins primarily in chapter 4. Melda and members of her family have reviewed the transcripts, as well as drafts of the thesis, and have provided feedback. We maintain regular contact despite the end of our 'formal' research period. I have given the Red Bear / Trejo family additional material that I perceive as being of value to them. Such materials include the transcripts

²⁰ Lenore Keeshig-Tobias goes on to quote Maria Campbell's (Metis) challenge that "if you want our stories, then be prepared to live with us" (73). This sort of directive coincides with my own ideas of collaboration.

of our storytelling sessions (written and disc format), collections of family photographs (printed and electronic format), the Red Bear / Trejo family tree, booklets with short stories and photos for family members, and any publishing royalties that might derive from material that they have provided. Some of these materials still need to be completed and I foresee our relationship continuing and perhaps involving the recording of further stories from other family members as well as additional research into historical information pertaining to the family.

I am committed to an interdisciplinary perspective inasmuch as disciplines are associated with establishing a 'right' way of doing things and excluding 'other' ways of doing things. I find that evaluating materials solely from a disciplinary perspective, whereby specific qualities of academic rigor characterize examples of good disciplinary work, threatens the evaluation of materials that might be useful from other perspectives. My own work cannot be characterized as a thorough ethnographic study or a comprehensive piece of literary criticism.²¹ My thesis is, however, useful for understanding a Lakota perspective that is itself interdisciplinary. Quayson suggests that "the interdisciplinary model has ultimately to answer to the ways in which it shapes an ethical attitude to reality, in this case to postcolonial reality ... Interdisciplinarity has to be placed in the service of something much larger than the interdisciplinary model itself"

²¹ I have written this thesis largely in the present tense which raises questions as to whether or not I am writing in the "ethnographic present" or the "literary present." The ethnographic present functions to convey a "hypothesized pure culture that the ethnographer tries to extract from what are considered the adulterating influences of contact with other, chiefly White, cultures" (see Sheila Rabillard, "Absorption, Elimination, and the Hybrid: Some Impure Questions of Gender and Culture in the Trickster Drama of Tomson Highway" *Essays in Theatre* 12.1(1993), 5.). It is by no means my intention to align myself with such a practice but rather to convey that there are different ways of conceiving of time and, inasmuch as Melda and Lupe's stories enact regeneration as associated with the oral tradition, I feel it best to indicate the ways in which they continue to be active in perpetuating tradition even in my efforts to commit their narrative to the written page.

(46). I am placing interdisciplinarity in the service of providing full context to Melda and Lupe's perspective of Lakota tradition. In doing so, I am trying to emulate Tuhiwai Smith's description of indigenist research as "an approach which borrows freely from feminist research and critical approaches to research, but privileges indigenous voices"

(147). Anthropology has a long history of adopting trans-disciplinary theories:

In historical terms, anthropology has often benefited from theoretical models derived from outside itself. One may recall that figures such as Marx or Weber were themselves not anthropologists, and that Durkheim was anthropological only in a belated and armchair sense of the term. Borrowing theory from other disciplines has indeed been the rule as much as the exception within anthropology. ... More recently, such incorporations have expanded to include the anthropological relevance of Gramsci, Foucault, Bakhtin, and Benjamin, as well as the recuperation of subaltern and female writers, such as Frantz Fanon and Zora Neale Hurston. (Knaft 285)

The present focus on indigenist research, however, demands cross-cultural exchange as well. Borrowing theories across disciplines, and across cultures, is useful for "getting out of confusing habits of thought" (Quayson 14). The present ethical commitment demands that local knowledges, or indigenous voices, inform academic inquiry so as to break the 'habit' of privileging dominant perspectives at the expense of dialogic engagement.

The Research: Larissa Petrillo and Academic/Personal History

My path towards eventually working with Melda and Lupe has been indirect and largely circumstantial. I have always been interested in people and how they think and

behave. In the early years of my undergraduate degree, I was interested in Jungian psychology and read Freud to complete a major in Humanities and Psychoanalytic Thought. I also studied the biochemistry of the brain and received a B.Sc. in Psychology from the University of Toronto. I traveled for six months through Europe and Africa and increasingly became interested in the socio-cultural aspects of human behavior. I returned to the University of Toronto for a year of Religious Studies. I wrote about the history of Western civilization and the suppression of women-centered spirituality. I returned to Africa for another six months and became more deeply aware of differing cultural perspectives. I also noticed my own ignorance about the indigenous population in Canada and the United States.

I studied Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario and was awarded a Master's Degree in 1996. During my MA, my interest in Native studies developed indirectly and continued alongside my interest in feminist interpretations of history and religion. I had a non-academic interest in Indians. I avoided studying Native cultures because I found the politics associated with colonized nations in my own country to be disquieting; I preferred to remain uninformed. I also associated New Age spirituality with the unsettling appropriation of Native spiritual practices and wanted to distance myself from those sorts of practices. Despite these hesitations, I took a course, in 1993-4, called 'Native / Non-Native Relations' and became more interested in Native Studies. Kay Koppedray, the professor teaching the course, greatly influenced my subsequent research in Native Studies. We read Allan Hanson's "The Making of the Maori: Culture Invention and Its Logic" (1989), Sam D. Gill's *Mother Earth: An American Story* (1987), Roy Harvey Pearce's *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the*

Indian and the American Mind (1988[1953]), and an article, written by Debbie Wise Harris, about the way Mohawk women were represented in the media during the Oka crisis. I found the arguments about the invention of tradition to be pertinent in demonstrating how knowledge is constructed.²² However, theories that disengage Native communities from their political engagement with the past can be used to subvert indigenous claims to sovereignty. Postmodern claims dispute essentialist discourses in ways that disengage Native peoples from a politics associated with their culture and history.

For my Master's thesis, *The Life Stories of a Woman From Rosebud: Names and Naming in Lakota Woman and Ohitika Woman* (1996), I wrote about the co-authored life stories of a Lakota woman. *Lakota Woman* (1991) and *Ohitika Woman* (1994) are the consecutive life stories of Mary Brave Woman, also known as Mary Crow Dog and Mary Brave Bird, a mixed-blood Lakota woman from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota.²³ I was interested in *Lakota Woman* because it provided information about spirituality from a woman's perspective and it did so from a cultural perspective that differed from my own. I learned to differentiate among mainstream feminism and women's perspectives associated with different cultures. However, *Lakota Woman* and *Ohitika Woman* are implicated in anthropological debates. Concerns over authorship and representation, in the eyes of some scholars, undermine the acceptance of *Lakota Woman*

²² Alan Hanson says, "invention is an ordinary event in the development of all discourse" (899). Jocelyn Linnekin further elaborates that "[s]ymbolically constructed traditions are therefore not inauthentic; rather, all traditions – Western and indigenous – are invented, in that they are symbolically constructed in the present and reflect contemporary concerns and purposes rather than a passively inherited legacy" (447).

²³ *Lakota Woman* was first published in 1990, although completed in 1979. *Ohitika Woman* followed the publication of *Lakota Woman*; it came out in print in 1994. Mary Brave Woman is now divorced from Leonard Crow Dog and she has used several different names.

(1991) and *Ohitika Woman* (1994) as “ideal” ethnographic or literary texts.²⁴ Most notably, Julian Rice critiqued the authenticity of *Lakota Woman* in “A Ventriloquy of Anthros: Densmore, Dorsey, Lame Deer, and Erdoes” (1994). He argues that Richard Erdoes constructed much of the text from ethnographic accounts. I decided to only briefly refer to Rice’s argument, and concerns over voice and representation more broadly, because I recognized that the debate could not be resolved. Initially, I had thought that the life history genre would resolve postmodern concerns over the cultural biases of mediated accounts by offering an “authentic” marginalized account. Instead, I learned that all accounts are mediated in some way and that concerns over voice and representation need not prevent the exchange of information across cultures. Biases are implicit in any representation. Efforts to discount collaborative texts contribute to the silencing of Native cultures. The author, herself, has not objected to Erdoes’s manipulations of the text. Mary Crow Dog stresses that making the information known is more critical than authorship concerns (Wise 7).

In 1994, during my Master’s education, I went to Pine Ridge Reservation. Kay Koppedray, the instructor who introduced me to Native Studies, became my thesis advisor. She had been going to Pine Ridge Reservation for several years with her husband, who is a bow-maker. I accompanied them to the reservation, and it was through Kay and her husband that I met Melda and Lupe. I did not have a specific agenda in mind but just enjoyed listening to Melda tell stories that I would inevitably hear repeated over the next several years. I did not write of my experiences on the reservation in my

²⁴ Arnold Krupat excludes the texts from his anthology of Native American literature because of Richard Erdoes’s involvement. See Arnold Krupat, ed. *Native American Autobiography: An Anthology* (Madison, Wisconsin: The U of Wisconsin P, 1994).

MA thesis, except to describe, in the epilogue, what I learned about Lakota culture from my experience in a sweatlodge. I returned to the reservation in 1996, with Kay and her husband, to go to Melda and Lupe's Sundance. I gave a copy of my thesis to Melda and Lupe's daughter, Barbara, because I had wanted to be 'up-front' about being an academic who writes about Lakota culture. At that time, however, I did not anticipate working specifically with Melda and Lupe.

For my doctoral studies, I entered the Individual Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Program at the University of British Columbia and proposed to undertake a collaborative cross-cultural project on Pine Ridge Reservation. I had intended to find someone who could act as an 'informant' in describing the role of Lakota women in spiritual practices. This had been my area of interest for several years. I was interested in how women's roles are regarded in different religious traditions. I planned on enrolling in courses at Sinte Gleska University on Rosebud Reservation and hoped to forge relationships that would be of use in my project. Once I arrived on the reservation, and earnestly listened to the storytelling, I began to learn more about Lakota culture. Consequently, I recognized that my own feminist agenda was not relevant to the project as conceived by those on the reservation. In this thesis, I write of that process – the process of being an outsider who came to know something of what it means to be an insider (Goulet 248). I stayed with Melda and Lupe for several months, returned repeatedly to Pine Ridge Reservation and eventually asked Melda if she would like to record her stories for her grandchildren.

Interpreting the Stories

Melda and Lupe's explication of affiliation and belonging is precisely what makes their life stories so relevant to a contemporary understanding of Lakota identity. Lupe is Mexican and Melda is Lakota; they negotiate their ties to Lakota culture in different ways. While I could have analyzed the ways in which gender and class are negotiated in their narratives, I have chosen to focus only on the topic of ethnic identity. I accept how they characterize their realities as valid and authoritative. I am interested in how people make sense of political conditions through the constitution of a personal reality. I acknowledge that normative categories are detrimental inasmuch as they disallow the complex intermingling of cultures or the compatibility of multiple identities. Nonetheless, I recognize that essentialist discourses are important for political resistance *and* a sense of self-regard (i.e. Indian pride, 'girl power,' gay pride, etc.). With reference to normalizing categories, Whiteley says "categories provide a way to understand reality, *as well as* being part of that reality" (18). Identities are experienced, among material conditions, as real. Consequently, I focus on individual lives and the contexts raised by those lives. I am interested in the choices that people make in negotiating their identities rather than how well they characterize delimited categories. Judith Butler says, "[t]he point ... is not then to answer these questions [about universality and humanity], but to permit them an opening, to provoke a political discourse that sustains the questions" (41). Specifically, I follow Helen Hoy's suggestion that identity be treated as a verb, not a noun, to try to gain a better understanding of Indian identity (177). Consequently, I examine the ways that Melda and Lupe talk about *being* Indian.

I interpret Melda and Lupe's stories using what I have learned about Lakota culture from extensive research. I attempt to be reflexive, or "conscious of being self-conscious," and use the ideas that come from my learning process to constantly revise my own interpretations (Goulet xxxix).²⁵ I draw on material from my own experiences as well as what I have learned from reading other Lakota life stories and ethnographies. I have also used information from emerging literature and criticism by Native writers and academics. Whenever possible, I support my interpretations with multiple references from both Native and non-Native sources. Life story narratives, which resonate with comparative material, have been my primary source for contextual information. I have primarily used the following Lakota life stories in interpreting Melda and Lupe's stories: Severt Young Bear and R.D. Theisz's collaborative *Standing in the Light: A Lakota Way of Seeing* (1994), Delphine Red Shirt's autobiographical *Bead on an Anthill: A Lakota Childhood* (1998), Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve's account of her life and family, *Completing the Circle* (1995), Carolyn Reyer's compilation of Lakota women's stories, *Cante ohitika Win (Brave-hearted Women): Images of Lakota Women from the Pine Ridge Reservation South Dakota* (1991), Russell Means's *Where White Men Fear to Tread: The Autobiography of Russell Means* (1995) and Joseph Iron Eye Dudley's life story, *Choteau Creek: A Sioux Reminiscence* (1992). Ethnographies have been critical in

²⁵ I have been influenced primarily by the following ethnographies in using this practice: Julie Cruikshank, with Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith and Annie Ned, *Life Lived Like a Story: Life Stories of Three Yukon Native Elders* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1990); Peter M. Whiteley, *Rethinking Hopi Ethnography* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution P, 1998); Jean-Guy A. Goulet, *Ways of Knowing: Experience, Knowledge, and Power among the Dene Tha* (Vancouver: UBC P, 1998); and Roger Spielmann, 'You're So Fat!': *Exploring Ojibwe Discourse* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1998). For a description of this ethnographic method in the study of Native cultures, specifically, see: Arnold Krupat, *Ethnocriticism: Ethnography, History, Literature* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1992) and Luke Eric Lassiter, "Commentary: Authoritative Texts, Collaborative Ethnography, and Native American Studies" *American Indian Quarterly* 24.4(2001): 601-614.

further elaborating and supporting my efforts to interpret Melda and Lupe's narratives. I have found the most substantive interpretive material in Raymond A. Bucko's *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge: History and Contemporary Practice* (1998) and Mikael Kurkiala's '*Building the Nation Back Up*': *The Politics of Identity on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation* (1997).²⁶ Both Bucko and Kurkiala approach contemporary Lakota identity and tradition with an interpretive framework that allows for the diversity and dynamism of contemporary Lakota culture. The critical work of Dakota scholars, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn and Vine Deloria, Jr, has been a mainstay throughout my doctoral research.

Melda and Lupe's account is not a conclusive 'Lakota perspective.' Their account should be regarded, along with other Lakota life stories and ethnographic information, as helping to foster an increased understanding about aspects of Lakota culture. This associative method is grounded in the oral tradition, in that many stories together comprise a cultural perspective. Speaking of her grandmother's life story, Dakota historian, Angela Cavendar Wilson, says that this "account by itself will not change the course of American history, or create a theory or framework ... It is not even representative of the 'Dakota perspective.' Instead, it is one family's perspective that in combination with other families' stories might help to create an understanding of Dakota views on [a specific] event and time period" (12). Melda and Lupe's stories might be regarded as part of a network of stories that can be used to facilitate the interpretation of

²⁶ Also useful: LaVera Rose, *Iyeska Win: Intermarriage and Ethnicity Among the Lakota in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, MA thesis, Northern Arizona U, 1994; Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, eds., *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women* (Lanham: U P of America, 1983); articles from *Indian Country Today*, the national Indian newspaper in the United States; and postings from *H-Net List for American Indian Studies* <H-AMINDIAN@H-NET.MSU.EDU>.

other stories. For example, in *Standing in the Light: A Lakota Way of Seeing* (1994), Severt Young Bear (Lakota) describes what he understands as Lakota identity:

Our Lakota people understand some things. Identity is based on the idea of *slolic'iya*, knowing who you are. In connection with that is the notion that there are limits, of only going so far, of having a limit. Around us there's an aura, a barrier that goes around us, a limit of our being. To get beyond that to the universe and the Great Spirit, we use our voice, we throw our voice loud and clear, we get on top of a hill and throw our voice in prayer. In this way we hope to find ourselves. It used to work, but now it takes a special effort to succeed. (106)

Young Bear says that Lakota people understand "some things." He is indicating that there are different 'ways of knowing' and that he is presenting what he conceives as a Lakota 'way of knowing' things. His account raises questions, which are addressed in the final chapter, about the limits associated with identity, practices that uphold Indian identity and the relevance of spiritual belief to individual identity. Melda and Lupe's narrative has both facilitated my interpretation of Young Bear's explanation and been informed by his and other Lakota stories.

Overview and Outline of Chapters

Colonial discourses about Indian identity are contested through strategic resistance efforts as well as through extant beliefs that, from a traditional perspective, repudiate the need for an engagement with colonial concerns. Melda and Lupe use traditional beliefs and cultural practices in an effort to undermine colonial authority. Indian identity is, in this respect, a categorization whereby "the *real* Indian and the *real*

White are defined by their difference from one another” (Rabillard 5). These are the findings that I had anticipated. Melda and Lupe also declare an identity that is rooted in Lakota cosmology, spiritual beliefs and traditional practices. I had not expected such a distinct religious understanding to emerge from their life stories. Problems that arise with colonial definitions of Indianness, such as ‘race’ and an association to an unchanging past, are unsettled by traditional conceptions of being related. Melda and Lupe understand their identities from a religious standpoint. Their theories about the world derive, in part, from their belief that we are all related. Spiritual practices, which are regarded as regenerative, supercede the delimiting of distinct identities. In *Culturcide, Resistance, and Survival of the Lakota* (‘Sioux Nation’), James V. Fenelon says that “[t]wo central themes – Lakota spirituality and Sioux sovereignty – are tightly connected in the traditional Lakota philosophy, defying the usual analytical modes of inquiry ... combining sacred and secular ... [and connecting] individual cultural identity with spiritual sovereign relations” (288). From a traditional spiritual standpoint, Lakota epistemology promotes a transcendent identification that encompasses and confounds mainstream theories of identity. From a colonial perspective, Indian identity compels definition. Traditionally, however, constructing and negotiating identity and tradition through prayer, ceremony and storytelling functions to maintain all that is related. Both of these standpoints operate in contemporary circumstances. Consequently, Lakota identity is both provisional and essential; constructed and lived.

In Chapter 2 – Power and Ethics, I review the ethics of the project, focusing on initiating the collaboration with Melda and Lupe. I regard both theory and method as developing in conjunction and discuss them together. I discuss questions associated with

knowledge and power, such as colonial ideas about the use of 'informants.' Specifically, I examine the differences between Lakota spiritual practices and academic ethics protocols. Chapter 3 – Representation and Interpretation provides an examination of appropriation, representation, textualization and interpretation. I acknowledge the power inequalities and cultural biases associated with different cultural positions and endeavor to address these concerns. Melda and Lupe's stories are associated with their cultural context through several interrelated sources. Chapter 4 – Melda: Indian Identity allows for a more in-depth analysis of Melda and Lupe's narrative. I interpret one of Melda's stories with reference to Lakota life stories and ethnographic information. In her story, Indian identity is constructed in opposition to colonial discourses. She makes cultural, political and genealogical claims to Lakota identity.

I examine Lupe's outsider status and their intermarriage in Chapter 5 – Lupe: Ancestry and Intermarriage. Melda both acknowledges genealogy as a factor in Indian identity and contests its relevance from a traditional perspective. She uses cultural practices to support intermarriage. Lupe, similarly, focuses on cultural and geographical associations in an effort to claim a Mexican identity. Chapter 6 – Indian Identity as Emerging Process focuses on the retraditionalization in Native communities associated with the 1970s and 1980s. Lupe's associations to Lakota culture are examined in that he uses visions and medicine men to support his position in the community. He uses practices that contribute to the support of Lakota tradition. Lakota spiritual beliefs are described in more detail in Chapter 7 – Lakota Tradition and Being Related. I examine the policing of tradition that has resulted from the proliferation of spiritual practices. These negotiations – the construction of identity and tradition – can be regarded, from a

traditional Lakota perspective, as part of the regenerative process of tradition.

Throughout the thesis, different standpoints are brought into relation with one another. I demonstrate how meanings shift with the adoption of different perspectives. Traditional Lakota beliefs can be regarded as an epistemological tradition. Standpoint epistemologies disrupt the interpretive frameworks associated with dominant practices. From a traditional Lakota perspective, different viewpoints can be conceived as an expression of the sacred relations of the universe. Using this viewpoint, cross-cultural dialogue can be regarded as a regenerative process that maintains relations.

Chapter II – Power and Ethics

Introductory Remarks

In this chapter, I analyze issues related to the politics of this project. I discuss questions associated with knowledge and power. Specifically, I address my efforts to follow ethical practices. I describe how I came to work with Melda and Lupe and what I have learned from the process. My methodology has been informed by my commitment to being respectful, which pervades Lakota social relations, but my understanding of the issues has developed throughout the course of this project.²⁷ In that sense, theory and method are mutually informing and I discuss them concurrently. I have used experiential knowledge, material from Melda and Lupe's stories and ethnographic material to more fully understand perspectives other than my own. I have attempted to break down the dichotomized thinking associated with the knower/known relationship. Melda and Lupe have very clear ideas about what they would like to achieve and by what means. I examine how their ethics, associated with Lakota spiritual practices, contest academic ethics protocols. Specifically, authority may be conceived in any number of ways. Understanding authority from a traditional Lakota perspective unsettles academic authority and dominant frameworks.

Who am I? Who are Melda and Lupe? What is our relationship? Throughout the project, I have been constantly making efforts to understand our respective positions and the power associated with them; I have been addressing ethical questions. I run the risk of misrepresenting Melda and Lupe and the material they regard as important, depending

²⁷ Kurkiala notes that "Lakota often emphasize 'respect' as their primary social value" (173).

on how I choose to use the authority associated with my subject position. The same is also true of Melda and Lupe in that they can use their positions to compromise my intentions. I cannot state conclusively that these breaches did not occur, although I do not have any sense of being compromised by Melda and Lupe. I hope to correct for my *own* mistakes by revealing the situations, at least those of which I am aware, where I failed to fully consider disparate perspectives of the project. In *Subalternity and Representation: Arguments in Cultural Theory* (1999), John Beverley says that “[s]ubaltern studies is about power, who has it and who doesn’t, who is gaining it and who is losing it” (1). I look at the ways I claim authority as an academic – as someone ‘who has power.’ I have increasingly gained insights into how Melda and Lupe negotiate power during the course of the project. In *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999), Tuhiwai Smith raises some of the ethical questions that I have considered in the project:

‘Who defined the research problem? For whom is this study worthy and relevant? Who says so? What knowledge will the community gain from this study? What knowledge will the researcher gain from this study? What are some likely positive outcomes from this study? What are some possible negative outcomes? How can the negative outcomes be eliminated? To whom is the researcher accountable? What processes are in place to support the research, the researched and the researcher?’ (173).

My Perspective as an Academic

I was born in Toronto, Canada, in 1969 and was educated at alternative public schools before attending university. The broad ideological shifts that accompanied the

social movements of that period have influenced my ideas about knowledge and power. Postmodern revisions of authority and authorship have also been significant to my 'post-civil-rights-era mentality.' My academic understanding of racial politics has been shaped, in part, by the ways that researchers have grappled with concerns raised by such scholars as Vine Deloria, Jr. (Dakota). Deloria is a scholar in American Indian Studies, History, Law and Religious Studies, at the University of Colorado at Boulder, and an advocate of Native rights. In *Custer Died For Your Sins* (1969), he writes: "The massive volume of useless knowledge produced by anthropologists attempting to capture real Indians in a network of theories has contributed substantially to the invisibility of Indian people today" (86).²⁸ Deloria's main concern has been that academia has largely been irrelevant to the needs of Native communities. The 'cultural leave-us-alone' policy, presented by Deloria and other Native critics and activists (Medicine; Ortiz), challenges anthropologists to rethink their relationship to Native communities.²⁹ Elizabeth Grobsmith, an anthropologist, says "[t]hose of us 'raised on Deloria' have had built into our knowledge of our discipline issues of ethics and morality, legality and property, jurisdiction and self-determination" (45). Peter Whiteley echoes this sentiment in *Rethinking Hopi Ethnography* (1998): "I [Whiteley] was 'raised' more directly on Ortiz than Deloria in this regard but the ethical implications were equally clear" (22). As an academic who works in a Native community, my academic principles are similarly informed by a questioning of the ethics associated with what has largely been a colonial endeavor.

²⁸ The salient essay, "Anthropologists & Other Friends," was first published in *Playboy* 16.8(1969).

Both Native and non-Native activists and theorists advocate ethical practices. Cook-Lynn (Dakota), for example, notes similarities between Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) and Deloria's views (*Why* 71). Said and Deloria are both concerned with decentering dominant power structures and practices. Critical practices have subsequently been reworked. Specifically, postmodernism in anthropology has been associated with critiquing the anthropologist as author, acknowledging biased interpretations and deconstructing theoretical assumptions. Efforts to revision academic practices have also, however, often replicated extant difficulties. For example, the continued struggle to achieve good practices was exemplified at the 1998 *Biennial Native American Conference* in Boise, Idaho. A well-intentioned non-Native panelist asked: "How can we treat our informants with more respect?" Vine Deloria, Jr., who was also on the panel, responded: "If you want to treat them with respect, then stop calling them 'informants.'" Deloria's remark is compelling. Consequently, I have tried to learn from my own experiences, as well as from the emerging discourses in Native and non-Native communities, about different ways of conceiving academic research.

How do we step out of the power structures of the knower/known relationship? Suggestions have been made that we can rethink the power relations of 'speaking for the other' by substituting any number of alternate prepositional phrases which connote a different relationship: speaking nearby, speaking on behalf of, speaking in place of, or speaking about. All of these formulations in the "identitarian 'speaking for' debates" (Spivak, *Companion* xviii) have only one speaking subject. 'Speaking with,' however,

²⁹ See, for example, Devon A. Mihesuah's collection of essays, entitled *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1998). The essays were originally published in *American Indian Quarterly* 20(1):1996.

denotes two speaking subjects. Using this approach, I see an alternate relationship negotiated between what has otherwise been conceived as a dominant subject and a marginal object. Instead of thinking about who is "*in the know*," and contrasting dominant and marginal ways of knowing, we need to focus on what is learned by taking up different positions of knowing. Deloria's point: wanting to do the right thing is good but not sufficient. It is not enough to say 'I mean to do well' and it is about more than not using the word 'informant.' It is about understanding an alternate relationship; one which is governed by a set of ethics associated with acknowledging different perspectives as equal.

The Ethics of My Own Practices

I have had good intentions and have, nonetheless, made mistakes in collaborating cross-culturally. I have attended to these breaches, learned more about my own subject position and continually made efforts to correct my practices. In 1996, when I first went to Pine Ridge Reservation with the idea of collaborating, I had wanted to work with a Lakota woman who could tell me about women's roles in Lakota spiritual practices. Clearly, I had an agenda and was, unintentionally, seeking out an 'informant.' I also had ideas about what constituted a 'good informant.' I only considered individuals who were readily identifiable to the non-Native community as 'being Indian.' More specifically, I wanted to work with someone from a prominent family who had recognizable status in the Native community. However, my awareness about what constitutes authority began to shift as I learned more about the community. John Beverley says that "[p]ower is related to representation: which representations have cognitive authority or can secure hegemony, which do not have authority or are not hegemonic" (1). I had to shift what I

regarded as being important, what mattered, to understand power differently. By listening to Melda's stories, and learning more about Lakota culture, I recognized different ways of conceiving power in the Lakota community. Melda's stories embody her position in a Lakota community that renders power and representation differently.

I made several mistakes, however, in initiating the project with Melda. For example, I inadvertently directed the project. I asked Melda if she would like to record the stories she tells for her grandchildren. In some respects, it was a good approach because I thought that it was something that would interest her as well as being something that I could achieve. Jo-ann Archibald (Stó:lō) relates a story about asking how to "approach people with whom [she] would like to talk?" and being told "go ask them" (116). In her dissertation, "Coyote Learns to Make a Storybasket: The Place of First Nations Stories in Education," Archibald describes her own process of gaining a sense of respect, reverence, responsibility and reciprocity in preparing to learn and spend time with cultural teachers. Appreciating these features of a reciprocal relationship, I asked Melda to tell me her stories. She seemed pleased with the request. However, *I* suggested what *I* thought of as a good project and therefore guided our collaboration. I believe that the project is one that Melda would have chosen for herself, but I do not *know* that to be true. In addition, I gave her a copy of Severt Young Bear and R.D. Theisz's collaborative *Standing in the Light: A Lakota Way of Seeing* (1994). In my view, the book exemplifies a good collaboration in that Young Bear's stories inform the work and Theisz has apparently done little editing. I had wanted Melda to know that I would try to be respectful in that same way. However, she may have appreciated *other* qualities about the book in which case our collaboration might differ from what she saw

as exemplary about *Standing in the Light*. In addition, we both now characterize the project as 'a book' and this may have been prompted by my introduction of the Theisz collaboration. Once again, I directed how we might conceive of the collaboration. I have since learned that the substance of those initial conversations has, in many ways, determined the ethics of the project and I have had to repeatedly correct for these mistakes throughout the project. The process that I would now suggest: ask the potential partner about their interests in possible projects, clearly state my conception of the project, and discuss and resolve any differences from the beginning.

Additionally, my understanding of gender issues influenced the project. My views initially prevented me from understanding how Melda and Lupe might conceive of gender. From my perspective as a non-Native feminist, I had thought that I should focus solely on Melda's life story. My tendency to privilege women's experiences was reinforced by familiarity with feminist interpretations in anthropology that regard gender differences as significant. Namely: Native men and women provide different accounts, these accounts are best interpreted without gender bias and it is oftentimes socially inappropriate for a woman to work closely with a man (Cruikshank, *Lived* 3, 19). I had repeatedly heard Melda's stories, but I knew little of Lupe's personal or spiritual life. In addition, I failed to recognize that Lupe's choice in following Lakota spiritual practices, as a Mexican, could be regarded as crucial to an understanding of Lakota identity. For these reasons, I suggested to Melda that we record *her* life story. I excluded Lupe from the process. I came to recognize, however, that cautionary fieldwork tales about cross-

gender communication are not necessarily universal.³⁰ After our initial recording sessions in November of 1997, Melda suggested that I include Lupe in the process as well. The first two recording sessions involve only Melda (1-35). Lupe interrupts these sessions several times (3, 9, 12, 24). He comes in to look for his keys, to listen, to ask questions and to call us for dinner. Lupe surreptitiously disrupts the 'girl talk,' presumably in an effort to expand my conception of the project. Melda probably also made delicate suggestions before she formally requested that Lupe be included. My tendency to focus on men and women as distinct is grounded in my mainstream feminist beliefs. I failed to recognize that there might be different ways of conceiving of gender. Melda and Lupe describe their lives together in an effort to teach their grandchildren about the importance of maintaining cultural perspectives as a family. In that respect, Lupe's involvement is crucial; I would not have learned the same things from Melda's stories alone.

What I Learned about Ethics

The process of entering into the project with Melda and Lupe demonstrates my engagement with broader issues of power and representation. Initially, I silenced Melda and Lupe by seeking out a 'good informant.' Then, I recognized Melda's position as 'valid,' but failed to fully consider the project from her perspective. The academic preoccupation with 'which' Native has the right to speak and in 'what' way reflects existing systems of power. Is it not possible to discredit, in some way, all Native storytellers? Conversely, are we to consider *anyone* as a Native representative?

³⁰ Wendy Wickwire's collaboration with Harry Robinson is an obvious exception and, I would suggest, that there are other examples of women and men respectfully collaborating cross-culturally.

Unfortunately, these questions forestall cross-cultural discourse as well as regulating what some may see as objectionable work. The act of discrediting Native storytellers ultimately serves dominant concerns: namely, that we don't have to listen to those we discredit. In "How Scholarship Defames the Native Voice . . . and Why" (2000), Cook-Lynn (Dakota) contends that the authenticity debates, associated with postmodern concerns over voice and representation, have silenced Native discourse. Beverley and Cook-Lynn both dispute David Stoll's attempt to discount the collaborative *testimonio*, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*.³¹ Beverley criticizes Stoll's argument and notes the biases in any ideologically invested idea:

But, in a way, the argument between [Rigoberta] Menchu and [David] Stoll is not so much about what really happened as about who has the authority to narrate. What seems to bother Stoll above all is that Menchu has an ideological agenda. He wants her to be in effect a 'native informant,' who will lend herself to his purposes (of information gathering and evaluation), but she is instead an organic intellectual concerned with producing a text of 'local history' (to recall Florencia Mallon's term) – that is, with elaborating hegemony. Though Stoll talks about objectivity and facts, it turns out he also has an ideological agenda. (74)

Beverley explains how assumptions inform all interpretations; the existing power structures associated with 'Native informants' and academic authority are reprised in the authenticity debates.

³¹ David Stoll, *Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans* (Boulder: Westview, 1999).

Reevaluating my research practices with Melda and Lupe has required that I recognize and respond to subject positions other than my own; I have had to learn from different perspectives. I would like to suggest that transforming research is possible. In *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision* (2000), Marie Battiste (Mi'kmaq) asserts that “[i]ndigenous knowledge exists and is a legitimate research issue” (xix). Whiteley notes that there is a “marked increase in formal attention to situated perspectives, especially via the influence of Native American critics like Vine Deloria Jr., and Gerald Vizenor, and more lately by postcolonial interventions (at least those of metropolitan academics like Spivak, Said, Bhabha, or Trinh)” (16). For example, in *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999), Linda Tuhiwai Smith talks about an ‘indigenous language of critique’ and a ‘local theoretical positioning’ from her perspective as a Maori researcher. As such, her assertion can be seen as part of a larger postcolonial effort to reposition knowledges from specific perspectives. Any discussion of the growing academic transition towards recognizing standpoint epistemologies is difficult to generalize because the ideology itself contests homogenization, but I suggest that critical theorists are increasingly doing research with situated perspectives in mind. The power relations of cross-cultural interaction are still being negotiated, but there is negotiation; there is listening and learning.

Standpoint epistemologies, or situated perspectives, have been increasingly prevalent in critical discourse. Some examples: Dorothy Smith has made efforts to articulate “a knowledge from our [women’s] standpoint ... situated in the particularities of the local everyday and everynight worlds of our immediate experience” (*Writing* 31). Similarly, Patricia Hill Collins describes “embracing both an Afrocentric worldview and

a feminist sensibility and using both to forge a self-defined [Afrocentric feminist] standpoint” (28). In *Talkin’ up to the White Woman: Indigenous Women and Feminism* (2000), Aileen Moreton-Robinson says: “I am representing an Indigenous standpoint within Australian feminism” (xvi). Tuhiwai Smith elaborates on Native North American political stances: “The concept of indigenist, says Ward Churchill, means ‘that I am one who not only takes the rights of indigenous peoples as the highest priority of my political life, but who draws upon the traditions—the bodies of knowledge and corresponding codes of values’ ... M. Annette Jaimes refers to indigenism as being grounded in the alternative conceptions of world view and value systems” (146). Tuhiwai goes on to describe the Kaupapa Maori ‘way of looking at the world’ as involving a Maori “epistemological tradition which frames the way we see the world, the way we organize ourselves in it, the questions we ask and the solution which we seek” (187). Whiteley describes a Hopi discourse (33). He says that Hopi social life involves a relationship between structure and agency that belies the divisions produced by Western epistemological bias (33). These standpoints, perspectives or ‘ways of knowing’ are rooted in specific cultural traditions and represent ways of understanding the world.

Throughout the thesis, I make efforts to interpret concepts from more than one perspective to demonstrate how different perspectives can shift analytic findings. Dialogue, and the knowledge that derives from the dialogue, facilitates an awareness of different perspectives. Eber Hampton, Chickasaw educator, tells a story about an elder's box in an effort to describe different ways of relating:

His question came from behind the box, ‘How many sides do you see?’

‘One,’ I said.

He pulled the box towards his chest and turned it so one corner faced me. 'Now how many do you see?'

"Now I see three sides."

He stepped back and extended the box, one corner towards him and one towards me. 'You and I together can see six sides of this box,' he told me.
(Battiste xvi)

In the same manner, I attempt to conceive of two speaking subjects with different perspectives. I presuppose that Melda and Lupe, as well as myself, have equally valid perspectives. By bringing these standpoints into relation – by literally and metaphorically talking with each other – we are able to sustain an alliance. We are speaking with each other about the knowledge that we can gain in being allied.

Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank also describes dialogic engagement as a method for learning:

In anthropology, as in any other form of storytelling, theory is tremendously helpful when it generates new questions and is utterly constraining when it predetermines answers. The work we do is grounded in talk, in dialogue, in interactive relationships. What too often are missing from scholarly studies, as Greg Sarris reminds us, are interruption and risk. Academics too often form the experiences of others with reference to scholarly norms. Yet unless we put ourselves in interactive situations where we are exposed and vulnerable, where these norms are interrupted and challenged, we can never recognize the limitations of our own descriptions. (*Life* 165)

My learning comes from my sustained dialogue with Melda and Lupe as well as what I learn through my research and experiences. Together, we attempt to see six sides of the box; I am writing about what I have learned from that dialogue.

Institutional Review Boards and Religious Authority

In *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999), Linda Tuhiwai Smith asks: “To who is the researcher accountable?” (173). I am accountable to the university, the tribe, Melda and Lupe and myself. I have ideological and emotional investments, as well as a responsibility to stakeholders, in both communities.

Consequently, I have negotiated the tensions over the ways authority is constructed in each sphere. Efforts have been made by universities, government funding agencies and tribal governments to establish policies to ensure ethical research. Research in the humanities and social sciences is often subsumed under protocols that govern scientific procedures.³² In the United States, research is governed by the National Institute of Health (NIH) whose guidelines are, in turn, upheld by Institutional Review Boards (IRBs). With reference to minority populations, the NIH indicates that “IRBs must ensure that any special vulnerabilities of subjects are accounted for and handled appropriately . . . IRBs should avoid paternalism and stereotyping” (www.nih.gov). In Canada, SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada), NSERC (National Sciences and Engineering Research Council) and CIHR (Canadian Institutes of

³² For a further discussion of the incompatibility of social science research and scientific ethics procedures see Jonathan Knight, “Protecting Human Beings: Institutional Review Boards and Social Science Research.” 23 May 2001. Fwd. by <news:H-ORALHIST@H-NET.MSU.EDU>. Online posting, 23 May 2001 <www.aaup.org>. Also, a survey was recently conducted by the HSSFC (Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada) about ethics protocols and their usefulness for Humanities and Social Sciences research. The results will be posted on their web-site <www.hssfc.ca>.

Health Research) have issued the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (www.nserc.ca). Following these guidelines, institutional review boards have established policies for any research that includes interviewing for academic purposes.

As a graduate student at the University of British Columbia (UBC) whose research involves the interviewing of 'human subjects,' I am required to submit a Request for Ethical Review to the Office of Research Services at UBC (the IRB for this project). I formulated the consent forms that were to be used (see appendix E). In order to protect cultural property, many tribes require that academic researchers obtain permission from their tribal council. The Hopi are well known for their tribal ethics review; the governing body will "take at least a year to consider research projects and then may not approve them" (www.nativenet.uthscsa.edu). For example, Peter M. Whiteley provides a cogent discussion of Hopi research protocols in *Rethinking Hopi Ethnography* (1998). With that in mind, I designed two forms in 1997, one to be signed by those I was interviewing, another by the Oglala Sioux (Lakota) tribal council. I decided that obtaining consent from the governing tribal body was the most ethical way to ensure that my research was valuable to the Lakota community. In doing so, I made the mistake of assuming uniformity across different tribes and political consensus among individuals on the reservation.

The ethics forms were received differently in the academic and reservation communities. Melda and Lupe signed their Ethics Review consent forms and, at that time, they told me that Pine Ridge Reservation is too large and complex to allow for the involvement of the tribal council in such projects. Knowing Melda and Lupe as I do, I

trust in their understanding of the protocols on the reservation. However, I am also accountable to the university and the policies that I had originally outlined. I have since inquired, both verbally and in writing, about research protocols with the Oglala Sioux Office of the Tribal President, the Oglala Sioux Office of the Secretary and the Oglala Sioux Tribal Office and have found there to be none. To confirm my understanding about vetting proposals I sent a registered letter to the tribal offices. My queries reveal that there are no policies in place and that the Oglala Sioux tribal council does not have an interest in assuming authority over academic research at this time. Concomitantly, I have found that institutional ethics policies could benefit from an increased capacity to anticipate and respond to the diversity in community practices. I felt that, by following the IRB protocol that I had outlined for myself, I failed to accept Melda and Lupe's authority and their ability to determine what constitutes an ethical project.

Melda and Lupe have ways of authorizing a project in the Lakota community which do not necessitate the involvement of the tribal council. Melda often talks about the importance of asking questions of elder Lakota members of the tribe. She stresses the importance of asking questions about matters that involve the community, ceremony and tradition; she says, "Me, I ask questions, I say, 'Why?'" (105). In her life story, Melda tells a story about receiving an eagle feather. She asked someone that she perceives as having authority to tell her what to do with the sacred object:

And I said, I asked Uncle Tom, I asked him, "I got this eagle feather," I said, "Uncle Tom," I said, "I don't know what to do with it." ... So all these things I ask the elderlies. What to do? I took advice from the older.

(22)

Melda indicates that elders or religious leaders should always be consulted about tribal issues and, in the few instances when she has told me a story that extends beyond her own life, she has consulted what she regards as the proper religious/tribal authorities for permission. She is following what she understands as traditional Lakota ethical practices. Tuhiwai Smith says that traditional ethical practices are meant to answer questions like "Is her spirit clear? Does he have a good heart?" (10). Lupe echoes this sentiment; he says, "Like I tell people, "When you pray, pray with a good heart and a good mind" (186). Melda and Lupe describe ethics as associated with traditional and religious authorities.

The Lakota Political Context

According to Mikael Kurkiala, in *'Building the Nation Back Up': The Politics of Identity on the Pine Ridge Reservation*, "[t]he tribal council is authorized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to govern the reservation in accordance with its own constitution" (104). The constitution of the Oglala Sioux tribe was passed by a narrow vote, by a small voting public, and was subsequently approved by the Secretary of the Interior in 1936 (97). The constitution indicates that the tribe is to be considered a political body that is to be governed by an elected tribal council. The Oglala Sioux Council is comprised of an elected president and vice-president as well as a secretary and a treasurer. The current term of office extends until November 2002, a duration of two years, and the present Pine Ridge tribal president, representing the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council, is John Yellow Bird Steele; the Bureau of Indian Affairs Superintendent, representing the Pine Ridge Agency, is Robert D. Ecoffey. The nine districts of the reservation are represented by one or two members of council, "with the exception of the town of Pine Ridge which has three

representatives in the council" (101). The council meets several times a year in order to pass resolutions which are then "processed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) . . . [through] the reservation superintendent who acts for the [Federal] Secretary of the Interior" (101). The nine reservation districts also have their own district councils which "function as local governments with relative autonomy from the tribal council except when dealing with issues involving major policy changes" (101).

Traditional governance, involving the *tiyospaye* (kin groups), was in place prior to the formation of the elected tribal council and, in many ways, continues to function. Young Bear (Lakota) indicates that having 15,000-20,000 people under one tribal leadership is difficult. He notes that the district council in Porcupine has 2400 members which is "too many," especially as contrasted with the traditional structure of the *tiyospaye* (118). *Tiyospaye* are smaller kin groups around which the Lakota community was traditionally organized. Leroy Little Bear (Blood) elaborates:

Several extended families combine to form a band. Several bands combine to form a tribe or nation; several tribes or nations combine to form confederacies. The circle of kinship can be made up of one circle or a number of concentric circles. These kinship circles can be interconnected by other circles such as religious and social communities. This approach to Aboriginal organization can be viewed as a 'spider web' of relations. (79)

The traditional *tiyospaye* structure involves a series of interconnections, albeit with elders as authorities. Patricia Albers states that "[t]o a large extent, tribal politics and domestic politics are the same. The social formations which dominate the everyday life of most

Sioux are defined by kinship and organized around the interests of separate but related domestic groups or *tiospaye*" (216). Shifts in power occur with a tribal political structure of an elected political leadership that is distinct from interrelated *tiyospaye* groups.

For the purposes of this discussion, the 1973 siege at Wounded Knee is an important historical event. Members of AIM (American Indian Movement), as well as other Lakota supporters, took armed control of the village of Wounded Knee. The area is dominated by the mass grave for the hundreds of Lakota men, women and children who were massacred at the site in 1890. In *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk*, Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel and Duane Champagne note that Wounded Knee II was "really only one incident in what had been a long history of political instability and factional conflict on Pine Ridge Reservation" (36). The take-over highlights the ways in which federal, state, tribal and religious figures have had divergent roles on Pine Ridge Reservation. Cook-Lynn cites the following as major causes of the 1973 protest: national policies for relocation, corrupt tribal/federal trust relationship, poverty, land use, water issues, state/tribal jurisdictional conflicts, concerns over the educational system and the racist threats encountered by Raymond Yellow Thunder and Wesley Bad Heart Bull (*Why* 8). Another factor was the proposed re-election of the tribal president, Dick Wilson. Wilson's re-election was protested by AIM members and led, in part, to their decision to occupy Wounded Knee.³³ Specifically, Kurkiala indicates that an elected term in office lasts for two years and "the only president who managed to stay in office for more than one term in a row was the infamous Dick Wilson whose re-election in 1974

³³ Many of the events surrounding the occupation of Wounded Knee are described in Peter Matthiessen's *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* (1983). Cook-Lynn says that "[t]he book is important because it said in print what many Sioux Indians had said to each other for some time" (Gonzalez and Cook-Lynn 98).

was based on threats, bribery and fraud" (100). Religious leaders took up positions of authority in the occupation of Wounded Knee and traditional ceremonies were revitalized. Lakota accounts of the event are sometimes divided because the siege at Wounded Knee embodies the question of who has the right to authorize, or speak out about, conflicting standpoints in the Lakota community.³⁴

The specific legitimating bodies associated with Pine Ridge Reservation conceivably authorize projects in ways that differ from other nations. Recent Lakota ethnographies, autobiographies and collaborations do not address Lakota tribal council protocols. The Native American Research Guidelines Advisory Committee (NARGAC), formed at Northern Arizona University in 1991, deals with some of the issues raised by complex tribal organization.³⁵ NARGAC urges that the tribe should be represented by "the Native elected representatives, elders, and/or traditional leaders of the community" (www.nativenet.uthscsa.edu). The committee recognizes that "the tribe may be divided along political, social, religious, geographic or class lines," but they have failed to sufficiently address the question as to what should be done in the event that there is a division between the "tribes' elected political and religious leadership." Recognizing an imminent deadlock, Devon Mihesuah (Choctaw) suggests that "[n]o single set of guidelines will work in all situations." She recognizes that tribes differ in their approaches and recommends that "respect, dialogue, and compromise" guide research

³⁴ See Mark Munroe's perspective about the negative aspects of the siege at Wounded Knee in *An Indian in White America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994). The Erdoes collaborations focus on the religious revitalization associated with Wounded Knee. Russell Means talks about his role in AIM in his autobiography, *Where White Men Fear to Tread*.

³⁵ Information on NARGAC comes from an April 1994 Native-L posting from anthropologist Deward E. Walker, Jr. (www.nativenet.uthscsa.edu). The members of NARGAC are: Devon A. Mihesuah, Nicholas J. Meyerhofer, Shirley Powell, Robert T. Trotter II and Peter L. van der Loo.

practices. As the intermediary among the academic and reservation communities, my ethics are based on respect for both communities and I have shown how that dialogue has been negotiated.

Concluding Remarks: Academic Proof and Religious Authority

I have indicated that Melda and Lupe have followed traditional Lakota practices for ensuring the ethics of their project. How do I know this? How can I prove this? At one point, a member of my doctoral committee asked, 'Have Melda and Lupe prayed for this project?' I could only answer: "Not in any way that I can prove." I cannot *prove* traditional ethical practices to the academic community because there is no way of directly explaining Lakota religious authority outside of the Lakota religious context. In *Prison Writings* (1999), Leonard Peltier (Lakota) says that he cannot provide details of his experiences inside the sweatlodge (*inipi*). He says, "[t]his precaution is for your sake as much as mine. To speak of what happens to me in the *inipi* would be like giving *you* the medicine intended for *me*. It would be pointless, even harmful – to you as well as to me" (197). I have repeatedly witnessed Melda and Lupe in the act of prayer, but I think that their silence about their prayers is what convinces me most that they have prayed for the project.

Writing about religious approval in an academic forum is difficult because academic writing requires evidence and I have no authority to write about such matters.³⁶ I do not understand the concept of Lakota religious power (*wakan*), or medicine (*pejuta*), well enough to know what I can and cannot disclose about sacred matters. Academics,

³⁶ See Janet Giltrow's *Academic Writing: Writing and Reading Across the Disciplines* (1995); specifically the section on 'Heights of abstraction, depths of proof' (pp. 72-4).

specifically, are cautioned about talking about sacred matters.³⁷ Consequently, my choice has been to provide evidence that I am unable to disclose sacred matters. I am not, however, suggesting that this should be the final solution. Further engagement is required on the topic of ethics protocols, in and among Native and non-Native communities, so that academic practices are compatible with Native ethics. After attending to the university recommendations, I contacted Melda and, among other things, told her about calling the tribal council. In reply, she told me a very humorous story about police officers on the reservation: that they *know better* than to bother someone like herself with unnecessary road checks and, therefore, leave her to govern herself. Melda was using a story about her experiences with conventional authority figures to communicate her values about accountability. She was telling me that there are different ways of conceiving of power and authority.

³⁷ The issue of disclosing spiritual practices is debated among Native writers as well. See Cook-Lynn for a description of Paula Gunn Allen's (Laguna) uneasiness in teaching Leslie Marmon Silko's (Laguna) *Ceremony* since it makes ceremony public (*Why* 91).

Chapter III – Representation and Interpretation

Introductory Remarks

Information can easily be misrepresented in a cross-cultural project because of the power inequalities and cultural biases associated with different cultural positions. Accordingly, the process of writing about Melda and Lupe's life stories is as important as the process of recording them. In our sessions, the process of recording was largely undirected. I avoided leading questions and allowed for an open-ended session. I had already heard Melda repeatedly tell the stories that she values, to numerous different audiences, over the course of our developing friendship. Therefore, I only needed to occasionally prompt her recall of those stories; Melda served a similar function in eliciting stories from Lupe that she had already heard. In transcribing our storytelling sessions, I follow Freda Ahenakew's (Cree) guidelines in her collaborative work for *Our Grandmothers' Lives as Told in Their Own Words* (1992) in which she says, "I try to write exactly what you are saying. Even when you say, "ah," I will write that down too. When you make a mistake, I'll write that down too" (303). Melda and I shared the transcribed record of our sessions as well as our own recollections of the extra-textual elements. Decisions about changes to the text have been reviewed together. I am aware that Melda and Lupe responded to me as they would to any audience by gearing their stories to sustain the engaged listener. Nonetheless, I follow Julie Cruikshank's suggestion to take "seriously what people say about their lives rather than treating their words simply as an illustration of some other process" (*Life*1). I regard this thesis as being *informed* by Melda and Lupe's life stories. The stories are my starting point rather than the support for existing theories. In this chapter, I elaborate on ways that I have both

interpreted and misinterpreted Melda and Lupe's material. I address appropriation, representation and interpretation: How do I ensure that I understand Melda and Lupe's stories and present them in a manner that does not appropriate meaning or misdirect the project? I endeavor to associate Melda and Lupe's stories with their intended cultural context. In doing so, I use several interconnected sources, akin to the network of stories from the Lakota oral tradition, to provide an explanatory framework.

Appropriation

The question of appropriation is implicated in cross-cultural collaborations because of the way that material can be rendered out of context. Native writers and critics have protested at how Native culture has been commodified, detached from intended contexts and used as cultural capital in any number of intellectual and economic markets. I quote Whiteley, at length, in his cogent summary of concerns over cultural property:

The epistemology of the ethnographic closet reflects a willful ignorance that is a self-reproducing and necessary condition for the instituted desire to know the Other as object rather than as presence in a genuinely intersubjective dialogue. This imputation of unknown Otherness infuses the gathering of knowledge with hierarchy (as Foucault and Said have persuasively demonstrated) – of subject and object, knower and known, transcriber and transcribed: It is this hierarchy, and its resemblance to formal political-economic subjection, that is the fundamental target of Native cultural resistance. The clash of representational interests and the epistemic and practical projects these are tied to pivots on the question of

cultural knowledge as instrumental form, intellectual property, and political capital. (6)

Whiteley highlights the connections among knowledge, power and representation. The issue of protecting indigenous knowledge is “further associated with larger Native American pressures for sovereignty – cultural, political, and intellectual” (Whiteley 4). Deloria describes how the appropriation of spiritual practices, associated with New Age spirituality, perpetuates the disparity between a dominant subject and a subordinate object:

Much of the difficulty that Indians have today with the appropriation of Indian rituals and teachings is the superior attitude which non-Indians project, once they have made some acquaintance with things Indian. In most cases they have a sneering, self-righteous posture which communicates the message, to Indians and non-Indians alike, that they know all about Indian religion ... The non-Indian appropriator conveys the message that Indians are indeed a conquered people and there is nothing that Indians possess, absolutely nothing – pipes, dances, land, water, feathers, drums, and even prayers – that non-Indians cannot take whenever and wherever they wish ... Indians are therefore put in a position where we must share with others – everything – but they need not share with us. (For, 265)

Deloria articulates the connections between knowledge and power. To know, at the expense of another, is to reinstate unequal power structures. ‘Getting’ information from Native ‘informants’ involves being in a position of power as the ‘knower.’ To this point,

Jace Weaver asks: “who is ‘enriched’ and who diminished?” (228). To take, without giving something back, is to reinstate power differentials. Consequently, unethical research practices are comparable to cultural theft. I have received much from Melda and Lupe and I acknowledge my privileged role. Their family has received, or will receive, the transcripts, thesis drafts and any associated material, photographs, the Red Bear / Trejo family tree, booklets with stories and photographs as well as a commitment to continued friendship and engagement. Our ultimate exchange has been that of learning.

Recognizing my own strengths and privileges has been effective in facilitating cross-cultural communication inasmuch as that awareness proceeds through a concomitant acknowledgement of the power connected with different subject positions. By acknowledging what I both ‘know’ and ‘do not know,’ I demonstrate what it is that I have learned. As Asha Varadharajan says about research and representation: “There is a false collapsing here of epistemology and appropriation. To know is not always to violate” (qtd. in Hoy, “Thief” 25). Knowledge is only associated with power inasmuch as it replicates the dominance associated with being an ‘all-knowing’ academic; to know everything appropriates knowledge that is not ‘ours.’ In an interview, Maria Campbell (Metis) talks about the importance of honoring one’s subject position in order to learn from other perspectives:

I know my place and I’m tired of explaining it to people who don’t honor their own place and their own history. You don’t have to be Native to know what I’m saying. I can tell when I’m reading to a room of people that they know because they honor the things they have. That knowing is an unspoken thing. (Silvera 266)

Campbell says that people who are aware of their own privileges best understand what she herself is trying to communicate from a different perspective. I am being told cross-cultural stories. By honoring my privileged role, I can learn from my position in the exchange. I am someone who is listening to Melda and Lupe's stories and trying to communicate them to others. In their very act of telling their stories to me, Melda and Lupe communicate that our exchange is relevant. Goulet reflects on cross-cultural communication in *Ways of Knowing: Experience, Knowledge, and Power among the Dene Tha* (1998). He similarly concludes that he is being told stories and that, therefore, "[t]he belief that communication is possible is *our* starting point" (xiv). Melda and Lupe are telling their stories to me. If I attend to their perspective of the exchange, I can recognize that they are speaking to me because they think that I *can* hear.

Representation

The power issues associated with knowledge and cultural capital have dominated decisions I have made throughout the project. Academic theorists have questioned the degree to which cross-cultural representation is possible because of the cultural biases associated with interpretive frameworks. 'Discourse' refers to "authoritatively sanctioned and conversationally taken-for-granted ways of understanding, speaking, and acting" (Britzman qtd. in Norquay 2). Knowing 'what' or 'how' to give something in return requires knowledge of the values associated with different cultural discourses. I might misinterpret Melda and Lupe's stories and use them for unintended purposes because I am unable to hear the implied cross-cultural meaning. In "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988), literary theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak concluded that the subaltern 'cannot speak' because of the differences between native and colonial discursive

modalities. Spivak defines the subaltern as “persons with little access to social mobility” (“American” 218). John Beverley elaborates, in *Subalternity and Representation: Arguments in Cultural Theory* (1999), that “[w]hen Gayatri Spivak makes the claim that the subaltern cannot speak, she means that the subaltern cannot speak in a way that would carry any sort of authority or meaning for us without altering the relations of power/knowledge that constitute it as subaltern in the first place” (29). In the foreword to *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies* (2000), Spivak writes: “My endeavor in ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ was to tell the story of Bhubaneswari Bhaduri (and why she could not be heard) . . . Her name is never mentioned in the discussions of my essay” (xxi). With this straightforward assertion, Spivak makes her point: no one heard Bhaduri; everyone heard Spivak. As academics, we are hesitant about speaking for others because we are concerned that we will appropriate meaning through misinterpretation and that we will fail to hear what is really being said. Following Beverly’s usage, I take ‘us’ to mean academics concerned about representing the subaltern. The ‘we’ versus ‘them’ dynamic is important for this discussion given the ways in which the discussion of the subaltern itself maintains that division. The question is, in effect, ‘can we hear?’

I have learned that, despite all of my best intentions, I have, at times, appropriated representations of Melda and Lupe to support my own ideas. Most significantly, I misappropriated Lupe’s ethnic identity to coincide with my conception of Lakota identity. When I initially wrote about Melda and Lupe, I characterized them both as Lakota. I noted that Lupe was Mexican but downplayed qualities that unsettled his association to Lakota spiritual practices. In doing so, I appropriated what Lupe said about Lakota culture to support my own construction of him as an ‘authentic Lakota informant.’ I

failed to understand Lupe's own characterization of himself as a Mexican, supporting multiple identities. Melda begins her life story by specifically designating her racial identity. She says, "I was born here in Allen, South Dakota ... And my mom came from — she's from Oklahoma. She's a Cheyenne Indian. I'm the seventh generation from my great-grandfathers. And I guess my mom — my mom and her dad — they came from Oklahoma and she's a Cheyenne, so I'm part Cheyenne and Sioux and I'm part Mexican 'cause my grandma is a Mexican" (1). Lupe, on the other hand, refrains from designating himself specifically with either, "I am Mexican" or "I am Lakota," but instead implies multiple associations and claims what others would see as incompatible identities. When I first recorded Lupe, Melda prompted Lupe to start talking about himself and his family. He makes a joke³⁸ and we talk about the spelling of the name of the town that his father is from, at great length, before he finally starts talking about his ancestors in Mexico. The four-page exchange is included here in an edited format:

Melda:

[To Lupe:] Why don't you talk about your dad and where you come from, Lupe?

Lupe:

No, I come from my mother. Ho.~ ...

Melda:

She's recording. So, go ahead and ... You came from your dad's an Aztec Indian and your mom.

Larissa:

³⁸ In the transcripts, I use the symbol '~' to designate laughter or comments made in a joking manner.

That's far back. Aztec....

Lupe:

Seventeen tribes of Aztecs. Seventeen of them. So far, I know. And my father came from there, you know. A long time back. When he was a young boy. He was a young boy when he came back to the United States with his father. And he went to Coleman, Texas. They were coming through to North Dakota when they pay a nickel to pass into another state. They pay a nickel apiece. Then they come to Nebraska. They stay there for a while. Him and his father.... (38-41)

Lupe talks about his ancestors in Mexico, as well as his connections to Mexican culture, and his involvement in Lakota spiritual practices, without ever specifically addressing his own ethnic identity. Nonetheless, he is clear about his identity and about not being Lakota. One of my doctoral committee members noticed my tendency to describe Lupe as Lakota, despite his own refusal to make such a designation. I reviewed the transcripts of our storytelling sessions and recognized that I had, in effect, overwritten Lupe's ethnic identity. I have revised my initial draft to better reflect Lupe's narrative. I reviewed this misrepresentation with the family members who had read the draft and, while they did not feel that I had necessarily misrepresented Lupe, they provided me with more information about the Mexican side of the family.

Method for Interpretation

With knowledge of Lakota culture, from research and experience, I understand much of Melda and Lupe's intended cultural contexts. I have provided contextual information for readers as well as indicating how interpretations are determined. The

following is an example of how we have understood one another in our dialogue. Specifically, I have found the silences in Melda and Lupe's narrative to be informative. For example, at one point in recording Melda and Lupe's life stories, we indirectly discuss Crazy Horse's grave. Melda mentions the Lakota warrior because of her disapproval of the love story in a recent movie about Crazy Horse:

Melda:

Yeah. He's [Crazy Horse] not married. The other girl died. He's probably turning around in his grave, wanting to come out and straighten us all out.

Larissa:

Yeah. Wherever his grave is....

Lupe:

Same thing like Custer. They say that Custer hated Indians. He didn't hate them. He likes Indians. He even got married to one of them.

Married to a Cheyenne woman. (122)

Our cross-cultural exchange in this example is deceptively straightforward. However, with discerning contextualization, the dialogue represents an important exchange about Lakota knowledge and ethics. Crazy Horse's gravesite is considered sacred knowledge; queries as to whether it is known and, if so, if it can be revealed are debated on the reservation. I was trying to elicit information about this aspect of Lakota discourse. According to George Kills in Sight (Lakota), as recorded in *To Be An Indian: An Oral History* (1971), Crazy Horse's father had those at the gravesite smoke a pipe and pledge that they would not reveal the location of the grave (Cash and Hoover 64). In his

autobiography, Russell Means (Lakota) states, “[a]ccording to one story, Crazy Horse’s bones and heart are buried at Wounded Knee” (290). In Mario Gonzalez (Lakota) and Elizabeth Cook-Lynn’s (Dakota) *The Politics of Hallowed Ground: Wounded Knee and the Struggle for Indian Sovereignty* (1999), the following account is provided in reference to Crazy Horse’s burial place:

When they got to talking about the burial place of Crazy Horse, a bit of silence fell upon the group. Mario had told them he had always heard stories about Crazy Horse being buried in the Manderson / Wounded Knee area but he was told by Robert Dillon, a son of Emily Standing Bear-Dillon, that his remains were moved several times and the final burial site is east of Wanblee. (189)

I suspect that Melda and Lupe know about the discourse surrounding Crazy Horse’s burial site. In *To Kill an Eagle: Indian Views on The Last Days of Crazy Horse* (1981), Howard Red Bear (1871-1968) talks about Crazy Horse. Charles Red Bear is Melda’s grandfather and brother of Howard Red Bear. Their grandfather, Red Bear, is Melda’s great-great-grandfather and he is described as an Indian Scout for the United States Army and the third cousin of Crazy Horse (Kadlecek 139, 161). Howard Red Bear says that Crazy Horse’s father left with the body but nobody knows where it is buried. He alludes to the fact that Crazy Horse may be buried some place near the Beaver Creek area (155). When I ask Melda and Lupe for information about an important ethnographic topic, Lupe changes the subject because it would involve disclosing sacred knowledge. I recognized that Melda and Lupe chose to adhere to ethics associated with Lakota sacred knowledge. By respecting their choice and not probing further, I demonstrate my respect for their

ethics. I regard the exchange as an important demonstration of Melda and Lupe's adherence to traditional practices, as well as my own acknowledgement of those practices. A certain degree of contextual information is required in order to understand the relevance of the material in the recording sessions.

Understanding a different cultural perspective is effected through learning about the intended cultural context. Native discourses emerge from cultural traditions that existed long before there was an empire to which a response could be offered; Native writers are not just 'writing back' or 'talking back' (see King, "Godzilla"). In the introduction to *All My Relations: Anthropology of Contemporary Canadian Native Fiction* (1990), Thomas King (Greek/Cherokee) says that "our hope, as writers and critics, is that if we wait long enough, the sheer bulk of this collection, when it reaches some sort of critical mass, will present us with a matrix within which a variety of patterns can be discerned" (x). In my own work, I have tried to perceive these patterns. I am, as Kimberley Blaeser (Chippewa) suggests, "working within native literature or tradition to discover appropriate tools or to form an appropriate language of critical discourse" (56). The need for theoretical perspectives directed towards culturally-based frameworks, as advocated by Blaeser, has been echoed elsewhere by other Native and non-Native writers and critics. Greg Sarris urges pedagogy which "move[s] closer to that which it studies" (*Keeping* 7), and Robert Allen Warrior (Osage) describes "a mature Native cultural and literary criticism" which "ground[s] itself in its own history and traditions" (xiii, 2). The interpretations in this thesis emerge from the framework advocated by Native critics and writers.

I have had to learn a cultural language to hear Melda and Lupe's stories; I have had to learn about a different cultural discourse. Julie Cruikshank indicates that an ethnographic overview provides a framework for *hearing* the narrator's stories and suggests that, to interpret life stories, we need to know enough of the relevant cultural background to provide context for hearing what is said (*Life* 4). As I have demonstrated, my interpretations are based, in part, on feedback from the academic and reservation communities involved in the project. I have also formulated interpretations by continually re-reading the transcripts of Melda and Lupe's storytelling sessions, as well as through experiential knowledge and research. I have learned something new with my ongoing visits to Pine Ridge Reservation as well as in my continued conversations with members of Melda and Lupe's family. Craig S. Womack (Creek) describes the process of interpreting Creek stories in *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism* (1999):

The oral tradition is a living literary tradition, the standard by which Creek stories, oral and written, are judged. Like any other literary tradition, it consists of a complex body of genres, characters, settings, plots, images, symbolic systems, structuring devices, as well as a relationship to larger Creek ceremony, society, politics, and government, that need to be explored in terms of formulating and analyzing approaches to Creek literary texts. (66)

Melda and Lupe's stories are part of an oral tradition that draws on "a complex body" of material. In commenting on the Lakota and Dakota, in particular, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn (Dakota) asserts that "there is a fairly long list of Dakota/Lakota writers and storytellers as well as a huge body of ritual and ceremony against which everything may be

compared” (84). Melda and Lupe’s narrative builds on, informs and is informed by Lakota myths, legends, metaphors, symbols, historical persons and events, “form[ing] the basis of the critical discourse that functions in the name of the people” (Cook-Lynn 84). I am trying to discern some of these patterns in an effort to interpret Melda and Lupe’s stories and I have made efforts to place Melda and Lupe’s narrative in the context of this Lakota discourse. Accordingly, I have tried to “elaborate the meaning of [Melda and Lupe’s] narrative in the context of community discourse, not in the context of an academically-positioned discourse” (Lassiter 611). Placing the stories in a community-based context is both my interpretive method and my effort to convey their meaning to others.

Textual Representation

The very act of writing conveys dominant ideologies associated with academic work. Tuhiwai Smith notes that “[r]eading, writing, talking ... are as fundamental to academic discourses as science, theories, methods, paradigms” so that “every aspect of the act of producing knowledge has influenced the ways in which indigenous ways of knowing have been represented” (35). Consequently, I have to make decisions about *how* to write about my understanding of Melda and Lupe’s stories. To what degree do I include Melda and Lupe’s stories; to what degree do I theorize about them? Given the politics associated with academic theorizing, I have found it tempting to “retreat from theory” (Moore 1). However, privileging storytelling over theorizing, or devaluing theory, serves to perpetuate a power structure that sees theory and story as unequally differentiated. Furthermore, resisting theory is itself a form of theory. As Henrietta Moore says: “the nature of the theoretical is itself in question ... [but] [t]his view of

theory is itself a myth or rather only a moment in a larger critical strategy" (9). I am, in turn, following what can be conceived as the postcolonial moment in a larger critical strategy in stressing the importance of theory. John Phillips says that "[p]ost-colonial theory must on the one hand act on elements that defeat the logic of the West ... but at the same time it must avoid falling into the self-destructive contingency that is its negative ... hence the commitment to *theory*" (70). The differences among academic theory and storytelling are problematic only inasmuch as I maintain the assumption that one version is dominant over another. As Lee Maracle (Salish) says "[t]here is a story in every line of theory" ("Oratory" 88).

Just as there are debates surrounding what it means to be Indian, there are debates centered on the authenticity and validity of the sources on that topic. Accusations have been leveled against non-Native writers who have influenced Native accounts. For example, the collaborative life story, *Black Elk Speaks*, is the source of many debates about how to effectively represent Native storytellers.³⁹ Cook-Lynn describes *Black Elk Speaks* (1932) as "the story of an Oglala holy man told by a University of Nebraska poet, John Neihardt" (*How* 79). Neihardt admitted to what he considered to be acceptable practices at that time in altering the text. When Neihardt revealed that he had written parts of the Black Elk text himself, critics questioned the degree to which the material could represent Lakota beliefs.⁴⁰ These debates continued in the 1980s and 1990s with postmodern concerns over voice and representation:

³⁹ Representing the words of Native storytellers is also the subject of suggestions around ethnopoetics, whereby textual strategies have been suggested to better convey the oral quality of the work (Tedlock; Hymes; Dauenhauer; Kroeber; Toelken).

⁴⁰ See Sally McCluskey, "Black Elk Speaks and So Does John Neihardt," *Western American Literature* 4 (1972); William K. Powers, "When Black Elk Speaks, Everybody Listens" in *Religion in Native North*

In contemporary Lakota public life (e.g. journals, radio shows and public rhetoric) references are frequently made to 'Black Elk's teaching'.

[However, a]nthropologist William K. Powers dismisses the book and its likes as 'the product of the white man's imagination.' He goes on trying to establish the unauthenticity of the book as a document on Lakota religion. (Kurkiala 31)

On the other hand, several critics and writers, both Native and non-Native, continue to appreciate Black Elk's life and story despite, and even because of, Neihardt's role.⁴¹

Black Elk and his family have not voiced any objections to the collaboration, as shown most recently in *Black Elk Lives: Conversations with the Black Elk Family* (2000), which includes interviews with John Neihardt's granddaughter, Hilda Neihardt, and Black Elk's granddaughters, Esther Black Elk DeSersa and Olivia Black Elk Pourier. Deloria specifically responded to concerns over the veracity of the text in his introduction to the 1979 edition of *Black Elk Speaks*:

Present debates center on the question of Neihardt's literary intrusion into Black Elk's system of beliefs and some scholars have said that the book reflects more of Neihardt than it does of Black Elk. It is, admittedly, difficult to discover if we are talking with Black Elk or John Neihardt, whether the vision is to be interpreted differently, and whether or not the positive emphasis which the book projects is not the optimism of two poets lost in the modern world and transforming drabness into an idealized

America. Ed. C. Vecsey (Moscow, Idaho: U of Idaho P, 1990).

world. Can it matter? The very nature of great religious teachings is that they encompass everyone who understands them and personalities become indistinguishable from the transcendent truth that is expressed. So let it be with *Black Elk Speaks*. That it speaks to us with simple and compelling language about an aspect of human experience and encourages us to emphasize the best that dwells within us is significant. Black Elk and John Neihardt would probably nod affirmatively to that statement and continue their conversation. It is good. It is enough. (xiv)

That the debates over the collaboration continued after Deloria's cogent summary of the issues is unfortunate. *Black Elk Speaks* embodies the process of encountering shared perspectives and, in such a divisive climate, this harmony should be much appreciated. For the purposes of this project, the debates about *Black Elk Speaks* convince me that my own practices can be regarded in any number of ways. Allowing my concerns over such issues to prevent my collaboration is 'not good enough.'

I have had to make decisions, based on my understanding of knowledge and power, about how to interpret and represent Melda and Lupe, their lives and Lakota culture. Specifically, I have had to decide in what ways to incorporate the material that Melda and Lupe have shared with me about their lives. After much deliberation, I have opted to analyze selected stories instead of including the entire 259-page document of our transcribed storytelling sessions in this thesis. My decision is based on conversations with members of my doctoral committee and has been reviewed with Melda and Lupe's

⁴¹ See, for example, Vine Deloria, ed., *A Sender of Words: Essays in Memory of J. Neihardt* (Salt Lake: HoweBrothers, 1984) and Raymond J. DeMallie, *The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1984).

families who have read, and commented on, previous thesis drafts that included the transcripts. I had wanted to include the life stories in full transcript form, without intervention, because Melda and Lupe sufficiently describe their experiences and understandings of Lakota culture. They do so in a way that speaks to proper practices. Recognizing that each individual reader might interpret the material differently, I had wanted to leave the transcripts of our storytelling session intact so that other readers, with different perspectives on Lakota culture, could find subsequent meanings in Melda and Lupe's stories. However, I can also provide context to contribute to their meaning.

My intent to provide the transcripts so that others could effect further analysis is also, however, a response to an academic agenda. I would have been attending to postmodern concerns over voice and representation by presenting Melda and Lupe's words, without any intervention on my part, as somehow 'pure' and 'uncontaminated.' By denying my role in the collaboration, I claim instead to be presenting the viewpoints of the 'authentic Indian.'⁴² To do so commodifies Melda and Lupe and their stories. Alternatively, I can interpret the stories and acknowledge my role in the construction of knowledge. For example, in *Ways of Knowing: Experience, Knowledge, and Power among the Dene Tha* (1998), Jean-Guy A. Goulet says of his work with the Dene Tha:

The theoretical issue involved in pursuing a largely experiential investigation of Dene Tha social realities is that of defining what is to be the focus of one's anthropological study. The answer to this question varies according to one's theoretical and methodological perspectives ...

The 'process of choosing what to include and what to exclude' from one's

investigation is of great consequence, for 'to assume research objectives and directives is to engage in a process of social construction, in effect constituting the object being observed and analyzed.' (249-50)

By constructing what I regard as important about Melda and Lupe's narrative, I present what I have learned about Lakota culture. I am an apprentice to Melda and Lupe's knowledge and, by exposing my role in the collaborative process, I am facilitating further cross-cultural dialogue and subsequent learning.

I present my position as well as Melda and Lupe's standpoints in an effort to understand where our perspectives either contest or merge. I follow Said's dictate that "[s]cholars ... must expose the roots of their social authority as scholars" (*Scholarship* 10). As outlined in the introduction, I am a young, white, female academic from Canada (the list continues: heterosexual, middle class...). In "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies" (1992), Peggy McIntosh lists some of the things I ostensibly have in my "backpack" as a person who claims white privilege. I also acknowledge that "whiteness, in general ... is also partial despite its dominance and self-representation as universal truth" (Moreton-Robinson xi). In *Talkin' up to the White Woman: Indigenous Women and Feminism* (2000), Aileen Moreton-Robinson stresses "the importance of whites seeing themselves and Indigenous people through Indigenous eyes – as a way station to developing less partial knowledges" (xii). Acknowledging white privilege is of little use, unless regarded in a network of socio-political relations. Most specifically, it is of little use if being 'white' and, therefore, 'privileged' prevents us from investing in the

⁴² This sort of denial about editorial and interpretive roles is characteristic of much of postmodern

values associated with research and learning; namely, working with others to expand our respective knowledges about seeing the different sides of a 'box.' In her collaboration with Harry Robinson, *Nature Power: In the Spirit of an Okanagan Storyteller* (1992), Wendy Wickwire reflects on being able to write about what she learned from Harry Robinson:

My role has been to help Harry reach a broader audience with his stories. But I am also present as listener and collaborator. I cannot speak for Harry or for the Okanagan people, but I can speak from what I have learned. I was close to Harry; I traveled with him and cared for him. My world and my way of thinking were changed by this experience. Harry knew this. (19)

Wickwire indicates that she cannot speak for others, but that she can speak from what she has learned. I follow her example: I am speaking about what I have learned from working with Melda and Lupe as well as what I have learned from them about their stories.

Concluding Remarks

This thesis represents an intended balance between being respectful and being analytical in my presentation of Melda and Lupe's stories. In *Custer Died For Your Sins* (1969), Vine Deloria, Jr. says "[t]he largest difference I can see between Indian religions and Christian religions is in inter-personal relationships. Indian society had [and has] a religion that taught respect for all members of that society" (124). Lakota social relations are governed by respect and I regard my research as involving interpersonal relationships

rather than simply an 'object' of inquiry. Such a negotiation is particularly complicated given concerns over power and representation. I explain my process in finding this balance. I also demonstrate my method of interpretation. Melda and Lupe's stories are presented with contextual information so that others might learn from them. Dakota historian Angela Cavendar Wilson, describes her grandmother's life story as "one family's perspective" that will increase understanding of a Lakota cultural perspective through its "combination with other families' stories" (12). Melda and Lupe's stories may now be counted in combination with other stories from both the oral and written tradition of the Lakota people. Furthermore, I suggest that my academic discussions are one more story in the criticism, emerging from both Native and non-Native writers, about ways of engaging in cross-cultural dialogues.

Chapter IV – Melda: Indian Identity

Introductory Remarks

In their life story narratives, Melda and Lupe describe what they perceive as Lakota tradition. Such a seemingly straightforward categorization – Lakota tradition – is not easily defined. In *Mixedblood Messages: Literature, Film, Family, Place* (1998), Louis Owens (Choctaw/Cherokee) states that “nothing in the world today is more complex, difficult, disputed, divisive, or so highly charged with dynamic energies as the question of ‘Indianness’” (154). He continues by saying that endless questions about what constitutes Native identity and tradition are part of the postmodern condition (20). Melda is a Lakota woman, with some Cheyenne and Mexican ancestors (see family tree in appendix D), and she has lived in Texas, Arizona, Colorado and Nebraska, as well as on Pine Ridge Reservation. In her life story, Melda positions herself as a Lakota woman by claiming a set of experiences that are lineal, cultural and political. Raymond DeMallie says that “[f]or the Lakotas of Pine Ridge ... to be Lakota, “Sioux,” or more generally to be *ikcewicasa*, “common men,” that is, Indians (not whites), is an unwavering source of pride and strength” (“Lakota” 4). I examine one of Melda’s stories in depth and find that she situates herself in a community that is distinctly Lakota, in part, by contesting non-Native discourses. Melda constructs a Lakota identity by contesting colonial impositions – specifically, the colonial restrictions on traditional spiritual practices. Melda’s other accompanying stories, and further ethnographic information, facilitate my interpretation. I explore Lupe’s Mexican identity in the subsequent chapter.

Race and Ethnicity: Summary of Findings

Colonization has defined Indians as different from, and dominated by, Europeans and their culture. Christopher Bracken, in *The Potlatch Papers: A Colonial Case History* (1997), says that “[t]he white nation – or, to be precise, the nation that desires to be white – frames its sense of itself, its self-consciousness, by repeating over and over to itself that it is about to swallow and to mourn an aboriginal other who has died” (231). Indigenous languages and cultures were identified as different, inasmuch as they were visible, and acculturation has been both effected by *and* resisted by Native and non-Native individuals alike. Colonial history involves the subjugation of Indians as a colonized nation. Lakota cultural identities have been eroded through missionary activities, residential schooling, the suppression of traditional practices and the implementation of agriculture and private ownership (Kurkiala 154). In ‘*Building the Nation Back Up*’: *The Politics of Identity on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation* (1997), Mikael Kurkiala says that associating the Lakota people with a reservation, combined with other federal policies, contributed to ‘confining’ Indian identities. Racial criteria, as outlined in the Allotment Act in the United States (1887) and the Indian Act in Canada (1876), were established to identify Indians. Race is, therefore, *constructed* along primarily hereditary lines with regard to Indian identity.⁴³ Additionally, with the Indian Reorganization Act (1934), the tribe becomes associated with a tribal/racial identity. Consequently, racial discourses are prevalent in both Native and non-Native communities.

⁴³ Please note that the usage of race in the thesis is meant to convey ‘race’ as a socially constructed concept. Its associations to blood quantum, heredity and visible difference are all important to ‘racial’ constructions of Indian identity.

Colonial definitions of 'Indian' have prompted indigenous responses to such categorization. Cruikshank indicates that "[i]deas about belonging provide particular insight into how local meanings are asserted in response to externally imposed classification systems" (*Social* 3). Tribal and reservation systems, which began as bureaucratic tools to subsume diverse peoples under a single classification, persist to the extent that present-day identities have "resulted from the interaction between governmental policies and indigenous responses to them" (Kurkiala 137). Efforts to define and delimit Indian identity have been taken up and reproduced within Native communities and these discourses often serve to fragment and marginalize groups within the community. According to Leroy Little Bear (Blood), this is part of "what it means to be colonized" (45). Maori critic Tuhiwai Smith elaborates: "it means that there is unfinished business, that we are still being colonized (and know it), and that we are still searching for justice" (34). Indigenous communities respond by revisiting history because 'race' and other characteristics denoting ethnic affiliation remain contested.

Constructing Native identity in contemporary circumstances involves, in part, strategically using culture to contest non-Native domination. Nagel asserts that ethnicity entails a negotiated interplay between self-identification and external ascription (240). However, rigid demarcations are inadequate in addressing the complexity of ethnic identity at present. Nagel says that "[e]thnic identity lies at the intersection of individual ethnic self-definition (who I am) and collective ethnic attribution (who they say I am)" (21). Indians have been defined collectively as a group since the colonial era. Consequently, 'difference' functions "on both sides of the binary system" (Lionnet 14) and collectivity is maintained through "the oppositional process by which difference and

boundary are maintained” (Cruikshank, *Social* 43). Indians construct ethnicity, in part, by using essentialist strategies that highlight difference:

The cultural self-consciousness developing among the imperialism’s erstwhile victims is one of the more remarkable phenomena of world history in the later twentieth century. ‘Culture’ – the world itself, or some local equivalent, is on everyone’s lips. Tibetans and Hawaiians, Ojibway, Kwakiutl, and Eskimo, Kasakhs and Mongols, native Australians, Balinese, Kashmiris, and New Zealand Maori: all discover they have a ‘culture.’ ... [A]s the New Guinean said to the anthropologist, ‘If we didn’t have *kastom* [customs], we would be just like white men.’ (Sahlins qtd. in Whiteley 5)

By strategically using culture, marginalized groups undermine the presumed non-Native norm of being ‘without culture.’ Essentialism, or rather the process of “essentializing” is, in this respect, a defensible notion (Paine 92). Indigenous peoples have been defined as different from those in a position of power and have redefined that identification as powerful.

Melda and Lupe construct their identities using several essentialising discourses and, in doing so, they make efforts to contest colonization. They identify with a cultural past that is contemporary with, or pre-dates, the colonial era. DeMallie expands on such a strategy with reference to the Lakota, in particular:

Lakota tradition, like the past of any cultural group, has become modeled by the concerns of the present. During the twentieth century, old elements in Lakota culture have been reinterpreted and reintegrated to serve as

symbols of Indianness, to differentiate the Lakotas from white people, and to serve as critical commentary on white culture. Through selective retention of past values and customs, as well as the creation of new patterns based on old cultural processes, the Lakota people have ... embrace[d] a recreated past that serves as a stabilizing force in a world of progressively more confusion to Indians and non-Indians alike. ("Lakota" 8)

Melda endorses symbols of Indianness, such as those associated with spiritual practices, as well as new attributes associated with Native culture, such as horses. She uses these symbols as identifying markers of cultural pride as well as to differentiate Lakota culture from that of the colonizers.

Melda and Lupe negotiate dominant discourses in constructing their identities. They do so, however, through their lived experience of political circumstances. I would like to stress that their reality is in no way 'spurious' or 'fabricated.' Rather, political discourses are made to have meaning in ways that are very personal. Helen Hoy illustrates the significance of the personal experience of politicized structures:

To argue that self and racial identity are constructed, moreover, is not to argue that they have no reality ... To cite a familiar, rueful quip, knowing that race is constructed does nothing to help a black academic hail a cab in New York during rush hour. Nor does the recognition of self/selves and racial identity/ies as constructs preclude agency. ("Nothing" 177)

Marilyn Edelstein defines agency as "the power to choose, to act, to change oneself and/or the world" (102). Melda and Lupe make choices about how they identify themselves and, in so doing, they make an effort "to transform what counts as important

in the world of the powerful” (Tuhiwai Smith 39). They create a way of understanding the world that is self-governing so that their grandchildren might understand how they are connected to the survival of a powerful heritage. Melda and Lupe perpetuate a Lakota perspective by maintaining pre-existing traditions that, in and of themselves, constitute a traditional Lakota identity; the traditions reinforce the earnest effort to maintain a suppressed culture. Dakota scholar Joyzelle Gingway Godfrey says: “We are here, we are surviving, we are living our traditions, we do go to sweats, we do have *Wopila* [thanksgiving] ceremonies, people still sun dance, people still go on vision quests, all of these things we still have ... we’re still there. And we’re still strong” (Gardner 473). Melda’s stories show that she is conscious of the process of colonization, aware of maintaining traditions that have been suppressed, and reflexive about her efforts to convey this sense of pride and strength to her grandchildren.

Melda: Red Bear Ancestry as Lakota Tradition

I have made every attempt to have Melda and Lupe’s stories instruct my findings about Indian identity. To demonstrate this process, I will interpret one of Melda’s stories using ethnographic information as well as what I have learned from her other related stories. I have heard this particular story numerous times, in various incarnations. The story is typical of her storytelling technique in that she comments on Lakota tradition by talking about an episode from her life. I have not made any significant revisions, except to indicate Lupe’s dialogue toward the end of the passage. Continuity and ‘difference’ are the two main themes that emerge in the construction of Indian identity in Melda’s story. She traces her kinship ties and shows how her genealogy extends both into the past

and future.⁴⁴ Bruce Miller explains how such a practice facilitates an authoritative role within Native communities:

At both private and public gatherings, the moral basis for the legitimacy of the grandmothers' 'teachings' is derived in part from age and experience but also from kinship ties and biological links to the audience. These kinship ties are commonly made explicit through recitations of genealogy or through commentary about the interrelatedness of the tribal members.

(111)

Melda shows the genealogical continuity of Lakota culture and her place in that tradition. She also differentiates between Lakota culture and cultural aspects that she regards as colonial or non-Native. She strategically comments on history by contesting dominant discourses. She does so, however, with the utmost of integrity in that she is commenting on her own family's history in ways that confer honor on her relations.

So, what do I say? My name is Melda Jane 'Runs Along The Edge' Red Bear Trejo.

Through all this Sundancing, we experience good things and sad things. I'm sitting here thinking about my brother, Albert. My brother took the wrong road at one time and couldn't get off the wrong road and that's why he died drinking. And before that, when he was with my parents, I guess, we go after him and we always make him feel important. Because he knows a lot. Yeah. And so always every time we let him because we could go after and we said, "Albert, you run the sweat." And he's real happy and he said, "Okay." He always singed this song, '*Miye [sic./Wakan]*.' Holy Red Cap. That was the first song, I guess. That's the song he *always* sing — never fails. That was his song. I never did ask him if that was his favorite song. I never did ask.

I never ask and I regret not asking when he died. After he died, I always wondered why he always sings it. Every time he sits in that sweat. One time I ask — I don't remember who I ask. They said, "Do you know why Albert sings that song?" So, I said, "Why?" They said, "A long time ago they had this medicine woman that" I guess, my mom

⁴⁴ Kinship ties are not necessarily racial; they also proceed through adoption ceremonies. This topic will be addressed in the final chapter.

used to go see her a long time ago. And she lived in Kyle. I don't know her name. "But," she said, "when they used to go see her, she uses Albert to help her out to put that *wakan*, altar, and she always use Albert to put altars and put, you know, good things in there. And that was her song. And they always sing that song. So, she teach Albert how to sing that song and he knew from there." Before he got married. That's why. I wonder why he always sing that song but I never ask him why. And they say, "Because he used to work with *winyan wakan* that's why he sings that song."

And, see, he grew up with — he was the oldest — he knew some of my great- great-grandmother and grandfather [great-grandparents, Philip Runs Along the Edge and Luisa Martinez] when they were at the house. So one time my dad used to have a lot of horses, a lot of horses, and they had a big corral. Where we have our garden. So, he told, he said, one time we was sitting out there talking, and Albert said, "I always wonder why . . ." Albert said, "when I was young they always send him to get the horses." He told me one time, "I was sitting here thinking," he said, "A long time ago," he said, "with my great- grandma and grandpa," he said, "I was just a boy," and he said, "I remember something when those two old people were alive a long time ago," he said, "and we had a lot of horses," he said, "they always tell me to go after the horses, but I remember something sitting here, too. Those horses they used to come back by themselves early in the morning. Before anybody wakes up and the sun was barely coming. Those two old people get up and they get all dressed up in their traditional ways and that old man used to braid that old woman's hair. Comb the hair."

And there is, like, I guess a long time ago when two old people grew old together and when that old woman cannot comb her hair and that old man used to comb the hair. And, you know, they part the hair in the middle and they put red right here in the part in the hair. That *was* right here. That you use that for the dog. *Wasa*. They put red paint, in English. He said, "Put that *was* right there and just braid her hair. And they have a meaning for that too." And I said, "What's the meaning to put that red hair, red paint right across and comb her hair?" He said, "That means that he loved her very much." Yeah. So, that's just like a love story, too. They have that.

But nowadays you don't see anybody doing that, uh uh, but they used to do that. Those old people. And he talked about that. And he said, "Another thing was that they dressed up in the morning. They get all dressed. And then he sits her down and comb her hair and put the *was* and they all get dressed. And those horses would come. Yeah, so they go out and they pray. And all the horses would come. Down east. They all come and they're all around that place. Eating grass. Some are nice. They go out and they talk to the horses and they eat breakfast. She cook. But they was the only two that always eat that breakfast. She cooked and it looks like everything was ready and they were all dressed up nice and they pray. They pray when the sun comes up, they pray. And the horses are there. All those horses. There's about over a hundred of them. They had a lot of horses. And they used to stand around there and they used to go out there and talk to them. Just like, the horses don't take off, they were there. They were there so they go out and they pray and they talk to the horses. And all this was done really early before anyone gets up. So they finish their breakfast and people start getting up and they take their good clothes off and put them away and here those horses take off. And then later on," he says, "They ask me to go after the horses." So, he said, "Why did they ask me, after we have breakfast, 'Go after the horses?'" He said, "I always wonder why. Because the horses always come back and they go out and talk

to them and they were around here. But when we're all up, the horses take off, then later on I have to go get them."

So it was really like — life was really easy for them. They don't have to catch the horses. They don't have to go after them. They really could control a horse's mind, too. And this brings me up to that *Horse Whisperer* — the movie. Remember the horse got hurt real bad and she had to contact this man who know about the horses. Get inside their mind and they listen. And I was thinking those old people used to do that. They used to get into even the horses and the minds of animals and talk to them. Really gentle. Because they were like that. They were gentle people. They were not — you compare all that to now where we live and it's not the same. They're just getting mean, they whip horses and hit dogs and it's not the same thing. Our world is really different from what they were living in those days. Because they say once you talk to a horse and each animal....

I did have a horse one time. I had a birthday down at my sister's — my aunt's house. My mom's sister's. We went over there and they gave me a horse and I was so happy. We had horses, our horses. But I never claim one for my own. So they say they give me a horse and I was really proud. "Oh," I said, "I have my own horse." And they brought those horses. And it was a wild horse. I seen wild horses. Because their mane was really hanging way down here. They look scary. And they brought him in the corral and I was just standing up there and I said, "No, dad, I'm not going to ride those horses. Not *those* horses. Which one is mine?" He said, "They're bringing him in." So when they came, it was wild horses. I was sitting there, "Oh no. I cannot ride a wild horse. They're wild." My dad said, "Well, they're going to break that horse for you." So they did. So I had to wait, like, one year. And they took that horse. It looked like a palomino. And, you know, they took that horse and they told me, my dad said, "You get on that horse and if you fall don't go crying, you get back on there." Which I go. I was really happy.

So, I got on the horse and I really fall because I never ride those horses before. I was around horses, but, boy, did I fall. I didn't cry because what he told me. So, I got back on there. And I keep doing that and I do that all summer. And, you know that horse, I talk to that horse. And that horse really listened. Years later, I used to have a cousin that lives up there, on that hill, and she got into an accident so she was on crutches, she can't walk. And she always tell me, "Come after me, because I want to play with you." I said, "Okay." About that time, that horse really listens to me. He does anything I tell him to do. So, my mom used to say, "Go after her. She wants to come and play. She's probably tired of being there." Because she couldn't walk. So, I go up there, but I say, "How am I going to bring her down here? I cannot carry her up to that house." And my mom told me, "You'll know what to do. Just go after her. You'll find a way to get her on the horse." So, I went up there and I told her, I said, "I came after you to take you down there so we can play." So, she comes out with her crutches and she can hardly stand up. And I looked at her and I said, "How am I going to put you up here?" And I said, "I know!" So, I got off and I told my horse, "Lay down."~ And the horse did. They were really surprised. Her mom and her uncle came out: "Gee, how'd you do that?" So, I said, "Well, I talk to my horse and my horse listens." So, the horse lays down and she gets on top and the horse stands up. And that's how I used to bring her down.~ So, I used to bring her back and when I get to the house with her I used to tell the horse, "Lay down." So he lays down. Real gentle. And then she used to get on. So, my mom said, "See, I know you'll find a way. The horses, they listen."

So, see like when Albert talk about my great- grandparents talking to the horse and then they always tell them: "Come back tomorrow." So they did. Every morning. And they do that every morning. But, somewhere along when we was growing up, I know that now we don't use all that. So, I think we lost a lot of our traditional ways that they used to do. We lost all that. Because of all this fast living. Even cooking nowadays. So we lost all that. And if we bring all that back it would be really nice. So try to — it's hard, really hard.~ And it's hard being patient. As a mother I learn how to be patient. And as a grandma, I learn how to be patient.

And Lupe knowingly asks, "As a wife?"

And, Melda laughs real hard and replies, "As a *wife*, I learn how to be patient!"

Interpretation

Melda uses ancestry, cultural knowledge and political discourse to describe Lakota tradition and her position in the community. She does so, however, by telling a story rather than staking a claim and declaring her place in the community. She describes her eldest brother, her great-grandparents [in the story, referred to as great-great grandparents] and her parents as being, in various ways, connected to Lakota tradition. In re-telling stories that they have told her, she continues the practice of passing on Lakota tradition. More than that, however, she continues the traditional practice, recounted in the story, of 'talking' to horses. She describes her brother telling her about her great-grandparents and their ability to communicate with animals: "they used to get into even the horses and the minds of animals and talk to them." Her reference to the film, *The Horse Whisperer*, represents her effort to make the practice of communicating with animals understandable to me, her non-Native audience. She laments the loss of tradition: she says, "we lost all that," wishing that "we bring all that back." Nonetheless, she describes being a young girl and talking to her horse in ways that, given the context of the story, could be conceived as traditional. In so doing, she contests the loss of

Lakota tradition and inscribes herself in a community that continues to practice the traditional ways of the Lakota people.

In one of her initial comments in her life story narrative, Melda says, "I'm the seventh generation from my great-grandfathers" (1). In this story, she shows how her knowledge of Lakota culture spans the generations and reaches back to her great-grandparents, Philip Runs Along the Edge and Shell Woman (also known as Luisa Martinez). In doing so, she invokes the Native discourse of 'seven generations' as a way of denoting continuity with the past. Deloria interprets the meaning of 'seven generations' as follows:

It is difficult to know exactly what was meant by seven generations; however, by relating that phrase to other knowledge about the Indian way of life it is not hard to understand ... A good family could anticipate that a child born into it would know and remember his great-grandparents. If that person lived a good life, she would live to see her great-grandchildren. Each person, we might say, is the fourth generation and looks back to three generations and forward to three. When the old chiefs spoke of the seventh generation they were basically saying that they wanted their great-grandsons, whom they hoped one day to see, to have the same rights and privileges as they themselves did. So instead of being a vague term for time, seven generations has a reality and precision within the family context as specific as any written contract ever drawn. (*For* 179)

Melda is conveying her knowledge of her great-grandparents to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren and fulfilling her role in maintaining seven generations of Lakota

tradition. Melda tells stories about her great-grandparents to demonstrate her personal traditional context. Melda invokes her ancestors and relations in several respects in the story. She references the same relatives in other stories, where they are further described, so that the process of storytelling serves to elaborate the ties she has to the Lakota community.

In her story, Melda describes visiting her mom's sister, her cousin and her cousin's uncle. In this way, she conveys her kinship ties in the Lakota community. Cook-Lynn elaborates on the relevance of the Lakota kinship structure, *tiyospaye* (*tiyospaye*):

The continuous overtracing of personal histories with the *tiyospaye* concept (defined as a societal/cultural/tribal organizational construct), which is based upon blood and ancestral ties and lineage, ... is so much a part of the storytelling process for the Sioux ... [because it is] a nationalistic forum for the people. (*Why* 93)

In using kinship ties, Melda is establishing herself within a national discourse; one which upholds the Lakota as a sovereign nation. Lakota scholar Beatrice Medicine describes *tiyospaye* obligations as a core foundation in Lakota identity.⁴⁵ She says, "[o]ur kinship ties, though anachronistic in some instances, bond us together in a Lakota identity" (Harjo 209). Melda's Lakota identity is supported through her connections to her relations; she visits relatives and shares stories with them. Young Bear describes how *tiyospaye* practices involve the hospitable practice of receiving one another:

⁴⁵ See, also, Ella Deloria's *Speaking of Indians* (Vermillion, S.D.: Dakota P, 1979) and *Waterlily* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1988).

At one time a very identifying practice within a *tiyospaye*, band, or even with a neighboring *tiyospaye* was the practice of Lakota people visiting each other, called *tiole*, looking for a home. Wherever you went you would visit a relative and they would take you in and share their food with you. You stay overnight, you visit, you talk, you share your stories. (132)

Children learned, and continue to learn, traditional values through family events, or *tiyospaye* obligations. Deloria says “stories must be passed along as part of the family heritage in the same manner as physical goods” (*For* 184). Melda learned the stories that she tells by visiting with her relations and then passes her stories to her great-grandchildren. She is constructing knowledge that pertains to the preservation of the Lakota nation.

Melda shows how her relations are connected specifically to Lakota spiritual practices and contests stereotypes associated with spiritual power. Melda describes her eldest brother, Albert Red Bear, as knowledgeable about historic and traditional ties to Lakota culture. Albert Red Bear was married to Christine Crow Dog, a marriage to which Melda vaguely refers in the story. Christine Crow Dog’s brother is Leonard Crow Dog, spiritual leader of AIM and an important figure in re-introducing the Sundance in the 1970s. In this respect, Melda indicates how she is related to individuals in the Lakota community who are highly regarded by outsiders. However, she does not elaborate on this connection in the story. In focusing on Albert’s traditional practices, rather than those of a noted medicine man, she is indicating that Lakota tradition need not only be associated with those of considerable stature.

Melda inscribes herself into the traditional Lakota community through her associations to her brother and her continued knowledge of the culture and language. She notes that Albert learned spiritual practices from a *winyan wakan* (holy woman or 'medicine' woman) before he got married. She uses the Lakota language to denote the spiritual practitioner as well as in her reference to the Lakota concept of the sacred, *wakan*, and the sacred paint used in ceremonies, *wasá*. She also refers to dogs, with reference to *wasá*, which is an allusion to the Lakota *yuwipi* ceremony.⁴⁶ About the *yuwipi* ceremony, Delphine Red Shirt (Lakota) says the following:

Our *yuwipi* ceremonies are when we come together and lose track of time in song and prayer. It is a period when we enter the womb of time and emerge on the other side whole and happy, like we used to be ... When the ceremony is over, we say '*Mitakuye oyas 'i*,' meaning 'My relatives, I pray for; all of them, I pray for.' (111)

Melda declares that her brother knew about traditional ways and shows her own continued knowledge of Lakota tradition through his stories, songs and her own understanding of traditional practices.

Land ownership is taken up as both a cultural and political topic in Melda's narrative. In her story, Melda refers to the Red Bear land, which is east of Allen or 'down east.' Melda currently lives on the Red Bear land and she describes a corral, with over one hundred horses, as being where she now has a garden. The land allotment and herd of horses denotes the wealth and status of her family at the turn of the century. Having the land is central to Melda's story because it is a place where her family can

⁴⁶ Cooking and eating a young dog, in a sacred manner, is part of the *yuwipi* ceremony.

have horses as well as being a place to pray; it is a place that they can maintain their traditions and prosper in new customs and practices. Melda regards land ownership as both a political and cultural issue. She says the following elsewhere in her narrative:

What I look at in South Dakota, the biggest problem is land. I don't care the other ones. I think our biggest problem is the land. We have to do something so we can take our land back. And that's it. We want to put buffalo, maybe one or two. We have to get the land back. (88)

She says that she wants to have land so that she can raise buffalo, which are still used in ceremonial feasts and their skulls and hides are used as sacred objects. At present, Melda must *purchase* a buffalo for these purposes when she holds a Sundance. Owning land, therefore, facilitates traditional practices. Land ownership is also a political issue because the loss of land is often associated with governing policies. Before returning specifically to the story at hand, I will discuss some of the issues involved in the dispossession of the Red Bear land. My interpretations are facilitated by ethnographic material and information from Melda's other related stories.

Melda's paternal great-grandfather, Philip Runs Along the Edge (also known as Red Bear), to whom she refers in the story, struggled to maintain Lakota tradition. He is an important figure both spiritually and politically. The effect of his struggle to contest the suppression of Lakota religious practices persists today in the historical erosion of their land ownership. Philip Runs Along the Edge was instrumental in bringing the ceremonial use of peyote to South Dakota. He was also an important figure in the development of the Native American Church. Peyote use is a recent religious practice and not regarded as traditional by all Lakota, which will be discussed subsequently, but

its practice raises important issues about the interchange between politics and religion. In *Peyote Religion: A History* (1987) Omer Stewart estimates there to be approximately 200,000 - 300,000 Native American Church members across seventy tribes. He cites the involvement of Melda's great-grandfather in establishing the pan-Indian syncretic church at several points in his text (87-9; 94-5). Melda describes how her great-grandfather brought peyote from Oklahoma to South Dakota:

It's really interesting that it [the ceremonial use of peyote] was first started 'down east.' That's where it started from. And one of them was my great great-grandfather, Philip Red Bear. 'Runs Along the Edge' Red Bear.

And my uncle, can't remember his name ... Ed Richards. And the other one was buried up here, Jim Blue Bird. Those are the three mens that started that. It started from 'down east' ... We do have all the names.

Pine Ridge had all the names ... I think it was in 1914 [1904]. (33)

Stewart tries to determine the date of peyote use in South Dakota using a number of sources, many of which corroborate Melda's claims. Stewart notes important changes that took place with the adoption of peyote use in South Dakota; he says that "Sioux peyotists have been an important, as well as controversial, segment of Sioux society since the early days of this century" (175). Specifically, Phillip Red Bear used the traditional Lakota pipe as well as peyote in his ceremonies. Stewart asserts that "[t]he Lakota put their own traditional stamp on the [ceremony] ... in Red Bear's use of the Pipe" (167). Melda's great-grandfather continued the traditional Lakota practice of praying with a pipe while also promoting the ceremonial use of peyote; his role in advancing Lakota

spirituality is a significant claim. His role is especially significant given that traditional practices were not supported by government policies at that time.

In her story, Melda associates the Red Bear land with prayer and cultural tradition; she also associates the land with the suppression of traditional Lakota practices. Melda uses stories about the Native American Church to contest the suppression of Native spiritual practices. The land 'down east' is implicated in political discourses because portions of it were lost when authorities arrested Melda's great-grandfather for using peyote. Kathleen Pickering notes an insufficiency in information about "the real economic and political effects of attempting to continue Lakota ritual practices during the period of cultural suppression by governmental and Christian forces, including denial of food rations and imprisonment" (186). Melda contributes to information about the effects of maintaining tradition with her description of the arrest of her great-grandfather:

[I]n those days, it was like they wanted to take them to . . . it was illegal. 'Cause of that peyote. So they wanted to put them in jail so they have to go, you know, like they crawl underground. They have to hide. They just tell a few people who goes to that meeting. And nobody knows about it 'cause Pine Ridge was really coming on strong. They wanted to catch them . . . And they did catch them. They got caught with the peyote. And my grandfather, Philip Red Bear, went to jail. Yeah. They took him to Deadwood. Yeah.~ They took him to Deadwood. They put him in jail over there. So he got a lawyer from Martin. And he had to put up one, I think, he said a section of land he had to put up. Give that section of land

to that lawyer. To get him out. So he did. It's a farm land, too. It's going towards Martin . . . So he lost a lot of land to come out. (6)

Philip Runs Along the Edge sold part of his land to pay legal fees. Stewart similarly mentions a 1916 federal trial in Deadwood (89) that was defended by "a mixed-blood Indian of the Sisseton tribe, who [was] practicing law in Martin, South Dakota" (215).⁴⁷ Melda portrays the dialectic between Native spiritual practices and the legal restrictions in her stories about land and religion. In "Aboriginality, Authenticity and the Settler World" (2000), Robert Paine says that the "'Contemporary Indian' presents him or herself arguing for Aboriginal collective rights – particularly to land" (100). Melda elucidates the suppression of religious practices and sovereignty through her characterization of the struggle over land ownership.

Melda constructs peyote as traditional, despite its relatively current introduction, through a strategic demarcation between peyote use and religious traditions associated with non-Native culture. It should be noted, however, that Melda adheres to both Christian and traditional beliefs in her life. Her commentary on Catholicism is meant to be strategic: she is commenting on the exclusive and restrictive nature of non-Native religious traditions.⁴⁸ Melda tells a story about her father's role in the Native American Church that demonstrates the dialectic between Catholicism and traditional practices:

⁴⁷ Further research is required to determine the connections among these sources.

⁴⁸ See the following for commentary on adhering to both traditional Lakota practices and Christianity: Raymond A. Bucko, *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge: History and Contemporary Practice* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1998); Vine Deloria, Jr., *For This Land: Writings on Religion in America*, ed. James Treat (New York: Routledge, 1999); Julian Rice, *Before the Great Spirit: The Many Faces of Sioux Spirituality* (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1998); Elaine A. Jahner, "Transitional Narratives and Cultural Continuity," *boundary 2* 19.3 (1992):148-179; Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, *Completing the Circle* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1995); Esther Black Elk DeSersa, Olivia Black Elk Pourier, Aaron DeSersa Jr., and Clifton DeSersa, *Black Elk Lives: Conversations with the Black Elk Family*, ed. Hilda Neihardt and Lori Utecht (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 2000); Mark St. Pierre, *Madonna Swan: A Lakota*

My dad was a Catholic a long time ago when they got the land 'down east' ... They were all Catholics, because there was only that Catholic priest was going around ... He was going around telling all these Indian people that they should be baptized because he said, 'If you're not baptized, you're going to go to hell.' You know, so they all believed him.~ They didn't want to go to hell. They all got baptized in Catholic. So, all my grandfather and they were all baptized in Catholic. 'Cause of that, see, what they told them. The *wasicus* came and told them they're going to go to hell if they're not baptized.~ And then we have to get baptized ... But, after — after I don't know how long — after he got married to my mom ... there was three men came from Oklahoma City. And that's when they introduced that peyote to them first. So it was my grandfather, my grandfather was the first one from South Dakota. Philip was introduced to peyote ... What I heard: they go into sweat and they come out and they go to meeting with the pipe. He used both of them ... So later on, I guess when they passed away, my dad was still going on strong. And I used to go to that church. I used to sit in there. Until when I was sixteen years old. I used to go with my dad every Saturday night. (6-7)

The Lakota term for 'white people' is *wasicu* and has come to mean "'clothes wearers,' 'fat takers,' or 'loud talkers,' emphasizing white men's negative characteristics"

Woman's Story (Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 1991); Paul, B. Steinmetz, S.J., *Pipe, Bible, and Peyote Among the Lakota People: A Study in Religious Identity* (Knoxville: U of Tennessee P, 1990); W. Stolzman, *The Pipe and Christ: A Christian Sioux Dialogue* (Chamberlain: Tipi Press, 1991); Clyde Holler, *Black Elk's Religion: The Sun Dance and Lakota Catholicism* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse U P, 1995).

(DeMallie, "Lakota" 9).⁴⁹ Today, the term *wasicu* has come to stand largely as an abstract designation of "a mind-set, a worldview that is a product of the development of European culture" (Means 28). In Melda's narrative, she uses 'wasicu' when referring to the historical suppression of Lakota spiritual practices; this is the *only* time she uses the term. She acknowledges that the use of peyote is not a traditional Lakota practice because it was adopted from another tribe in the 1900s. She says, "I know that peyote is not traditional" (75). However, peyote use, especially in conjunction with the pipe, contests efforts to suppress Native spiritual practices. It also indicates continued adaptation and innovation of a persistent tradition. In that sense, Melda regards peyote as being 'traditional' inasmuch as it resists the colonial suppression of Lakota spirituality.

Aspects of Lakota culture that are, in fact, colonial can be incorporated as symbols of tradition in a strategic effort to comment on both the process of colonization and aspects of non-Native culture. Melda has used peyote as a symbol of being traditional despite her recognition that it has come to be associated with Lakota culture fairly recently. The same can be said of Melda's references to horses. Horses were introduced by white settlers, but can be conceived as being traditional inasmuch as they oppose the technology associated with "all this fast living." Devon Mihesuah (Choctaw) says that "[t]he term 'traditional' changes over time ... Plains Indians who rode horses in the 1860s are considered traditional today but were not the same people as their traditional ancestors of the early 1500s who had never seen a horse" (25). Melda tells a

⁴⁹ *Wasicu* may have originally meant "'white' or 'snow' of the north, *Waziya*" and been associated with sacred beings (Lincoln, "Good" 104). It may also mean 'many' and refer to settlers (Black Elk DeSersa 5). See, also, Ella Deloria's (Dakota) *Speaking of Indians*.

story about her paternal grandfather and how he made the transition from pre-colonial lifestyle, one without horses, and adapted to the colonial period:

And Howard Red Bear was the last one that of my grandfathers that I know. And you know him, Lupe. Howard. Yeah, and one time he went to store on a horse because he used to walk seven miles every day. You know, from way down east to store. And that was his exercise. He come way over here and then walk back. So, people tell him, they said, "You want a ride?" And he says, "No, this is my exercise." I have to take this walk. So one time he rode on his horse; came to store. And he was always walking, so he left his horse at the store and he walked back.~ We always tell that story about him. That's the day when grandpa left his horse down at the store.~ (9)

Mirroring this shift towards incorporating, or resisting, technology, Melda also tells a humorous story about her mother trying to drive a car when she was a young woman.

And they came down that hill. And they came down real fast. And she don't know where the brakes are. So she was going around and around down there where the house. Yeah, she couldn't stop it. So finally my Uncle Moses jumped off. And what he did was he got those groceries and he throw them in front of the car.~ She said, "I run over those groceries and I keep going around and around and I was thinking, well, we'll run the gas out." And I guess the old people didn't go out. They didn't get excited. They just leave them alone ... So what she did was she jumped

out and let the car go and so it went in the creek. They never got it out.

They just left it there. (26)

Melda is describing the technology associated with non-Native culture and how her family has confronted these colonial effects. She uses specific discourses to oppose what are generally considered to be characteristics of non-Native culture in order to indicate how she is connected to traditional Lakota culture and how it differs from mainstream culture. In telling a story about horses, as well as a story about peyote, Melda is telling a story about the survival of Lakota tradition. In her characterization of Lakota tradition, what is 'traditional' is constantly changing. In many of her stories, Melda defines Lakota tradition as whatever opposes non-Native colonial impositions – most significantly, the suppression of Lakota spiritual practices.

Concluding Remarks

Melda refers to both of her great-grandparents in her story, their love for each other and their traditional prayers. Melda's paternal great-grandparents are Philip Runs Along the Edge (or Red Bear) and Shell Woman (or Luisa Martinez). She tells several other stories about these ancestors in her life story narrative and, in many ways, they embody many of the characteristics that she chooses to pass on about her own life. Luisa Martinez is from Mexico and their intermarriage relates to Melda's own marriage to Lupe, who is Mexican. In a recent conversation, after our recording sessions, Melda conveyed further stories about her great-grandmother. She said that I should include the material and, I suspect, that the emphasis on her own Mexican ancestry derives in part from my previous downplaying of Lupe's Mexican heritage. She says that Luisa Martinez 'Runs Along the Edge' was from Old Mexico and is an Aztec. Luisa apparently

used the name Shell Woman so that she could avoid using her Mexican name. Philip Runs Along the Edge traveled to “Washte country” (which is Arizona / New Mexico) every winter and the people in Arizona gave him Luisa as a wife. Luisa’s father was reputed to be a conquistador, Hernandez Martinez, and she had in her possession a conquistador helmet that she kept with her in South Dakota. Melda jokes that “Philip must have been really handsome to get such an important woman.” Melda indicates that her family is connected to a prestigious heritage in Mexico. She implies that her marriage to Lupe perpetuates the traditional practices of her great-grandparents. Intermarriage only became problematic with colonial ideas about race and Indian identity, specifically those associated with heredity and visible racial difference. She contests racial discourses that are associated with Indian identity by focusing on intermarriage as a traditional practice. Melda uses the context of her great-grandfather’s marriage to an Aztec to demonstrate the continuity of her own marriage to an Aztec. She says that the story of her great-grandparents praying together at sunrise is “just like a love story.” Melda ends her story listing her roles as a wife, mother and grandmother. Lupe finally interjects and asks her about her role as a wife and whether it requires patience. They laugh together at his joke and, in that respect, Melda’s story about her great-grandparents mirrors her own life story; one that involves a Lakota and an Aztec praying together.

Chapter V – Lupe: Ancestry and Intermarriage

Introductory Remarks

The racial discourse involved in delineating Indians, non-Natives and mixed-bloods has emerged in the historical context of colonization. Blood quantum, which was erected as a federal policy, is now one of the central criteria in regarding Indian identity both from within and outside of Native communities. These governmental policies continue with present-day tribal enrollment qualifications that are associated with blood quantum. In *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (1996), Joane Nagel says that “questions of membership, cultural content, and history are issues of constant negotiation and reconstruction in all ethnic communities” (235). However, the legislated focus on ancestry politicizes ‘Indians’ as an ethnic group in North America. Nagel asserts that “[i]ronically, in some instances, the burdens of proof [of authenticity] can become more and more onerous as one moves closer inside Indian communities” (242). For example, Greg Sarris offers a literary example in *Watermelon Nights*. One of the characters worries over the way in which her Indianness is conceived after being told: “[y]our father’s from Kashaya Reservation and your mother might as well be pure Mexican” (60). Intermarriage has implications for Indian identity. Scott B. Vickers (1998) elaborates on the ramifications of blood quantum arguments:

[R]acial criteria have had and continue to have a destabilizing and de-racinating effect on Indian identities, confounding any meaningful discussion of ‘Indianness,’ a concept that grows less and less definitive, as perhaps it must, as time and this discussion go on. As historian Limerick

has explained, 'Set the blood quantum at one-quarter, hold to it as a rigid definition of Indians, let intermarriage proceed as it has for centuries, and eventually Indians will be defined out of existence'... Thus the blood quantum argument is a major conundrum that vexes Indian identity at its very core. (164)

Indian identity has been associated with racial purity, authenticity and a discordant relationship with a pristine and vanishing past. In their life stories, Melda and Lupe comment on intermarriage both in reference to their own marriage and those of their children. In this chapter, I analyze Melda and Lupe's dialogue about marriage to better understand how they conceive of the politics of intermarriage. I also examine Lupe's construction of his Mexican identity; I explore his ties to Lakota culture in the following chapter.

'Well, that's okay then': Mixed-Blood Identity & Intermarriage

Racial criteria have come to be associated with Indianness through the implementation of government policies and absorption of dominant ideologies. Ideas about truth and authenticity have been taken up in Native communities and have influenced what it means to be Lakota. Correspondingly, intermarriage is an issue in the lives of Melda and Lupe, as is the case for many contemporary Indians, because of their own cross-cultural marriage as well as the out-marriages of some of their children and, inevitably, grandchildren. Historically, however, adoption and intermarriage were traditional practices for the Lakota people and functioned as an expression of the Lakota understanding of relatedness. Alliances were forged, and continue to be supported, through intermarriage, adoption, spiritual relationships or economic relationships. Allies

reinforce the Lakota nation. Relations, therefore, extend beyond categorizations associated with blood quantum. In *Iyeska Win: Intermarriage and Ethnicity Among the Lakota in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (1994), LaVera Rose (Lakota) says that “[i]nitially Lakotas embraced outsiders through adoptions, making them relatives with all the comforts and rights of kinship” (13). She further claims that “[w]hile Lakotas [traditionally] view ethnicity solely in terms of behavior, Euroamericans base their ethnic membership primarily on race” (100). These fluid pre-colonial categories were eclipsed by ones that were more rigid and combative; the Lakota necessarily increasingly distinguished between allies and adversaries with the institution of the Allotment Act and the claiming of treaty rights. Consequently, contemporary Lakota identity involves the negotiation of racial and cultural identities that are both colonial and traditional.

At times, Melda uses discourses that invoke racial and cultural authenticity. She does so, however, very rarely and she employs such commentary to critique broader political issues. For example, Melda uses oppositional terms in her story about a beauty contest at the Pine Ridge powwow in 1957. She placed second in the contest and she highlights both race and culture to explain her standing. Melda tells the story twice in her narrative and both times she emphasizes that the winner was an *iyeska* (mixed-blood):

I still remember her name: Darlene. She wasn't a full-blooded Indian. She took first and I took runner-up. The reason I took runner-up is they were arguing between which one and then I didn't use the moccasins. My mom was really disappointed: "I told you to wear moccasins and everything." (62) . . . Ah, her name was Darlene from Rosebud. But she was an *iyeska*, a half-breed. (221)

Melda uses the term *iyeska* to indicate her competitor's mixed-blood designation; this is the only time she uses the term in her narrative.⁵⁰ She uses the term in much the same way as she has used the term *wasicu* (white) to comment on colonial discourses. Melda implies that someone with non-Native blood should be excluded from the beauty contest. She also associates her competitor with the neighboring reservation, Rosebud, which highlights community differences. On the other hand, she suggests that she lost because she failed to wear traditional moccasins, a cultural marker rather than a racial one.

Powwows became prevalent in the 1950s as an effort to provide for the social interaction that had previously characterized traditional ceremonies. The powwow is therefore an emergent custom that represents an effort to maintain tradition within colonial confines. Tuhiwai Smith says that “[q]uestions of who is a ‘real indigenous’ person, what counts as a ‘real indigenous leader,’ which person displays ‘real cultural values’ and the criteria used to assess the characteristics of authenticity ... are designed to fragment and marginalize” (72). The concept of a beauty contest appeals to ideas of authenticity and reflects the marginalization associated with categorizing Indians. Melda uses race to strategically comment on colonial pressures and her personal experience of those pressures. She is using both racial and cultural criteria to highlight her understanding of a situation that was both traditional and colonial. Hence, we can see the ways in which indigenous people caught between two worlds are sometimes compelled to “use both kinds of language to claim a legitimate voice” (Cruikshank, *Social* xv).

⁵⁰ The literal meaning of *iyeska* is ‘white talkers’ because mixed-bloods acted as translators of English and Lakota languages (DeMallie 10). Historically, respect was accorded to translators because they forged useful alliances. Now the term carries negative associations, largely related to racial and behavioral characteristics attributed to assimilation. Rose notes that “[t]he evolution of the usage of *iyeska* reveals

Melda discusses the issue of intermarriage in her life story and, in doing so, acknowledges racial issues in her construction of Lakota identity. Specifically, she notes the intertribal and cross-cultural marriages of her sons:

Twenty-nine grandkids and one great-granddaughter ... I have a Navajo daughter-in-law and I have three of them [daughter-in-laws] are white — Lupe Junior, Jimmy, and Marcos. Three of them. And I have Raymond's married to an Indian girl, Levina. (33)

Later in the narrative, Melda and Lupe expand on the reasons for their sons marrying outside of the Lakota community:

Melda:

So we have lots and lots of cousins. That's why I told my sons, I said, "When we move back to South Dakota and a girl comes to them and they say, 'She came to me and she likes me and all that.' And I say, 'No, because we're all related.'" So, they kind of said, "Mom, do you know this...." You know, they mention a girl. And I say, "Yeah. They're related to us." And they kind of got tired of that, so they went away and got married to — most of them — white women ... I was sitting there thinking and I said, "How come you boys don't marry to Indian women." They said, "Mom, you told us we're all related to the Sioux here. You can't marry them." And I say, "Oh, that's right. Well, that's okay then."~

how Lakota definitions of ethnicity have changed over time ... [whereby] ostracism culminated in racism against biracial people by their Lakota relatives similar to that expressed by Euroamericans" (13).

There are several topics being discussed, in several different ways, in this exchange. I should mention first, however, that the women who have married into the Trejo family have supported a commitment to traditional Lakota practices and I suggest that matters of the heart are even more complex than those involving ethnicity. As Drew Hayden Taylor (Ojibway) notes, out-marriage is often inappropriately the source of political discussion:

Some who like to dabble in amateur (or not so amateur) sociological examination believe ... that a non-Native girlfriend is a symbol of success and achievement in both White and Native societies. Or then there's the theory that White women are just easier to find in the dark. I don't know which is the correct answer, or even if there is an answer. One could say that maybe two people just fell in love, but for reasons that I've quoted above, their love has taken on a political taint. (*Two*, i)

I am focusing on the political aspects of intermarriage and, for that reason, I interpret the dialogue in terms of racial identity. According to Winona Stevenson (Cree), everything becomes political in Native communities and "the most pervasive politics are personal and familial" (7). Their relationships, however, clearly extend beyond political analyses.

Melda subverts racial criteria in her discussion of intermarriage but she does so through first acknowledging race as an issue, thereby using both traditional and colonial discourses in her commentary. She implies that she would prefer to have Lakota in-laws by saying, "well, that's okay then ~" when her sons respond that she has told them they cannot marry Lakota women to whom they are related. She hints that, in some way, she would prefer Lakota in-laws. She delineates between being mixed-blood, or from another Indian nation, and being Lakota which, in this case, is taken to mean 'Indian'. At

the same time, however, she laughs when she makes the comment. By making the comment in a light-hearted tone, Melda underscores the irony of her own predicament as a mixed-blood woman who has married a Mexican man. She also further highlights the irony in considering racial issues from a traditional perspective; she is ultimately saying that 'it is okay' – that it is not an issue or, rather, that it is a *colonial* issue.

Melda indicates that her sons have not married in the Lakota community because "we're all related to the Sioux here." In doing so, she invokes traditional out-marriage practices and highlights her position, and her family's position, in the Lakota community.⁵¹ Melda has chosen to disregard urban dislocation or class issues and other factors related to intermarriage.⁵² She frames the discussion with reference to traditional practices and community identity; she stresses her genealogical position in the Lakota community as necessitating out-marriage. Melda says, "I have a whole bunch of cousins. Probably met a whole bunch of my cousins. From my mom's side and my dad's side. Too many! Too many cousins" (33). In *Bead on an Anthill: A Lakota Childhood* (1998), Delphine Red Shirt (Lakota) conveys a similar sentiment about traditional out-marriage practices:

'*Witcotakuye hena sloлкиya ye*,' she tells me. 'Know who your relatives are' ... because it was considered taboo to marry a relative, no matter how distant. These were the things she wanted me to know. (96)

⁵¹ See Lavera Rose, "Iyeska Win: Intermarriage and Ethnicity Among the Lakota in the 19th and 20th Centuries," MA Thesis (Northern Arizona U, 1994).

⁵² Incidentally, geography apparently plays a role: sons who live in other states have married non-Native or mixed-blood women, while Raymond, who primarily lives on the reservation, is married to a Lakota woman.

Red Shirt emphasizes the traditional aspects of the taboo against marrying relatives by using the Lakota language, employing the past tense, and emphasizing inter-personal instruction.⁵³ Melda is, similarly, teaching her grandchildren about traditional out-marriage practices with her story and her emphasis on being related to those in the community. I have witnessed the reinforcement of this traditional practice while in Pine Ridge. When I first went to South Dakota, in 1994, the Trejo family held a large Easter egg hunt for their immediate family and distant cousins. At the end of the day, the two sides of the family lined up facing each other and were introduced to one another with specific mention of familial relation. Kay Koppedray, who accompanied me at the time, told me that the gathering of the relatives functioned to prevent relatives from marrying. I was initially skeptical, but have since recognized that this practice, as well as what it represents, is important in the construction of Lakota identity. Traditional out-marriage supports the Lakota conception of being allies, of being related. In highlighting that she is closely related to other community members, Melda invokes traditional taboos necessitating out-marriage practices. She constructs herself as being Lakota, in that she is closely related to members of the community, and she indicates that her own choice to marry outside of the Lakota community supports traditional cultural practices.

'Aztecs. Indians.': Lupe's Construction of Mexican/Indian Identity

Lupe positions himself as an Aztec Indian and claims a heritage that pre-dates the colonial era. In doing so, he contests non-Native discourses that are associated with the colonial era in Mexico. Mexican identity is itself complex, given its hybrid nature. In his

⁵³ See, also, Ella Deloria (Dakota) for a discussion of out-marriage practices.

ethnographic work, *The Aztecs* (1996), Michael E. Smith describes the effects of racial and cultural history on Mexican identity:

At first new Spanish traits were simply incorporated into pre-existing *Nahua* [Aztec] cultural patterns . . . Considerable intermarriage between Indians and Spaniards took place, and by the time of the Mexican Revolution of 1910, most if not all *Nahuas* were of partial Spanish ancestry. Today Mexican culture is a true blend of Aztec traits, Spanish traits, and traits developed during the four and a half centuries of colonial and national rule . . . [T]he Mexican people are *mestizos*, their genetic heritage a combination of Indian and Spanish traits, with some African, Asian and other European genes contributed as well. (293)

Lupe describes himself as an Aztec Indian and, in so doing, he negates colonial history and colonial racial categories; he privileges a pre-colonial Indian identity. Lupe describes his father as a full-blooded Aztec who was born and raised in Mexico (39). He says that his “ancestors from Mexico, they’re traditional Aztecs. Indians” (42). Melda also highlights this association in her description of Lupe: “Your dad come from Aztec nation, Aztec tribe. From Old Mexico” (39). Smith indicates that there are “no full-blooded Aztecs alive today [but] . . . [m]any Mexicans look to the Aztecs for the origin of their cultural heritage and take pride in the achievements of Aztec civilization” (294). Lupe has negotiated the various meanings of being Mexican and has identified himself as an Indian, contesting colonial discourses that emphasize race as a primary factor in Indian identity.

Mexican identity in North America is further complicated by American perceptions of Mexican immigrants. Lupe explicitly situates himself as a Mexican and emphasizes his ties to Mexico. He resists racist discourses associated with Mexican immigrants in the United States. Born and raised in Coleman, Texas, Lupe grew up in an area that has been described as "an extension of Mexico in terms of its Catholic religion, folklore, architectural styles, medium of communications, and cuisine" (De Leon 268). Largely migrant workers, and accustomed to a chronic sense of displacement, the Mexican people in this area of Texas cultivate a deep sense of a Mexican-American culture, 'Tejano' culture (De Leon 268). Racism and efforts to demarcate the American population contribute to the contested nature of Mexican identity. For example, Nagel says that "'Hispanic' is not an option on the Census Bureau's [United States, 1980] list of races ... Thus, Spanish-speaking respondents must choose black, white, Indian, or some other race when completing the census form" (87). In his life story, Lupe emphasizes his ancestral roots in Mexico and constructs himself as an indigenous Mexican rather than an immigrant. Lupe's father left Mexico as a young boy, but Lupe has returned with his father to visit his relatives in Mexico:

[My father] came from a tribe of Aztecs. Aztecs from way down deep in Mexico. In the middle. Middle of Mexico. About 800 kilometers from the capital city. Mexico City. About a six hour drive. (42)

Lupe stresses his association with Mexico, 'way down deep in Mexico.' His emphasis on the middle of the country delineates his heritage as distinct from the border towns of Mexico. He identifies with being an indigenous Mexican, an Aztec Indian, instead of regarding himself primarily as a Mexican-American.

Lupe uses cultural traits that contest dominant discourses in constructing a distinctly Mexican identity. He strategically highlights ethnic characteristics that oppose mainstream American norms. For example, in describing his mother, Lupe focuses on distinct language and healing practices. Lupe's maternal grandfather was not Mexican and I was surprised to learn that Lupe has non-Native ancestors. He describes his mother's mixed-blood status, but stresses her ties to Mexican culture:

Lupe:

My mother is part English.

Larissa:

Really! She's like half Mexican, half white?

Lupe:

My grandfather was a man who was tall, light complexion, blue eyes. My grandmother was kind of little, dark, with black eyes. But my grandfather was white, you know. Light complexion, blue eyes.

Melda:

So, the blue eyes run in the family. Lupe's uncle is really white and has got blue eyes and green eyes.

Lupe:

I've got four cousins. Two boys, two girls. Who have green eyes. Really green eyes. It comes from the English side, you know. My mother doesn't speak English. She talk nothing but Mexican. (85)

Lupe implies that, despite his mother's parentage, he considers her Mexican given that she speaks only Spanish. Melda, who found the language barrier difficult in her conversations with Lupe's mother, emphasizes the connection between language and ethnic identity in describing Lupe's mother: "She's Mexican and she's going to *be* a Mexican and she's going to keep her language" (141). In addition, Lupe describes his

mother as performing *curanderismo*, Mexican folk healing (De Leon 1268). Lupe's mother claims personal knowledge of traditional Mexican healing practices:

My mother, too [referring to Melda's mother engaging in traditional healing practices].⁵⁴ My mother cure people, too. A different way though. Her way is with a broom and two eggs and you go out there and pray over the body. When you get in a car accident and you're scared all the time and can't sleep, she'll go out there and clear it up. You'll be all right. A broom. [She learned] from her aunt. Her aunt. A long time back. When she was a young girl. She used that for many people. From Texas to Nebraska and Colorado. In the hospital, too. One time, my cousin got into a big accident and the doctors couldn't help him and he hollers and hollers. My mother got her broom and my cousin was laying down with two nurses and a doctor there. The doctor seen my mother with a broom, you know, and they call my mother back, "No, no, no."~ They thought she was going to beat him up with it. They don't know. I explain to the doctor that she's going to doctor. They let her do it ... With the broom. Make the crosses and crack that egg. The next day, no more hollering. They let him out of the hospital. She did it. (129; 131)

In describing his mother's healing practices, Lupe strategically contests mainstream medical practices and the dominant discourses with which medicine is associated. The same is true of his emphasis on her refusal to speak English. He regards his mother as

⁵⁴ Melda's mother would use a type of grass, a cattail, to cut out the cataracts in people's eyes (127). A similar practice is described by Martha Royce Blaine *Some Things Are Not Forgotten: A Pawnee Family Remembers* (194).

Mexican, despite her mixed-blood status, and contests associations to mainstream American culture.

Lupe counters Catholicism with traditional religious practices and has negotiated this dichotomy throughout his life. He uses “both kinds of languages to claim a legitimate voice” in his struggle to negotiate both traditional and colonial cultural values, in particular those associated with religious beliefs (Cruikshank, *Social* xv). When he was younger, Lupe considered becoming a Catholic priest:

In Texas. Seven years I was there [monastery]. I was trying to be a regular preacher, a deacon. For many years. I don't go no place. I stayed there for seven years . . . In a church, yeah. In a convent. A very big convent. Nothing but men there. And then one time I just walk away. And went — you know, I came here [Nebraska] by myself. I went to Texas where my father was. And my mom. And I got into that again. One more year. (56) . . . When I was young, you know, I used to go to church with my mother. All the time. Until, when I grow up, I decide it might be better to just do it myself . . . Seven years in Lubel, Texas. And then I come back to Coleman, Texas. And I stayed one more year there with the fathers. The name was San Pedro. In Coleman. (151)

Lupe apparently struggled with his ultimate break from Catholicism in that he left the seminary, and then returned for one more year, before finally making the decision to abandon Catholic religious practices. About his break with Catholicism, Lupe says, “I walk away from the religious. I walk away” (57). Lupe structures his personal experience of Mexican religious syncretism in political terms by delineating and

juxtaposing traditional Aztec practices with Catholicism. In describing his father, Lupe says, “[h]e believe in the Catholic and the traditional, but he was a Catholic really” (42). He notes his father’s Catholicism and contrasts Catholicism with Aztec religious traditions, ‘the traditional.’ Lupe’s ties to the Aztec community function to contest colonization, but he recognizes the dialectic implicit in Mexican identity.

Reconfiguring ethnicity in ways that challenge colonial categorizations serves to amend the fragmentation associated with colonization. Lupe characterizes a historical pattern of intermarriage as being a traditional Indian practice. He asserts that, historically, Indians across the North American continent – in this case, understandably, the Lakota and Aztec – met up with each other and intermarried. Other ethnic groups invariably become implicated in this cross-cultural practice of intermarriage and therefore he regards everyone as being Indian:

You know, it was a long time ago that the Lakota people went to the south and they met the Aztecs over there coming this way. And they met each other over there. And they got together and they adopted each other. They were all Indians ... In this day, we’re all mixed ... And just one drop of blood, you consider yourself an Indian. We’re all Indian ... (253)

Lupe subverts blood quantum criteria by stressing that any amount of Indian blood dictates Indian identity, therefore ‘we are all Indian.’ For Lupe, Indianness extends beyond a colonial understanding of blood quantum and tribal designations. Lupe regards himself in relation to a composite mythology that displaces colonial and tribal

understandings of racial divisions. In her novel, *Gardens in the Dunes* (1999), Leslie Marmon Silko describes the Sand Lizard people⁵⁵ and their beliefs about intermarriage:

Sand Lizard mothers gave birth to Sand Lizard babies no matter which man they lay with; the Sand Lizard mother's body changed everything to Sand Lizard inside her. Little Sand Lizards had different markings, and some were lighter or darker, but they were all Sand Lizards. (204)

Silko notes the irrelevance of an externalized racial identity, contesting colonial ideas about 'looking Indian.' By referring to the Sand Lizard mother's *body* as affecting birthright, Silko deconstructs scientific ideas about blood quantum instilling race.

Gender is, in her characterization, important because non-Native men first colonized North and South America and had children with 'Sand Lizard' *women*. Silko displaces colonial ideas with a traditional understanding of race and intermarriage: Race matters but not in the way we thought it mattered. In Silko's characterization, as well as in Lupe's, 'we are all Indians' or 'Sand Lizards' because there are ways of conceiving of intermarriage which negate colonial distinctions.

Metanarratives, however they have been problematized by postmodern theorization, offer a unified discourse to those in Native communities who fully realize that "nothing is authentic, no matter how bright" (Vizenor 134), but nonetheless realize the power in claiming such an association. Through Lakota spiritual practices, Lupe promotes a resolution between the religious practices that he associates with colonialism and those that he regards as preceding and continuing alongside Catholicism. Lupe's

⁵⁵ Silko uses Sand Lizards as a fictional nation in her novel.

descriptions of Aztec culture emphasize 'traditional' aspects that contrast those associated with colonial Mexico:

My ancestors from Mexico, they're traditional Aztecs. Indians. Some of them live in the tradition. Live in the mountains. Never come down yet. To this day. They're still up there. The work they got over there is *machetes*. The weapons, they make. Surviving on the mountain. They're hunting deer, sheeps, and all that. On the mountain. And I've got a lot of aunts, uncles. Right there in the village, Silao. So, my father's family is a really traditional people. (42)

Lupe describes aspects of Aztec culture that are essentialised and resonate with images that are stereotypically 'Indian.' He regards Lakota spiritual practices as connected with his conception of a traditional Aztec culture:

That's why I said it's connected, the Lakota people are connected a long time ago, they pray. They [Aztecs] pray with rocks and fire, the same and they do over here. And the pipe over there. And they use feathers too, but the feathers come from different kind of a bird. Different customs. And over here the Lakota people use the eagle and the hawk. That's what they use. Everything's connected. (254)

Lupe constructs his identity, as an Aztec who supports Lakota spiritual practices, in terms that are trans-historical and cross-continental. Aztecs use directional colors like the Lakota (Waters 21). Beverly Hungry Wolf (Blackfoot) states that "[a]nthropologists say that my ancestors got the Sun Dance from tribes to the south, who originally got it from the Aztecs of Mexico" (42). Lupe makes these same associations. He also stresses the

connections among Indian nations through the ceremonial use of peyote. He says, "[i]t's a traditional way for the Aztecs" (75). From Lupe's perspective, peyote is traditional to the Lakota because it has been traditional for the Aztecs. In *Peyote Religion: A History* (1987), Omer C. Stewart describes the continuity between traditions in Mexico and those of the present-day Native American church:

[I]t seems to me that there are enough features of the old Mexican peyote complex present in the modern American peyote religion to support a theory of at least partial continuity of many ideas and practices: the gourd rattle, the ritual number four, the dedication to the four directions, the cleansing in fire, smoke and incense, the all-night ceremony, cigarette smoking, and so forth. But most significant of all is the ancient, persistent belief in the supernatural power of the peyote plant common to both rituals. (41)

Lupe tells a story about his father explaining that peyote, a cactus, used to grow in the ocean and that when the continental waters receded it was found in the deserts. In connecting peyote to the land, covered as it was long ago by the ocean, Lupe displaces colonial ideas about the land, tribal divisions and territorial boundaries by instead focusing on time and space as associated with an prehistoric continent. Silko echoes similar pan-Indian sentiments in her novel *Almanac of the Dead*; she prophesies that Native people of the North American continent will unite and overturn the colonial world, dismantling the colonial division between Mexico and the United States. In a recent essay on Silko's novel, Adam Sol states that "*Almanac* offers a prophetic vision of the overthrow of the established systems of government and belief and the return of this

continent to its original inhabitants” (28). Cook-Lynn similarly notes that “[t]he interest in decolonization goes back to the Mayan resistance narratives of the 1500s and has always played an important role in political and social life” (96). Lupe structures his understanding of Mexican identity using a political narrative that undercuts the colonial apportionment of the North American continent and peoples.

Concluding Remarks

In the following chapter, I further explore Lupe’s connection to Lakota culture and Melda and Lupe’s connection to Lakota spiritual practices as a way of understanding Indian identity. The following comments should, therefore, be regarded as a bridge between the previous discussions of intermarriage and colonial ideas about Indian identity and the forthcoming examination of the Lakota perspective of being related and the use of ceremony to support those relations. Lupe regards Lakota tradition as functioning to bridge Catholicism and traditional Indian practices. Lupe met Melda shortly after his decision to leave the church. He later adopted Lakota spiritual practices and began praying at Crow Dog’s Sundance. He recounts that his parents came to support him while he was Sundancing at Leonard Crow Dog’s:

Melda:

[Lupe’s mother] faint right away and Leonard comes and doctors her.

Lupe:

And I told my mother, “Sorry mom I cannot help. I’m all tied up.”~

Melda:

But she was really supporting Lupe.

Lupe:

My father was Catholic. He never come for years. But one time I was dancing and I was facing south. My father was against it. He thought I was doing something wrong. And I talked to him. I never argued with my father. So, one time, one year, I was dancing. My mother was there. My father was never around. We went to take the pipes. All of us. I was offering the pipe and I see a person over there, my father. Standing over there. I went over to speak to him. He said, "You know what, son? I'm really happy that you're doing this. I thought you were doing something ugly. I thought you were doing something else." And he liked it ... It made me feel real good ... All by himself. From Scottsbluff. (87)

Lupe emphasizes that his father, who was a Catholic, supported his spiritual beliefs and that "he liked it" when Lupe was Sundancing. Lupe identifies himself as an Aztec Indian, emphasizes his Mexican and Indian cultural ties and maintains these connections despite being grounded in the Lakota cultural tradition on Pine Ridge Reservation. In doing so, he situates himself in opposition to the discourses associated with the culture and history of colonization in both North America and Mexico. His multiple negotiations of Indian identity make a powerful statement about the way in which he conceives of race and, more importantly, about the way in which he conceives of the colonial construction of race and ethnicity. Lupe regards his adherence to Lakota spirituality within this context; a context whereby praying together is 'okay' because it is only considered problematic from a colonial perspective. He is hoping that others will come 'all by themselves' to try understand why he is doing something that could be alternatively considered 'ugly' or 'real good.'

Chapter VI – Indian Identity as an Emerging Process

Introductory Remarks

Indian identity extends beyond racial formulations and involves making claims to a cultural tradition. Consequently, cultural signifiers are particularly relevant to Indian identity in contemporary circumstances. While Melda and Lupe talk about what it means to be an Indian throughout their narratives, the specific event around which they frame their discussion is the Sundance. They describe the life events that culminate in their holding a Sundance and discuss their lives, since setting up a Sundance, by drawing connections to the annual ceremony. In this way, they articulate identity from a perspective that associates their cultural values with prayer and ceremony. Since the 1960s, Indians have used traditional culture to revitalize individual and collective ethnic identities. Cultural renewal accompanied activist efforts and led to a proliferation of cultural and religious practices. Melda and Lupe's path to the Sundance is one of ethnic renewal on an individual level that mirrors that of a community undergoing a parallel revitalization. In *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge: History and Contemporary Practice* (1998), Raymond A. Bucko clarifies the use of 'tradition' and 'traditional' in contemporary political and cultural discourses:

Tradition itself is a vital term in contemporary Lakota discourse and constitutes a key symbol in Lakota culture. Tradition is used on the reservation today both as a term to authenticate a legitimate link to the past and as a mark of legitimacy itself. People, behaviors, and ceremonies are often called traditional ... The word *wichoh'a* 'tradition' is used in several ways by the Lakotas on the reservation. The first meaning

matches the English definition of the word; it implies the handing on of a body of material from the past. The second, more analogous to custom or habit, refers to actions in the present that represent generalized repetitive behavior. Finally, the English word traditional is used to mean 'proper, correct, or accurate' and can imply one or both of the two Lakota meanings. (Bucko 14, 98)

Lakota identity and tradition function in a tandem relationship and instead of defining what constitutes 'tradition,' I focus on how Melda and Lupe negotiate what they understand as Lakota tradition. My analysis is facilitated by an in-depth look at the stories that both Melda and Lupe tell about their increasing involvement in the traditional community in the 1970s and 1980s.

'And we got into this Lakota religion': Re-identifying with Tradition

Contemporary Native identity is an emerging process, constantly negotiated by individuals and communities. Since the revitalization associated with the 1970s, there has been a renewed interest in Indian tradition in both Native and non-Native communities. Drew Hayden Taylor (Ojibway) elaborates:

[When growing up,] White was 'in' and Native people (and, no doubt, many other ethnic cultures) tried to look it, dress it, or act it ... These days, it's a completely different ball game. Native is 'in.' The darker you are, the more you are embraced, the more 'Indian' you are thought to be ... But it's often more than simply how you look. It's how you think, act, where you live, and point with your lower lip. Consequently, something

more representational of the existing philosophical schism is the difficult question of determining 'what makes a Native a Native?' (*Two* 64)

Taylor indicates that social values have shifted over the past three decades – from regret over an Indian heritage to a privileging of qualities associated with being Indian.

Historically, the political, religious, economic and cultural suppression of Native cultures dislocated individuals from their traditions. For example, Carole Anne Heart Looking Horse (Lakota), wife of Arvol Looking Horse who acted as spiritual leader of the Lakota nation and keeper of its sacred pipe, says that "[i]t wasn't until 1978, when the American Indian Religious Freedom Act was passed, that our people felt finally they could practice their ceremonies openly in this country" (Katz 292). The re-emergence of Native ceremonies prompted an entire generation to reconsider their traditions. Consequently, as Marjorie Schweitzer explains, "[s]ome [individuals] return[ed] to their native communities and enter[ed] again into Indian social and ceremonial life, learning as retirees what they had missed when they were young" (16). The active process of learning about being Indian has contributed to the present questioning of the authenticity associated with tradition. As Taylor queries: what makes a Native a Native?

Contemporary Indian identity involves a negotiation of past and present effects, colonial and pre-colonial traditions. Traditionalism "symbolizes for the Sioux what it is to be Indian" and is based on a historical context and represents an "attempt to return to the 'old ways,' the 'traditional ways,' 'Lakota ways,' ... that provide historical links to the past" (DeMallie, "Lakota" 2). In *'Building the Nation Back Up': The Politics of Identity on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation* (1997), Mikael Kurkiala considers the contemporary mediation of the presumed static and primary quality of being Indian. His

ethnographic study is useful in many respects, but I disagree with his characterization of 'becoming Indian':

Those individuals who at a later stage in their lives try to 'become' Indian, of necessity approach that identity as an object, a desired state, which they wish to appropriate and embody . . . Those individuals who are socialized in a Lakota setting, such as rural Pine Ridge, to a larger extent take their identities for granted and are less inclined to manifest it either verbally or symbolically. The difference, however, is increasingly one of degree rather than of kind, as the rural Indians themselves frequently resound to and challenge the objectifications of the 'born-again' Indians . . . The most vocal self-designated 'traditionalists' are most likely individuals who at some stage have experienced disconnectedness from their Indian heritage, and have returned to it. (231-2)

It is by no means a given that those who move toward Lakota tradition later in life are less traditional and, likewise, it is by no means a given that those who have been raised within Lakota tradition necessarily claim an un-problematized identity. Kurkiala perpetuates the unfortunate tendency, as lamented by Cook-Lynn, "to discuss the divisions on Indian reservations between half-breeds and 'traditionalists'" in the scholarship about the Lakota people ("How" 88). In this passage, he fails to explore seriously either Lakota identity as an emerging process, over the course of an individual's life, or dislocation and its effects on Indian identity. The process of connecting, or maintaining a connection, to a traditional past is pervasive enough to be partially constitutive of

contemporary Indian identity itself. Why, then, should it be of surprise that individuals are in various stages of negotiating that identity?

Instead of defining 'what' constitutes Native tradition, my focus is on the individual construction of tradition in contemporary circumstances. How do Native individuals, at present, maintain links to the past? In my approach, I follow Raymond A. Bucko's emphasis on the dialectical nature of Lakota ritual and belief:

From my observations of contemporary Lakota practice and from the ethnohistorical literature, it is clear that ... different people apply the labels 'truly past' and 'truly contemporary' differently. Lakota ceremonial practice is rather charismatic, fluid, and based on individuals' ongoing spiritual experiences ... What brings all these people together is their quest to behave in what they conceive as 'a traditional manner,' and thus they engage in this dialectical process as individuals and as groups to produce a satisfactory rendition of tradition ... My task is not to establish what is legitimate contemporary practice, but rather to demonstrate how this legitimacy called tradition is in fact arrived at. (12; 14)

Individuals make claims to Lakota tradition in different ways and these claims are "in turn validated or discredited in various communal and interpersonal contexts" (Pickering 186). Melda, who was "socialized in a Lakota setting," has been to varying degrees dislocated from the Lakota community and has moved towards Lakota tradition increasingly in her later life. However, these facts do not in any way imply an indistinct connection to what she understands as Lakota tradition. Accordingly, I examine one of

Melda's stories in depth to determine how she makes appeals to a contemporary tradition that is both persuasive and dynamic.

Melda □ And they're going to have a ceremony

We started to Sundance because of Lupe's brother, Ruben Fire Thunder. We met Ruben in . . . back in, I don't know, I can't remember [1975]. Anyway, we lived in Scottsbluff and Lupe's mom was really sick. And she was going to die. So the doctors told us, the whole family, to stay over night. So we went and stayed over night, but she wasn't going to make it. She was dying. So, at that time my brother, Norman, and Cleo [Lupe's sister], my sister-in-law, lived over here [Pine Ridge Reservation] in the housing. So, they called us and she told me, she said, "Melda," she said, "I don't think that I can lose my mom this year. I can't take that." She said, "We're going to do one last thing for her." She said, "I'm going to send that Ruben Fire Thunder, the medicine man, over there. And they're going to have a ceremony."

So, we're supposed to get ready. In Scottsbluff. Look for a place and have the ceremony there. So, I said, "Okay, we'll try." So, we went and we had this place but then we had to get a dog. I'd been to Sundance and I grew up in a traditional way. When I was young I used to go there but I've never actually cooked a dog and all these things. That dog was the funny part.~ Oh, we went all over trying to catch a dog. And we were supposed to be there in three hours. We were supposed to catch a dog and singe the dog and cook it.~ It was really hard because when you live in a city, you can't do that.~ There was no way you were going to start a fire outside. So, Lupe was running all over and almost everybody was looking for a dog. So, finally we just gave up and just let the dog go and we got the place ready. Boy, did we have fun that evening.

And all of Lupe's aunts came over. So, we had a ceremony. And this was like . . . all of his aunts speak Mexican, they didn't speak English. So, we had Wally there and Lupe was interpreting for his side of the family, and he tell Wally and Lupe tells Wally in English and then Wally tells Indian to Ruben. That was three, two interpretation there. So that was really hard, it took us long. 'Cause, you know, they ask him what and then pray and then, you know, their aunt say they tell Lupe and Lupe have to interpret to Wally and then it goes to Ruben and oh, it was like, we spend until like four o'clock in the morning.~

But he was . . . Ruben was a real good medicine man. I met him first . . . I think that was the first time we met him. So, they prayed for Lupe's mom. He said, "They're going to give her one year to live." But he said, "On the same day that next year she'll die; she's gotta go." So they just extended it one year. For her.

When we went to the hospital she was sitting up. Yeah. And they told me to make *wasna*, *wojapi* and fry bread for her. And then she was supposed to eat that first. So, I walk in there with *wojapi*, fry bread and *wasna*.~ They don't do that at the hospital, I guess. Just little amounts of those. So we explain it to her and she said, "Okay, that's good." She said, "I don't remember anything, but the nurses say that all those I.V.'s and everything they started to shake real bad." They were supposed to put Indian medicine, Lakota medicine, in those I.V.'s. So I guess they did. The spirits did. That's why it was all shaking. And they all got scared.~ Miracles happen. Like that.

So she came and she was doing pretty good and she was out of the hospital within three days, I think. They took her home and she was really happy. So all her sisters they stayed there. They're all from Texas. So after she got better, they all went back. And a year later, she got real sick. She was happy to die. 'Cause I guess she knew. Yeah, so she said, when she was in the hospital she was telling her daughters . . . she said, "Four white horses came after me." She said, "And I'm real happy." She said, "I'm happy to go." And she kind of keeps looking up and says, "I've got to go, they're waiting." And she just left. And after that, Cleo said, "Well, I'm happy," she said, "I spent one year with my mom and now I can let her go." Yeah, a whole year and then after that she kind of looked up in the ceiling and said, "I have to go. The white horses they came after me. They're waiting."

So, after we moved back over here, we went to Ruben Fire Thunder's a lot. And he adopted Lupe as a brother. And, as I was telling you, we had eighteen ceremonies in a row.

Interpretation

Melda's efforts to reconnect with Lakota tradition in the 1970s and 1980s demonstrate the degree to which identity and tradition are dynamic processes regardless of 'socialization' in the Lakota community. Melda asserts that she "grew up in a traditional way," but she also acknowledges that she "got into this Lakota religion" (1) more earnestly later in life. She was raised in the Native American Church and grew up praying with the pipe. She has spoken the Lakota language since childhood. Her family ties to Pine Ridge are extensive. While I doubt that she would characterize herself as ever being disaffected from Lakota tradition, she has experienced dislocation both as a migrant worker and living in urban areas such as Denver, Colorado and Scottsbluff, Nebraska. In her story, she describes that "there was no way you were going to start a fire" in Scottsbluff. In doing so, she highlights the incompatibility between a rural traditional past and the contemporary urban situation. She also describes the difficult

task of finding a dog for the *yuwipi* ceremony.⁵⁶ The incongruity between the past and present again contributes to the irony in her story. Melda describes tradition as an emerging process. Referring to her knowledge of tradition, she says: “[w]hen I was young I used to go there [*yuwipi*] but I’ve never actually cooked a dog and all these things” (155). She acknowledges that she had to learn how to be involved beyond being a participant. Melda also tells an associated story about how she cooked *wasna* (pemmican) and *wojapi* (chokecherry pudding), foods that are used ritualistically in ceremonies. She focuses, in her discussion, on the female role of cooking for Lakota ceremonies. Patricia Albers describes that “[m]uch of the preparation that goes into a feast and give-away is in the hands of females” (214). In focusing on her ability to cook *wasna* and her inability to cook a dog, Melda describes herself as both knowing and not knowing about traditional practices. In doing so, she contests totalizing discourses associated with Lakota tradition.

In *Standing in the Light: A Lakota Way of Seeing* (1994), Severt Young Bear describes four circles of people who are present at Sundances: those who are in the center (the dancers), those in the arbor (supporters/singers), those who are helping around the edge of the arbor, and those who are disengaged and remain further out in the parking lot (177). In her life story, Melda similarly describes moving through these circles in her involvement with the Sundance. The Sundance was restricted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the 1880s and then revived in a public display, associated with an annual fair,

⁵⁶ The *yuwipwi* ceremony is a “Lakota ritual in which the holy man is bound in a darkened room and obtains release through the mysterious intercession of helping spirits. Employed in contemporary times for spiritual devotion and to find lost objects” (Holler 230). A young dog is ritualistically cooked for the ceremony as a way of according respect and honor in the Lakota tradition.

in the 1950s and 1960s. Melda recalls going to the commercialized, BIA-sanctioned Sundance in the 1950s:

[The Pine Ridge] Sundance was in the morning and powwow starts in, like, the afternoon. We always stay there. But, I never did go in the mornings. The old people were there. My mom used to tell us, "You should go there and sit there." And I really regret not having done that. Because, I was like probably sixteen. Probably seventeen. And we sleep late.~ We always sleep late in the tents. She takes off. Sometimes we get up and we catch the end of it. They do that. I remember Sundance, they dance every morning, I don't know why. They didn't dance all day ... In those days, nobody really got into these Sundances. I was there and after that, that was in 1957, that was the year that I got into that beauty contest and I took runner-up. (221)

Melda states that the Sundance was connected with the powwow and that she didn't appreciate the significance of the tradition at that time. The beauty contest, to which Melda refers is, of course, the one in which a mixed-blood girl 'took first,' as described in a previous chapter. The dancers only danced during the morning, instead of a full day, most likely because health officials deemed a full day of dancing as unhealthy. Additionally, the dancers could take part in the powwow and rodeo as these were also proceeding at this time. In *Bead on an Anthill: A Lakota Childhood* (1998), Delphine Red Shirt describes her experience of the Sundance at that time in similar terms:

Mom-mah and Kah-kah prayed while the carnival rides stopped and started as people purchased tickets for a quarter; the dust at the rodeo flew

as the riders with numbers pinned on their backs, dressed in their cowboy boots and brand new jeans, mounted and dismounted with each passing event. The vendors counted change and sold hamburgers, and the dancers danced. The dancers danced in the full sunlight, raising their arms to the sky, sage crowns upon their heads, sage bracelets upon their wrists and ankles. Some carried a hoop made of sage, others a fan made of sage. They danced, ignoring us, as we children ran from one event to the next, spending quarters as fast as we could get them. I was like everyone else there: I ate snow cones and cotton candy. I drank soda pop and ran around the sacred circle. I chased boys and ran to and from the carnival looking for quarters on the ground. I played and played, never once stopping, until the last day, to see the faces of the Sun Dancers ... [including] the man in the long dark wig. I was no different from the tourists. I wanted to see what everyone else had paid to see. (69).

Both accounts attest to the restricted nature of the Sundance as well as the ways in which the younger generation was disconnected from Lakota tradition. The BIA Sundance was constructed as entertainment, a scripted event, rather than tradition. It was a display of 'old time Indi'n tradition,' akin to the Wild Buffalo Bill show or a carnival sideshow. The older generation, however, supported the enactment of the ceremony and encouraged others to learn from the Sundance and move towards the ceremony. Melda has advanced through those four circles, beginning with sleeping in her tent in the 'parking lot' and most recently to her involvement inside the Sundance circle. The network of people who work together to support the dancers are an important part of the ceremony. All of the

individuals, together, enact and propel tradition. James Fenelon says that “[s]ocietal integrity and group polity ... grow out of and are essential to the sundance” (290).

Melda’s description of her initial estrangement from tradition, as was the case for much of her generation, is her way of according honor to a tradition that both survives and impresses upon a new generation that they are able to move through circles towards Lakota ceremony.

The dialectical relationship among individuals and the community allows for the endorsement of individual claims to Lakota tradition. Personal interpretations of Lakota tradition are supported through interpersonal associations (Pickering 186). In her review of Bucko’s ethnographic text, Kathleen Pickering notes that “appeals [are made] to kinship, adoption, Lakota mentors, personal visions and dreams and historical documents ... to establish ... individual authority” in speaking about Lakota tradition (186). Melda begins and ends her story with an invocation of Ruben Fire Thunder and his adoptive relationship to Lupe. In *Choteau Creek: A Sioux Reminiscence* (1992), Joseph Iron Eye Dudley says that “in Sioux culture there are claimed relatives, what sociologists call fictive kin. They are relatives in a cultural and social sense, but not biologically or legally. It is a kinship that is beyond even the extended family ... It is a claimed relationship” (121). Adoption often proceeds from the *hunka*, or brother, ceremony⁵⁷ and those who are adopted “are also considered in certain contexts insiders, whether they are whites or Lakotas or members of other tribes” (Bucko 221). Kenneth Lincoln elaborates that “an adoption is a spiritual tie ... It involves extended kinship into the Sioux community and culture” (*Men* 738). Melda emphasizes the spiritual and cultural ties

⁵⁷ The most extensive account of the *hunka* ceremony is in Black Elk’s *The Sacred Pipe*, 101-15.

between her husband and Ruben Fire Thunder. She conveys her experience of Fire Thunder's spiritual power in that he extended Lupe's mother's life for exactly one year. She, thereby, attests to Fire Thunder's capacity to heal and establishes his authority as a traditional practitioner. She, in turn, validates her ties to Lakota tradition through her connection to this medicine man. She lists the other people who were at the ceremony, further supporting her claims. Melda authorizes her own role in the traditional community through her associations to specific individuals and practices. She does so, however, in an encompassing manner in that her "[s]tories serve to both establish and legitimate the poles of the dialectic that creates tradition" (Bucko 145). Bucko elaborates that stories "not only guide the dialectical process but also become part of the process itself" (145). Accordingly, Melda's stories demonstrate the ways in which Lakota tradition is experienced as a dynamic and regenerative process.

'I Tell You About That Eagle': Communicating Visions

Lupe □ This year I'll be here with you dancing.

So, anyway ... I started drinking. But, I worked every day. Every day. Sundays, too. I was working and one time I went to work early in the morning. Sunday morning. And I had a six pack of tall boys here. And I was drinking early. And I told Melda, "I'm going to work now." And she said, "Okay. When you come back, I'll have breakfast for you." So, I left. I go about four miles. Maybe three. Check my water. Get out of my pickup.

And, it was a really sunny day. Early in the morning. Sunday. And I seen a big shadow. And right beside me was a big eagle. Really big one. Like three feet high. Big one! Huge! Biggest one I've ever seen in my whole life. And, I know he wants to tell me something. And me, I want to kill it.~ I got up and he went like this and jump up and jump down. Jump up and jump down. But then he really scared me. He turned his head all the way around. Like an owl. And his eyes turned color. I was staring at her and she was staring at me. And then it opened its mouth and started saying something to me ...

But, I got in my pickup and took off. Went home. I didn't drink that beer or nothing like that. I let them spill. I got home and she said, "You done working?" And I said, "That eagle was bothering me." She said, "What eagle?" And, I said, "Get in. I'll show

you.” It was still there. Stayed there four days. Melda’s father know. Melda’s mother know. And Melda. Went to see it. Four days. Nobody see it. Only us. It was right there, where the road goes like this. By the lake. On Sunday, a lot of people go back and forth. But, they never seen that eagle, though.

And, it was that day when everything turn my life around. Like somebody came to me and tell me, “You need to pray.” To pray. And, [later], I told my boss that I was going to take two weeks off or a week. And he said, “Okay. I understand that.” So, I came home. And, I told Melda, “Pack up. We’re going to leave. We’re going to Sundance.” She was surprised: “*What?!?*”

We went up to Leonard Crow Dog [in 1980]. He was real young. We were young. And, I do things that I never done before. You know, pray by the tree. And I pray there. People came to me and asked me if I knew what I was doing. And I said, “Yeah. This year I’ll be here with you dancing.”

Interpretation

Having met Lupe in his later years, I cannot imagine him as reckless, but he says that his earlier years were characterized to a certain degree by a pattern of drinking and fighting. The internal pressures of colonialism, often involving dislocation from tradition, can be manifested in dependency on alcohol. Joyzelle Gingway Godfrey, Dakota educator, explains the connections between alcohol and colonial discourses:

So lots of ‘stuff’ we’re going to have to rethink ... and think about what we want to be; who do we want to be? Who *are* we, truly? That’s something we need, as Indian people; we need to look at our true history, the reality of who we really were, as human beings, so that we can *be* human beings, so that we’re not trying to live up to those thoughts, pictures, something that we never were. My God, no wonder we have so much alcohol and drug abuse, no wonder we have suicide. Our teenagers are killing themselves in droves – what do they have to live up to? On the one hand, they see their parents, the alcohol and drug abuse that’s horrible; on the other hand, they see themselves as supposed to be this noble Indian,

you know. So for them there is no middle ground. There is no safety net.

Yet there truly *is*. (Gardner 464)

Godfrey explains that Indians are unable to function as everyday individuals while trying to negotiate the dichotomized stereotypes associated with colonial discourses – the noble Indian or the drunken Indian. These images function in the erasure of a past and contribute to an overwhelming sense of internalized oppression.⁵⁸ Elsewhere in his narrative, Lupe describes the loss of identity associated with racism:

The little ones, you know, the innocent ones are the ones who get hurt. They go to school, someplace else. They don't know who they are, just what they've heard about them [i.e. racist remarks] ... There's a handful over there that they're crying for help. They're lost. These songs could bring them back. They've still got a chance. There's gotta be old persons to give the help to them. (119) ... Lakota people they've got a good heart but some of them are lost, you know. They're lost. Seems like they're caught in this web. Unless you give them a little help, put a hand out, you know, and bring them out. To the circle again. That's what they really need. (120)

Lupe suggests that traditional practices, such as songs, can heal the effects of racism and help to bring people into the 'circle' again. For a certain period of his life, Lupe was what he describes as 'lost,' but he was able to find the strength in Lakota tradition that allowed him to heal the effects of racism. It is this process of being 'lost,' or not having a

⁵⁸ For a discussion of the interconnections between colonialism and alcoholism see Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran, *Native American Postcolonial Psychology* (Albany, New York: State U of New York P, 1995).

sense of the strengths associated with an Indian identity, and the subsequent movement towards Lakota tradition that Lupe describes in his narrative about the eagle.

Internalized oppression occurs when “people have turned their rage inward” (Rice, *Before* 4). Resisting the effects of colonialism, often through a reconnection with tradition, can be the grounds for renewed strength and identity. Cook-Lynn describes the effects of racism as well as the importance of resisting oppression:

Like all people confronted with an oppressive government and racist colonialism, the Sioux are familiar with hatred. It begins with the hatred felt from others and the hatred felt for others, from outsiders, and, then, it sometimes turns into self-hatred, that is, internalized oppression, which eventually, and mercifully, can become the landscape of resistance. (87)

Lupe transforms his experience of oppression into a ‘landscape of resistance’ with his decision to stop drinking. He makes the commitment “to pray” and decides to dance at Crow Dog’s Sundance. He continues traditional practices throughout his life and never returned to drinking. In *Before the Great Spirit: The Many Faces of Sioux Spirituality* (1998), Julian Rice uses Lakota cosmology to describe oppression and resistance. The Thunders are spiritual beings associated with protection and destruction. According to Rice, they play a role in resistance and recovery as well as in despair and dislocation:

[L]ife seems completely out of control, as if the Thunders that were once their friends now threaten to break them apart. The narrators counsel a return to spiritual practices that would once again make the Thunders their primary protectors. The forces that have caused so many Lakota to destroy themselves in alcohol or intratribal violence can become the forces

that bring new life, when traditional priorities in prayer are remembered.

(Rice 98)

Lupe moves from the destruction associated with drinking and fighting to a regenerative awareness of the “need to pray.”

Lupe’s vision resonates with Lakota imagery and symbolism and he interprets the vision as meaning that he should connect with Lakota tradition. He specifically chooses this event, rather than other possible contributing factors, as prompting his decision to engage in Lakota ceremony:

And, you know, how I tell you about that eagle — it changed my whole life. And then when I start praying in the traditional way, a good way, that’s thirty-three years. I like to pray this way. (151)

Lupe’s life shifted and began to resonate with Lakota tradition as his path merged with the ‘good red road.’⁵⁹ He communicates what can best be described as a vision of an eagle, cites Melda and her family as witnesses, and recounts the vision and his experience to share his spiritual knowledge. Other accounts from Lakota individuals are often similar in tone. For example, Bucko recounts being told the following story:

Eagles came to the ceremony. They said they know my problem. They understood, and they’ll help me. I went to the lake and looked to the west. Some thunder beings were coming up and there was a red cloud above and gray and white — black and red came together. A voice said when the

⁵⁹ “The ‘Red Road’ ... signifies the good, traditional Lakota way. To the Lakota the medicine wheel ... is a symbol of cosmos. The direction (‘road’) south-north is the red road which stands for harmony and life, whereas the direction (‘road’) east-west symbolizes warfare and destruction” (Kurkiala 214).

black and red come together, you'll never drink again. They came together. I watched. I had an uplifting feeling. (172)

According to Rice, "the Lakota rely on animal spirits for courage and healing, especially the buffalo, the bear, the eagle, and the elk" (1). Lupe's vision of the eagle lasts for four days, which is a sacred number associated with Lakota tradition.

Lupe is critically aware of his position as an 'outsider' in the Lakota community but he, nonetheless, establishes himself in the community. He makes "appeals to kinship, adoption, Lakota mentors, personal visions and dreams and historical documents," to establish his connection to Lakota tradition, in much the same manner as Melda does in her narrative (Pickering 186). Lupe conveys his personal vision of an eagle, but he also communicates other visions and dreams in his life story. Toward the end of our recording sessions, Lupe is compelled to record some of his dreams. He says: "We'll turn it [recorder] off, but first I've got three dreams I want to talk about" (249). By relating his dreams and visions, Lupe is claiming his authority in a community that associates dreams and visions with spiritual knowledge. He also notes his connection to several Lakota medicine men and describes his relationship with them as well as what he has learned from them. In his story about the eagle, Lupe says, "[w]e went up to Leonard Crow Dog. He was real young. We were young." He invokes his association to Leonard Crow Dog and also highlights that the whole community was 'real young,' which implies that he was a *part* of the revitalization of the Indian community at that time. In another story, Lupe relates his experiences with Stanley Looking Horse who acted as keeper of

the sacred pipe of the Lakota people.⁶⁰ Stanley Looking Horse has since died, but he was highly regarded in both Native and non-Native communities. Lupe indicates how Looking Horse supported his prayers in the Lakota tradition:

He [Stanley Looking Horse] tell everyone, 'This man standing right here is from a different tribe but he carries strong prayers. This man really and truly believes.' (185) ... He told Melda and people up there that I carry strong prayers. I don't make nothing up. That make me proud, you know. To hear somebody talk about me like that. (67)

Lupe is proud that Stanley Looking Horse, a medicine man whom he and others respect, recognized the strength in his prayers despite the fact that he comes from "a different tribe." In many ways, this sentiment encapsulates Lupe's conceived identity. He regards himself as an Aztec Indian and therefore recognizes that he is from a 'different tribe.' On the other hand, he maintains a distinct connection to Lakota tradition. He validates his role in the Lakota community by making appeals to traditional authorities – itself a practice evident among the Lakota themselves.

Concluding Remarks

Before Lupe's first *hambleceya*,⁶¹ Ruben Fire Thunder adopted Lupe, in the Lakota tradition, as his brother (165). This began a significant relationship between Lupe

⁶⁰ The pipe was brought to the Lakota people by the White Buffalo Calf Woman. For the myth of the White Buffalo Calf Woman see, among others, William Powers, *Oglala Religion* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1977), 82-3. The original pipe is kept at Green Grass and a medicine man is designated as the keeper of the pipe. In many ways, Green Grass can be regarded as "the religious center of the Sioux world" (Steinmetz 16).

⁶¹ The *hambleceya* or vision quest involves seeking a vision and is a factor in ritual legitimation.

and Ruben and was the first of several adoptive relationships in which Lupe found strength. It was also the beginning of Lupe's instruction in Lakota tradition:

So, he [Ruben Fire Thunder] said, "Brother," and we sit down, we're waiting to go sweat . . . He said, "Brother, the thing we're doing here is really powerful. Things come to your mind. Things we have to do. Not for ourselves. For the people. We're going to do this for the people. Not for ourselves." . . . And he talked to me about a Sundance. He said, "I run this Sundance over here, brother." He said, "The spirits came and told me that we have to move." So he asked me about Sundance to have down at our place, east of Allen, he told me. He said, "We're going to move that way." (169)

Melda's mother and her eldest brother accompanied Ruben and others 'down east.'

Ruben Fire Thunder chose the Sundance location and, unbeknownst to Lupe, also passed the Sundance to Lupe:

Right there where the arbor is, he stood there, facing west. He started singing. Say a prayer when he sings. "Right here, brother. Next year there's going to be a Sundance here. A lot of people gonna come. We'll get together." The way he was telling me, we'll get together, I didn't get it into my head. He was telling me he was dying. He was dying. He never told me, "I'm dying." He never told me that. He never told me. "Brother, we're going to build this Sundance here." (171)

Ruben Fire Thunder died shortly afterwards. Lupe set up the Sundance on the spot where Ruben had stood, facing west. The Sundance began in 1988 and was held in memory of

Ruben Fire Thunder. It ran for three four-year cycles before being dedicated as a memorial Sundance in honor of Lupe Trejo. It is a powerful story. Melda and Lupe are passing this story on to their children and grandchildren. It is the story of their connection to Lakota tradition. Respectfully, I also place myself in this process of preserving and transmitting Melda and Lupe's story.

Chapter VII – Lakota Tradition and Being Related

Introductory Remarks

Melda and Lupe understand Indian identity using a religious outlook that is firmly rooted in Lakota cosmology, spiritual beliefs and traditional practices. Lakota religious beliefs and practices developed before the start of the nineteenth century, persist at present, and can be seen to operate in Melda and Lupe's understanding of Lakota identity. Lakota tradition is constantly negotiated, at the individual and community level, as something that is both old and new. Drawing on the past, tradition is constituted as something both current and venerable in the present. Consequently, Lakota tradition can be conceived in a number of ways. In speaking about tradition as something essential, as well as something that has been both eroded and solidified by colonial forces, individual sentiments about changes in tradition are both divisive and unifying. Efforts to police 'Lakota tradition' are pervaded by the prevalent assumption that there is a 'right' way to do things. On the other hand, tradition is experienced as both dynamic and regenerative. Melda and Lupe talk of praying in the traditional way and show us that tradition is something that is worked on and maintained. Making mistakes, settling conflicts and passing on stories are necessary components to maintaining tradition. Contemporary ethnic identity, from a Lakota perspective, involves a negotiation of ties to tradition inasmuch as Indian identity involves a dialectical relationship with a pre-colonial past. Their epistemological framework involves the Lakota spiritual belief that we are all related, embodied in the prayer '*Mitakuye oyasin*' ('All my relations').

Lakota Tradition

Lakota spiritual beliefs and practices provide a theoretical framework for understanding the world. Raymond DeMallie and Douglas Parks describe a belief in *wakan* (power, the sacred) as the “basis of the Lakotas’ culturally distinctive theory of existence” (8). *Wakan* has been described as “anything that was hard to understand” and is often associated with sacred power (Walker, *Belief* 70). Julian Rice defines *wakan* as “cosmic energy obtained through personal visions” (*Before* 21). *Wakan Tanka*, generally glossed as meaning ‘god,’ is the sum of all that is mysterious and sacred, or *wakan*. Beatrice Medicine (Lakota) says “*Wakan Tanka* translates from the Lakota language to mean ‘Great Holy’ or ‘Great Spirit’ or ‘God’” (Harjo 208). *Tunkashila*, meaning grandfather, is often referred to as a personification of *Wakan Tanka* (see Rice, *Before* 146). Holy men (*wacasa wakan*) and women (*winyan wakan*) engage, through their personal experiences, with sacred power, *wakan*. Access to *Wakan Tanka* is not restricted to traditional practitioners. Prayer and ceremony facilitate spiritual knowledge among all individuals in the Lakota community. DeMallie further describes these concepts:

At the heart and core of being Lakota, however, is an appreciation of the sacred, *wakan*. *Wakan Tanka*, the fullness of *wakan*, not only suffuses the universe but indeed comprises the universe. *Wakan*, power, manifested in outer forms, constitutes the world as perceived by human beings ...

Access to this power through dreams and vision quests, ceremony and prayer – a claiming of relationship with the power that constitutes all the world – provide[s] the mainspring of Lakota culture. (“Lakota” 14)

Lakota individuals gain access to the holy mysteries, associated with *Wakan Tanka*, through prayer and ceremony. In doing so, they claim their relationship to *wakan*, or the power that “constitutes all the world.”

Lakota cosmology supports the concept of communion in the universe. *Wakan*, or the sacred, connects all of creation and is part of the Lakota belief in the principle of relatedness. According to the Lakota creation story, people were created together and only later dispersed as different ‘tribes’:

Long ago the Indians all lived as one; after a great council they decided to split up, the tribes scattering in different directions, eventually developing distinct languages and experiencing unique events. (DeMallie, “Lakota” 10)

The four directions, central to Lakota ceremony, are often associated with the dispersal of these tribes. Many of the great mysteries, such as the sun, rocks, thunder and other phenomena are variously associated with *Wakan Tanka* and they are all related through their associations to *wakan*, sacred power. The following account is attributed to Chief Red Cloud: “...[T]he sun (*Wi*) was a Great Mystery (*Wakan Tanka*), ... and that he was our [grand]father (*Tunkashila*), and my people addressed him as Father (*ate*)... *Inyan* [the Rock] was *Wakan Tanka*; that *Wakinyan* [the Thunder] was *Wakan Tanka*” (Walker, *Belief* 140). Delphine Red Shirt (Lakota) further details how the power associated with *wakan* connects all individuals with the rest of the universe:

All things have a spirit because everything is a part of that which is ‘*Taku Ska Ska*’ [also referred to as *skan*] – meaning ‘that which moves, that which lives and is connected.’ ‘*Taku Ska Ska*’ is the mystery within all

living things, which is sacred energy and is 'wak'a' [*wakan*] or 'divine.'

It connects us, the ant and me. (6)

The prayer, *Mitakuye 'oyasin* or 'all my relations,' is a way of acknowledging and invoking the sacredness associated with what are, from a traditional Lakota perspective, the divine relations among all things. Identity, from a traditional Lakota perspective, involves knowing one's relationship to the divine, *wakan*, which is in all relations.

The traditional Lakota conception of identity is grounded in an epistemological tradition that both differentiates and encompasses mainstream theories of selfhood. According to traditional Lakota beliefs, all relations are sacred. The act of prayer maintains these relationships. Knowing who you are, or claiming an individual identity, necessarily also involves claiming sacred knowledge. Accordingly, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn (Dakota) says that the "question '*taku iniciapi he?*' or 'what is your name' is a sacred question which most often means 'who are you in relation to all the rest of us?'" (Gonzalez and Cook-Lynn 189). Ethnographer Mikael Kurkiala further describes the connections among Lakota cosmology, traditional practices and an understanding of the interrelatedness of both the immediate and broader community:

[B]eing Lakota is being related. In its extension, the kinship system permeates Lakota cosmology as a whole. It is the model for interaction and proper attitudes, behaviors and terms of address towards, not only fellow Lakota, but to Creation as a whole. (85)

Traditional practices, namely prayer and ceremony, function in the support of an ideology that encompasses the Lakota people as well as other ethnic groups. Severt Young Bear (Lakota) elaborates on Lakota identity:

Our Lakota people understand some things. Identity is based on the idea of *slolic'iya*, knowing who you are. In connection with that is the notion that there are limits, of only going so far, of having a limit. Around us there's an aura, a barrier that goes around us, a limit of our being. To get beyond that to the universe and the Great Spirit, we use our voice, we throw our voice loud and clear, we get on top of a hill and throw our voice in prayer. In this way we hope to find ourselves. It used to work, but now it takes a special effort to succeed. (106)

Young Bear connects the idea of negotiating a Lakota identity with prayer and ceremony. He refers to going to the top of a hill, which is a way of describing the vision quest (*hambleceya*). He describes 'throwing a voice.' From a Lakota perspective, 'sending a voice' means praying: '*Ho ye waye'lo nama'hon ye wani' ktelo*' / A voice I am sending, hear me, I will live.'⁶² For example, the following account is recorded in William Powers's *Yuwipi*: "I send a voice above. With the pipe, I send a voice above. 'I do this because I want to live with my relations.' Saying this over and over, I pray to *Tunkasila*" (43). Similarly, in *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux*: "Grandfather, I am sending a voice! To the Heavens of the universe, I am sending a voice; That my people may live!" (53). In reference to throwing a voice, Young Bear says "[i]n this way we hope to find ourselves." Praying ensures that the people 'will live' – that *all* that exists will continue to be related.

⁶² This refers to a song from the sweatlodge ceremony (*inipi*). The translation is taken from Frances Densmore's *Teton Sioux Music* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1992[1918]) 124.

Competing Religious Beliefs

Religious diversity on Pine Ridge Reservation complicates traditional Lakota beliefs both historically and in the contemporary context. At present, the reservation is dominated by religious pluralism, whether Christian or Bah'ai or some combination of Lakota beliefs (Bucko 15). The interrelationships among religious traditions are diverse and pervasive. For example, as we have already seen, the Native American Church involves a blending of Indian and Christian practices and beliefs. DeMallie and Parks note that "[f]or most of the past century they [religious practitioners] have kept these two religious modes [Christian and traditional] separate" (14). He goes on to say that "[a]mong some Sioux groups traditional and Christian practices have become amalgamated; among others they are kept strictly separate" (7). Consequently, social life in the reservation community has been characterized by the concomitant attempt to accommodate the competing religious ideals of both Christian and traditional beliefs and practices.

Efforts have been made in both academic and reservation communities to distinguish among traditional and Christian beliefs. Native spirituality is often seen to be incompatible with Christianity. Consequently, accounts that have been provided by individuals who have been regarded as representative of traditional culture have been complicated by the knowledge that these individuals are also Christians. For example, Nicholas Black Elk has been identified as conveying a distinctive traditional vision to John Neidhardt in *Black Elk Speaks*. However, concerns have been raised that Black Elk

was also a Christian.⁶³ The same is also true of academic queries as to the viability of George Sword's account of Lakota myth. George Sword (1846-1910), who was also a Christian, was a primary informant for Dr. James R. Walker's ethnographic corpus.⁶⁴ In "Transitional Narratives and Cultural Continuity" (1992), Elaine A. Jahner says that "Sword's exceptional (and bicultural) imagination created tales that comment on ways in which traditional values and beliefs could continue to function in a reservation and a Christian environment" (171). She draws on comments made by Edgar Fire Thunder, a friend of George Sword and presumably related to Ruben Fire Thunder, in determining that "Sword's legends show that the Christian and Lakota worldview do not have to cancel each other out" (177). The authenticity debates, in the early 1990s, have had a particular role in determining the quality of traditional beliefs and practices since colonization. While the tendency to determine what counts as 'correct' or 'traditional' can be regarded as reductive, these efforts have also contributed to the ongoing cross-cultural dialogue about the consideration of worldviews and accompanying ideologies from different perspectives.

From a traditional perspective, Christian admonitions against following more than one faith have often been superseded by Lakota ideals about praying together. In *Completing the Circle* (1995), Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve notes that, in the past, the gatherings of the Episcopalians or Presbyterians often "served the same social function as the old Sun Dance, when friends and relatives from all directions came together in the

⁶³ See, for example, Julian Rice's *Black Elk's Story: Distinguishing Its Lakota Purpose* (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1991).

⁶⁴ James R. Walker, *Lakota Belief and Ritual* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980); James R. Walker, *Lakota Society* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982); James R. Walker, *Lakota Myth* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

summer” (99). Presently, religious beliefs can often be regarded as interrelated. For example, Bucko records a Lakota man’s description of what he sees as a natural conflation of spiritual beliefs:

These guys who come looking for a pure Indian way of life. They’ll see this here picture of Christ and they can’t understand it. My grandfather had an altar with his pipe and the statue of Mary. There’s one God . . . *Tunkashila* and God are the same. They’re just different words, different symbols. So I need both. (Bucko 175)

A similar ideology is expressed by Madonna Swan’s grandmother in *Madonna Swan: A Lakota Woman’s Story* (1991): “All prayers are good!” (43). I have often been unsettled in much the same way as those guys “looking for a pure Indian way of life” when I have entered houses on Pine Ridge Reservation and found both Christian iconography and Lakota symbols of tradition. In this respect, Melda and Lupe’s house is no exception. They engage with both Christian teachings and traditional spirituality. For example, Melda describes her associations to the Christian church, most specifically the Church of God in Scottsbluff, Nebraska:

Melda:

I took my kids to Mr. and Mrs. Bailey’s Church. Every Sunday. Wednesdays and Sundays. I think Rae-Anne asked me one time, “Grandma, what did you do when you was young?” I said, “You know, I grew up in Mr. and Mrs. Bailey’s Church.” Because that’s where we had fun . . .

Larissa:

What faith was that?

Melda:

It's a missionary church. She [Mrs. Bailey] came in 1955, she came to Scottsbluff. And when she came to Scottsbluff, they didn't have no church so we just set that up. The Indian missionaries borrow a church. ... My dad was minister in Native American Church, but when we moved to Scottsbluff most of the time we go there. (143)

Melda does not comment on the apparent incompatibility of her adherence to both Christian and traditional beliefs. Instead, she regards traditional and Christian spirituality as affiliated.

Competing Definitions of Tradition

Since the 1970s, Lakota ceremonies have proliferated and traditions have been translated to the contemporary context. Concerns over determining the 'correct' way of engaging in traditional practices has accompanied this retraditionalization. As we have already seen, attending to the 'red herring' discourses of truth and authenticity has real consequences in Native communities with regard to the incompatibility of Christian and traditional religions. The same is also true in identifying and defining traditional Lakota beliefs and practices in present circumstances. In *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (1996), Joane Nagel says, "[i]ndividual Indian ethnic renewal appears to be tightly connected to an interest and a participation in tribal traditions and ceremonial practices, in particular to notions of and activities associated with spirituality" (190). She connects retraditionalization with Indian ethnic renewal and highlights the importance of spirituality and tradition to contemporary Indian identity. She also acknowledges the contested nature of traditional

practices in the contemporary context. She says, “[d]espite the well-known fact that identities and cultures change, ... [t]o document the reconstruction, much less the new construction of an individual’s ethnic identity or a community’s cultural practices or institutions, is often an unwelcome, sometimes vilified enterprise” (63). While contemporary Lakota identity is often associated with traditional practices, these practices are often contested because an unchanging past is incommensurate with a present that necessitates change.

Sundances have increased steadily over the past three decades on Pine Ridge Reservation and elsewhere. Current Sundances both maintain continuity with the past and incorporate contemporary changes. Traditional practitioners must balance traditional and contemporary needs. Interpretations as to how that balance is best achieved vary among individuals and communities. The number of Sundances has increased, in part, because of competing ideas about tradition as well as with the cultural renewal in effect on the reservation. Kurkiala identifies the growing number of Sundances on Pine Ridge Reservation:

From the mid 1970s, the number of Sun Dances has grown significantly ... In the summer of 1993, approximately thirty Sun Dances were held on different locations on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations. In the summer of 1997, the number had increased to 43 on Pine Ridge alone.

(227)

In 1979, there were several hundred people attending the tribal Sun Dance at Porcupine (Steinmetz 79). However, as the number of Sundances increases exponentially, the number of people attending each Sundance as well as the number of medicine men that

can run each Sundance dramatically decreases. Last year (2000), including the memorial Sundance honoring Lupe Trejo, there were at least three simultaneous Sundances in the immediate area of Allen, alone. Consequently, the competition over 'viable' ceremonies accelerates. The dialectic surrounding authentic ceremonies is a corollary to the proliferation of traditional practices and the discourse surrounding the definition of correct practices.

Claiming traditional authority for a Sundance proceeds in a number of different ways. Associating the Sundance with a respected medicine man is the most direct means for appealing to Lakota tradition. Primary debates focus on associating Sundances with either money or non-Native individuals. According to some, Sundances are 'more' traditional if non-Lakota are excluded from the ceremony. By excluding non-Native participants, traditional practices are delineated through their opposition to a colonial presence. James Fenelon says that "spirituality [can be regarded as] emblematic of cultural sovereignty" (294). By this logic, the Sundance has become grounds for an ongoing cultural struggle. The 1990s have been dominated by the protection of Lakota spiritual practices. Specifically, tribal and individual efforts have been made to prohibit charging money for Lakota ceremonies as well as preventing non-Native people from taking part in them. In 1993, Lakota spiritual and political leaders passed the 'Declaration of War Against Exploiters of Lakota Spirituality' which was brought to the attention of the United Nations (Fenelon 295). Melda and Lupe have been indirectly implicated in these debates because they hold a Sundance.

Melda and Lupe construct their Sundance as traditional by associating their ceremony with traditional discourses. Melda and Lupe's memorial Sundance for Ruben

Fire Thunder began the first four-year cycle in 1988. Although Melda is notoriously bad with dates, Lupe confidently recalls the date of their first Sundance through his associations of the Sundance with each of its four-year cycles.⁶⁵ He denotes the year by associating the Sundance with his pledging of a four-year ritual commitment. The following is an exchange between Melda and Lupe about the history of their Sundance:

Melda:

So we moved back in 1990 and '91 to South Dakota and that's when we took care of my mom and she died in '91 and so we start Sundance probably in '92 or '93. [Melda's mother was still alive when the Sundance was started.]

Lupe:

It'll be twelve years this year. [1988]

Melda:

Twelfth year this year! This year is twelve.

Lupe:

Next year we start a new cycle. (70)

Melda and Lupe emphasize that their Sundance has been running for a significant period so as to establish it as a credible and committed ceremony. When I have asked them about their roles as initiators in what has become an increasingly common practice, they recall the events from a situated perspective:

Larissa:

How many other Sundances were there then? Just Crow Dog?

Melda:

⁶⁵ For a discussion of memory and forgetting in oral history accounts, see Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany, N.Y.: State U of New York P, 1991); Luisa Passerini, *Fascism in Popular Memory: The Cultural Experience of the Turin Working Class* (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1987).

We used to go to Crow Dog's. And there was Reno's [Richards]
and Vernal Cross. That's it, that I remember.

Lupe:
That's about it.

Melda:
That's about it. John Around Him start after ours or before?

Lupe:
After. After ours. (175)

In an effort to claim authority, Lupe stresses that their Sundance has preceded others. While other accounts of the number of Sundances at that time differ, the details matter less than the meaning Lupe attaches to their Sundance and its long history.⁶⁶ By stressing the history of their Sundance, Melda and Lupe associate their Sundance with a more distant past that resonates with the originative sentiments of the cultural revival era.

Melda and Lupe explicitly position themselves against the selling of cultural knowledge and do not charge money for their Sundance. In this way, they contest the associations to spiritual exploitation that have accompanied the colonial era. The Sundance controversy proliferated in 1997 with several articles in *Indian Country Today*, the national Indian newspaper, which listed medicine men accused of selling the Sundance to non-Native participants.⁶⁷ Melda and Lupe were falsely implicated in the activities when an article stated that a Sundance east of Allen, where the Red Bear land is

⁶⁶ Paul B. Steinmetz, S. J. records a different account of the number of Sundances in the late 1980s: "Marie Red Cloud told me that during the summer of 1987 there were at least fourteen Sun Dances on the Pine Ridge Reservation: Richard Moves Camp and Celo Black Crow in Wanblee, John Around Him in Kyle, Frank Fools Crow with DuBray helping in Three Mile Cree, Reuben Fire Thunder and Reno Richards in Allen, Ricky Two Dogs and Sarah Thunder Hawk in Porcupine, Pat Janis in Wolf Creek, Pete Catches near Holy Rosary Mission, Billy Good Voice Elk and Richard Broken Nose in Oglala, and one in the Yellow Camp and one north of Calico" (33).

⁶⁷ See K. Marie Porterfield, "The Selling of the Sun Dance," *Indian Country Today*, 28 Jul - 4 Aug. 1997: A1, A6.

located, was charging \$5000 a person for the Sundance. A correction was later printed in *Indian Country Today*, noting that the commentary was meant to refer to a Sundance in California:

Lupe:

And I, myself, a lot of people know me. I never ask for notning. I run the sweatlodge. One time . . . [a] Lakota man from the reservation, he was charging \$50 a person. To go in a sweatlodge. So, I sit there. And this man and woman came and ask me, "How much do you want to charge to sweat?" I said, "Nothing. Everything is free here." . . . [W]e're not supposed to charge money to sweat or Sundance or nothing like that . . .

Larissa:

How much were they saying in that stupid newspaper article?

Lupe:

\$5000. A person.~

Melda:

\$5000 a person.

Larissa:

That was so silly.

Lupe:

I've still got it.

Larissa:

They printed a correction didn't they? ...

Lupe:

Oh, yeah, he did ... I've still got all the names of the eastern medicine men, too. They've got me in there, too. I'm not a medicine man!~

Melda:

That was two womans from Kyle doing that. These two womans,
if they're going to put out something like that, they should just go
Sundance to Sundance.

Lupe:

Learn.

Melda:

Be there, see what they're doing. Then they know who's running a
good Sundance and who's charging. Our Sundance we don't charge.

(238)

Lupe stresses that "we're not supposed to charge" and contrasts his ethics with those of a Lakota man charging for a ceremony. In this way, he aligns himself with traditional practices and contests discourses that might associate race with tradition.

'White people, black people: No, you can't come in.': Policing Tradition

From a traditional Lakota perspective, everything in the universe is related and united through the act of prayer. Exclusivity has, however, become a prevalent issue in the policing of Lakota tradition. Specifically, debates on Pine Ridge Reservation center on whether or not non-Native people should be allowed to take part in the Sundance. I was staying on the Red Bear land and attended several Sundances during a period of intense debate and I am, therefore, also implicated in the discourse about outsiders. Individuals are split on the issue: some Sundances won't allow any non-Native people to enter the area while other Sundances welcome dancers of any affiliation. Melda and Lupe allow dancers of any race at their Sundance. They have done so since the beginning of their Sundance, but their actions have taken on new meanings given the debate surrounding cultural legitimacy that has emerged on the reservation. Their view

reflects traditional Lakota teachings on forming alliances and honoring relations. Melda conveys the words of both her father and Ruben Fire Thunder in urging that individuals be accepting of other races:

All humans are created equal and we're not supposed to say, "White people, black people: No, you can't come in." Because they're humans and we help each other out. So that's the way he [Ruben Fire Thunder] told Lupe. (114). . . . And me I, like, my dad always, you know, teach us to pray with everybody. He said, "That's the only way you're going to see *wiyosaya* [heaven]. It's the only way you're going to go to heaven." He said, "Because God didn't make just Indians. God make all kinds. So, if God only wants people to go to heaven — just Indian people — he would have created only Indian people." And that's why I believe in, you know, what he tells me. You see all kinds of nationalities. And a lot of different kinds. Different kinds of Indians. (22)

Melda invokes traditional authorities in accounting for her view about interrelations among the races. She refers to different races, such as "white people, black people", as "different kinds of Indians" and, in so doing, she alludes to the Lakota conception of the races created as one. She also says that praying "with everybody" is "the only way you're going to heaven," which refers to the claiming of sacred knowledge through prayer. From a traditional spiritual perspective, the sacred, *wakan*, infuses all relations. Lupe also urges that everyone should pray together because of the human relationship with *Tunkashila*⁶⁸ and *Wakan Tanka*.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ '*Tunakshila*' refers to the Lakota conception of the godhead and literally means 'grandfather.'

And I would say it's good to get together with one another regardless of color or race, to get together, and pray. *Tunkashila* and *Wakan Tanka* meant for us to be all together as one. He put it this way. He made the world himself and the world was one but then the men were different colors. There's myself. Look at the color I am. Look at yourself. Look at others. (238)

Lupe also invokes his understanding of the Lakota creation story whereby different peoples were created together as one before they split apart. In his formulation, Lupe sees everyone as being related. He uses traditional Lakota beliefs, invoking *Tunkashila* and *Wakan Tanka*, to explain that we are all related "together as one." Bucko, similarly, records an account of a Lakota man describing the races as associated with the colors of the cardinal directions:

The four colors represent the four races. So you can't discriminate. Some say just Indians, no *ska wichasa* ['white people']. Then they say *mitakuye iyuha* 'all my relative.' To me they [the colors associated with the cardinal directions] represent the four races. (198)

There is an inconsistency between the traditional Lakota belief that 'we are related' and efforts to disengage from non-Native culture. Both Melda and Lupe frame their discussion of inclusion/exclusion with reference to Lakota spiritual beliefs and find that Lakota cosmology supports their decision to have non-Lakota at their Sundance. In doing so, they powerfully comment on individual identity, cultural tradition and traditional conceptions of ethnicity.

⁶⁹ '*Wakan Tanka*' refers to the Lakota conception of the godhead as well. It is translated as meaning

Given the debates about identity and tradition that have emerged in the contemporary context, Lupe's Mexican heritage has been the subject of controversy for some on the reservation. However, individuals who exclude Lupe from their definition of what constitutes a 'traditional practitioner' are defining and policing tradition in ways that are associated with colonial discourses. Lupe acknowledges that he has been criticized, but he uses Lakota spiritual beliefs to explain his position:

And I know for a fact that I've been put down many time, but I don't care.

To me, it doesn't matter . . . To me it's all right. For forgiveness: ask him up there. The only man that can give it is up there. We're only human.

We're human beings and we're pitiful. (186)

Lupe is indicating that there will always be people who judge others based on their beliefs about race, but he disengages himself from the debate by urging a more transcendent understanding of human nature. Elsewhere in his narrative, Lupe stresses that you pray with 'your heart and your mind,' subverting colonial discourses about the distinction between faith and reason, right and wrong. Lupe describes humans as 'pitiful.' People can't provide answers about tradition and there can't be a resolution to what constitutes tradition because the world is *wakan*, mysterious and sacred. Consequently, from a traditional perspective, everyone has a different understanding of *Tunkashila* and *Wakan Tanka* as well as of tradition.

Tradition as Negotiated

I have mentioned the policing of the Sundance, dictates about the 'right' way to engage in traditional practices, and racial qualifications in practicing Lakota tradition as

part of a discourse intent on defining and limiting tradition. It is important to realize, however, that, from a traditional Lakota perspective, these debates can also be regarded as constitutive of tradition itself. Lakota tradition is dynamic and changing because it operates within a system of interrelations. People make up tradition in both senses of the word; they comprise tradition and they construct tradition. Deloria emphasizes Lakota spirituality as a religion that belongs to the people which is characterized by spontaneous community activity (*Custer* 125). Consequently, the process of identifying and enacting tradition effects renewal. Bucko claims that "the ongoing dialectic [is] essential to the constitution of tradition" (84). Rice echoes this sentiment with his assertion that conflict cannot be avoided and that "without it the people could not generate the energy to live" (114). Conflict operates through the Lakota trickster (*Iktomi*) in creation and other stories. It also operates in the understanding of *Wakan Tanka* as something that is unknowable. These relationships are, however, generative rather than destructive.⁷⁰ Accordingly, individuals determine what constitutes tradition through interaction and debate. Kurkiala describes the many levels on which the principle of relatedness operates:

To the Lakota, 'culture' was traditionally generated through communicative events . . . In Lakota mythology, the principle of life is *skan* [*Taku Ska Ska*], 'that which moves'. Movements and flows, reciprocity and interdependence, are the processes which sustain life in all its forms. Interaction means crossing boundaries, physically and

⁷⁰ For a discussion of the concept of conflict in Lakota cosmology, with reference to the trickster and the Thunder Spirits see Julian Rice, *Before the Great Spirit: The Many Faces of Sioux Spirituality* (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1998), 47.

spiritually . . . Thus, in a very real sense, human beings are co-creators of the world they live in. (158)

By interacting with others about what constitutes tradition, as well as with *Tunkashila* and *Wakan Tanka*, individuals are enacting tradition and 'co-creating the world.' As Lupe says, "[p]ray to yourself and talk. *Tunkashila* and *Wakan Tanka* know what you're there for" (106). The *relationship* to *Tunkashila* and *Wakan Tanka* is what determines meaning in Lakota tradition. Lupe says, "I truly believe what's in there [sweatlodge ceremony], is what you put in there" (237). The individual and community relationship to *wakan*, the sacred, constitutes ceremonial potency. From a traditional perspective, relationships in the world are *wakan* and, therefore, mysterious and powerful. Many different interpretations of the sacred are a given part of the tradition. Deloria says, "Indians do not quarrel over the manner in which the story is transmitted, its basic outlines, or its intended meaning" (*For* 184). Consequently, 'real' Indian identity, as associated with an 'actual' tradition, is at odds with traditional Lakota beliefs about a tradition that is constantly shifting. From a traditional Lakota perspective, defining and limiting identity and tradition as only associated with the past, or as only considered from a colonial perspective, fails to take into account other ways of conceiving of that identity. Vine Deloria, Jr. summarizes some of these ideas; specifically, he contests the idea that Lakota tradition, and I would suggest Indian identity, has ever only been associated with the past:

We must be confident that in showing respect for our traditions we are acting responsibly. In a real sense we cannot 'revive' a religion for that is going backwards. What we can do is respect religious traditions and allow

them to take us forward into the future. That is all the old ways ever promised they would do. (*For* 268)

Concluding Remarks

One of Melda's favorite stories is about one of her grandsons, Patrick. When he was very young, Patrick wanted to dance in the Sundance ceremony and he knew that he had to have a Sundance skirt in order to dance. Patrick asks his mother, Barbara, about his Sundance skirt. Melda relates the discussion that she has with her mother and daughter, Barbara:

Anyway, we got over there in the morning. We always sit in that cookshack. So, we were all sitting in there. And here Patrick came. He came over and he said, "Have you got my skirt ready?" So, Barbara said, "No, Patrick." He said, "Why don't you have my skirt ready? I told you I want to dance." And my mom was sitting there and Pansy and all those old people. So, I said, "No, Patrick, you wait." And, my mom told me, she said, "No, he's a boy. He's a Lakota boy. Make up his own mind. He want to dance, then let him dance." So, he was really happy when my mom say that . . . And here, I don't know, my mom got this little Sundance skirt. Just small. A blue one. Yeah, and it had ribbons. She got that from her bag and she said, "I've got a skirt for him." . . . So, we got him ready . . . And I talked to [the medicine man,] Earl [Swift Hawk]. I said, "My grandson wants to come in." I said, "Is it all right?" I told him that he wanted to dance. He told me the same thing. He said, "Good.

He's a boy. If he wants to do something then let him." So, I said, "Okay."

(15)

Melda recounts the discussions that took place among the generations of women, as well as with the medicine man, in order to determine how to maintain tradition. She is perpetuating a tradition by passing on stories. For purposes of this discussion, I am focusing on the dialogue that takes place rather than the gender issues that are also apparent in the story. I have heard this story many times and have interpreted it differently on many occasions. Melda repeatedly uses 'she said' and other "quotative verbs" to convey the dialogic engagement that is critical to her story (Ahenakew 363). The story can be interpreted in any number of ways. The group of women assesses whether Melda's grandson is too young to Sundance. This is a discourse that has emerged in the contemporary context. Melda's mother and the medicine man both corroborate the determination that "he's a boy" and is free to make his own choices. From a traditional Lakota perspective, each individual is part of all that is related. Decisions are therefore sovereign and sacred. I regard the story as promoting a dialogue about traditional practices. Melda emphasizes her own learning in the negotiation of tradition in the contemporary context; she highlights that she listened to those she respects to learn about proper practices. She indicates that she has been "told" about tradition; she then perpetuates this telling. Melda and Lupe have recorded their life stories and, in their telling, they have sustained and perpetuated Lakota tradition. I have facilitated their effort to pass on traditional beliefs and practices. In that sense, we have been talking, together, about maintaining all that is related.

Chapter VIII - Conclusion

Indian identity is lineal and cultural; political and spiritual. However, these structures are interpreted differently according to colonial and traditional standpoints. Traditional conceptions of being Indian extend beyond colonial categories. In fact, Severt Young Bear (Lakota) advocates dismantling limits and barriers. He says, “around us there’s an aura, a barrier that goes around us, a limit of our being. To get beyond that to the universe and the Great Spirit, we use our voice [pray]” (106). From a traditional Lakota perspective, ‘we are all related.’ Such a formulation subverts the very notion of differentiating among racial groups. Accordingly, traditional adoption and out-marriage practices promote the incorporation of allies. On the other hand, the colonial designation of ‘Indians’ as a subjugated category has prompted indigenous responses that are strategic and resist domination. For example, blood quantum is a prevalent ideational discourse associated with colonization. Consequently, contemporary Native identity involves racial determinants. Similarly, Native tradition is associated primarily with a pre-colonial past. Negotiating tradition in the contemporary context often renders accusations about authenticity; correct practices are associated with delimiting an identifiable tradition. Traditionally, however, prayer, ceremony and storytelling actively regenerate Lakota tradition. In the contemporary context, traditional beliefs encompass colonial formulations and debates about identity can be regarded as traditional processes. Mainstream efforts to define and delimit identity and tradition are subverted by strategic indigenous discourses as well as from a traditional Lakota perspective.

Quilting has been used as a postmodern metaphor for fragmentation and construction. From a Lakota perspective, quilting is instead regarded as a contemporary

expression of Lakota tradition. I use this metaphor to show how different cultural perspectives, or standpoint epistemologies, promote interpretive frameworks that challenge dominant theories. From a colonial perspective, fragmentation and construction are associated with an ideology of exclusivity. Dichotomies are associated with the differentiation between dominant categories and subordinate 'others.' Fracture is implicit in the delineation of colonial identities. Consequently, postmodern analyses determine that identities are constructed; identities are pieced together. Scraps of fabric are analogous to the fragmentation associated with the critique of ultimate truths and normalizing categories. The construction of knowledge, the invention of tradition, can be likened to the quilting of these multiple partial truths in the formulation of contemporary identities. For example, John Phillips uses a quilting metaphor in referencing Jacques Lacan:

Time-lag is a limit, a concept, a 'signifying 'cut' or temporal break' (245). Thus it serves as a singularity, a contingency closure, an excess, a disturbing alterity, an anchor, a *point de capiton* (the Lacanian term for the nodal point which 'quilts' floating signifiers into a unified field: see Zizek 1989:87). ... It is both an infinite identity that remains extrinsic, and a finite concept that refers to itself ... a subject of enunciation who must speak the truth from outside the sentence itself. (78)

Truth and enunciation are problematized in the contemporary moment. However, fragmentation and construction function to disengage political agency. For subordinated groups, the postmodern metaphor of the quilt is ultimately disempowering.

Quilting is, however, regarded as a traditional practice in Lakota communities. Quilting is both empowering and affirming of the continuation of an extant tradition. Lakota star quilts are currently critical identity markers in the reservation community and they are central to give-away ceremonies. The star on a star quilt has eight points and is pieced together from many diamond-shaped multi-colored patches. In her essay, "The Role of Sioux Women in the Production of Ceremonial Objects: The Case of the Star Quilt," Patricia Albers states that star quilts are the most prestigious item given away at honoring ceremonies:

Star quilts are not only presented to people being honored, but they are also given to others on behalf of the honored. Today, star quilts are one of the most prestigious items in the Sioux give-away system. They are given at memorial feasts, naming ceremonies, homecoming celebrations for veterans, and in the "donations" of powwow officials. When given away for honorific purposes, star quilts bestow respect on both the giver and receiver. (131)

From a traditional Lakota perspective, the give-away embodies the ideology of being spiritually wealthy and, correspondingly, materially poor. She says, "the star quilt has come to represent the preservation of family and community honor ... [quilts have] achieved the status of an ethnic banner, upholding all of those meanings and symbols that signify Sioux traditionalism" (133).

Quilting is a relatively recent practice in reservation communities. Albers states that "[t]he art of quilting has been practiced by Sioux women for nearly a century. It was introduced to them through government and church agencies" (126). The star pattern

is connected to the 'Star of Bethlehem' or the 'Lone Star' pattern which is found in non-Native quilting traditions. Further reworkings of the star pattern have begun to emerge by juxtaposing a star pattern with Lakota symbols, such as the buffalo, medicine wheel or eagle. Albers suggests that quilting was adapted from non-Native quilting patterns but that Lakota women also configured the pattern from ceremonial hide robes which had a traditional morning star design (124):

The morning star, which appears in the East in early April, has always been an important symbol in their myth and ceremony. It represents the direction from which spirits of the dead travel to earth, and by extension, it signifies a continuing link between the living and the dead. More generally, the morning star symbolizes immortality. (129)

Lakota practitioners have adapted traditions to contemporary circumstances; they have "transposed the symbolism of the morning star from an old medium to a new one" (129).

The practice of quilting is passed on down generations of Lakota women. Kurkiala says that "[t]he value of the star quilt lies primarily in the bonds of kinship and friendship that giving it away and receiving it establishes" (159). In *Completing the Circle* (1995), Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve (Lakota) tells the story of learning how to quilt and uncovering the stories of her grandmothers in her attempts to learn about her tradition. She indicates the place of quilting in connection with her family and with tradition:

There is a star quilt on the bed in my home. The once bright tones of red, lavender, blue, and brown are now soft pastel hues blended into an eight-pointed star. It was a wedding gift from my grandmother, Flora Driving

Hawk, and each time I make the bed I remember how she stitched the diamond pieces together. I think of how she and her women friends sat around the quilt frame, gossiping, laughing, sighing as they stitched they joys and sorrows of their lives into the quilt. Later, after she died, I learned to quilt, honoring her request to finish the star quilt tops she had made for each of my three children. (xi)

Melda, similarly, tells stories about being taught to quilt by her mother. Her mother taught her the difficult pattern of the 'Drunkard's Path' and she began to make a quilt under her instruction. Melda left the quilt unmade for many years, even after her mother's death. Part of the problem was that she ran out of fabric and was unable to find a corresponding color in local fabric stores. I took a swatch home to Vancouver, found a close match and sent some fabric back to South Dakota. Neither of us would have ever guessed under what circumstances the quilt would ultimately be finished. Lupe passed away in 1999 and Melda finished her quilt and placed it on Lupe's casket. Melda honored her husband and her relations in offering a quilt in a traditional manner.

My involvement in Melda and Lupe's lives, in recording their life stories, has been critical to both academic and reservation communities. The Lakota perspective functions as an epistemological tradition that challenges and enhances dominant academic thought. This recognition of local knowledges, or standpoint epistemologies, is relevant to both communities inasmuch as power and knowledge are transformed by speaking with one another about reconstituting power. As Tuhiwai Smith explains, what matters is "attempting to transform what counts as important in the world of the powerful" (39). Melda and Lupe have contributed to my own reevaluation of ideas about

identity and tradition. Their stories have prompted new ways of understanding power and authority. They have also facilitated my awareness that communication among Native and non-Native communities is an ongoing effort. I anticipate continued respect and reciprocity in our engagement with one another. In telling their stories, Melda and Lupe honor family and tradition. They also accord me honor in sustaining our relationship and sharing their stories. Their stories about Lakota tradition function to sustain tradition. They ensure that tradition is passed on in the most dynamic and essential of ways – their stories pattern a star quilt honoring their relations.

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Appendix A - Photographs and Maps



July, 1958

Figure 1. Commemorating Melda and Lupe's 40th "Wedding" Anniversary



Figure 2. Melda and Lupe's 40th Anniversary, Allen, South Dakota, 1998



Figure 3. Solomon Red Bear, Melda's father (front row, child on left), Phillip Red Bear, Melda's great-grandfather (front row, seated, right), Charles Red Bear, Melda's grandfather (top row, far right), ca. 1916?



Figure 4. Lupe Trejo (right), early 1950s.



Figure 5. Melda Red Bear (left), Berta Crow Dog (sister of Leonard Crow Dog), Lucille Red Bear (Melda's sister), Martin, South Dakota, before 1957.



Figure 6. Melda Red Bear, early 1950s.



Figure 7. Melda Red Bear, ca. 1960.



Figure 8. Solomon Red Bear, Melda's father (standing), White Star, Melda's cousin (sitting, middle), 'Down East,' Allen, South Dakota.



Figure 9. Native American Church Members, ca. 1920s or 1930s.



Figure 10. Howard Red Bear 'Down East' before 1968.



Figure 11. Jessie Red Bear, Melda's mother (top right), Solomon Red Bear, Melda's father (far right), Uncle Poor Thunder and wife (2nd from left, middle), May 16, 1931.



Figure 12. Example of a Star Quilt for a Give-Away

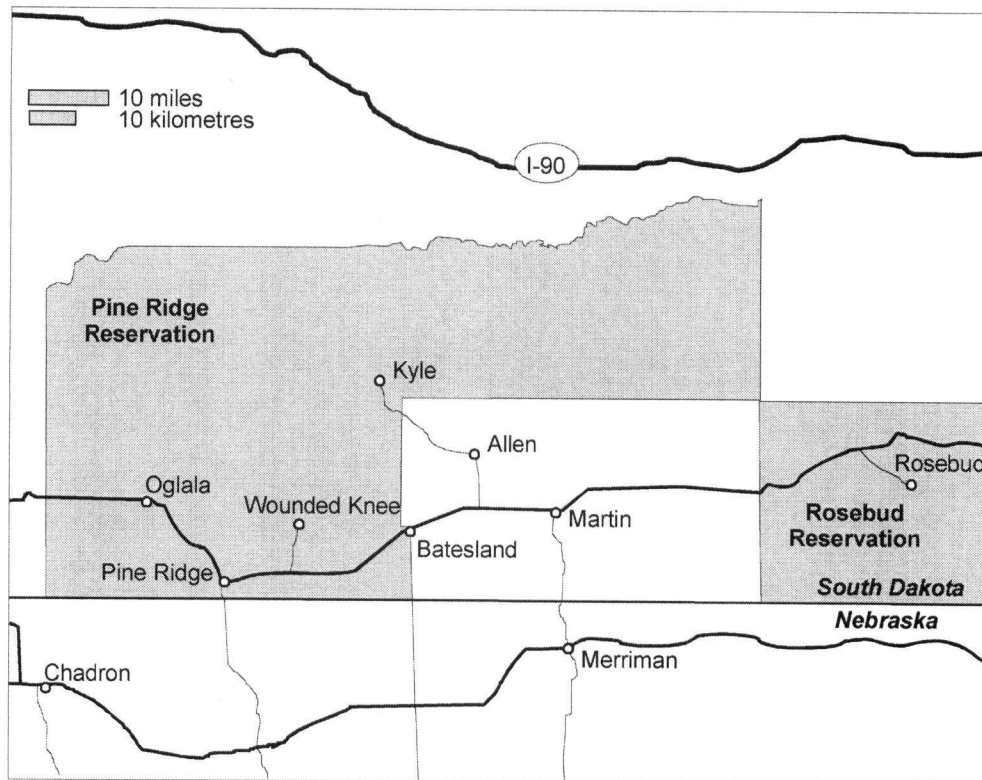


Figure 13. Map of Pine Ridge and surrounding areas

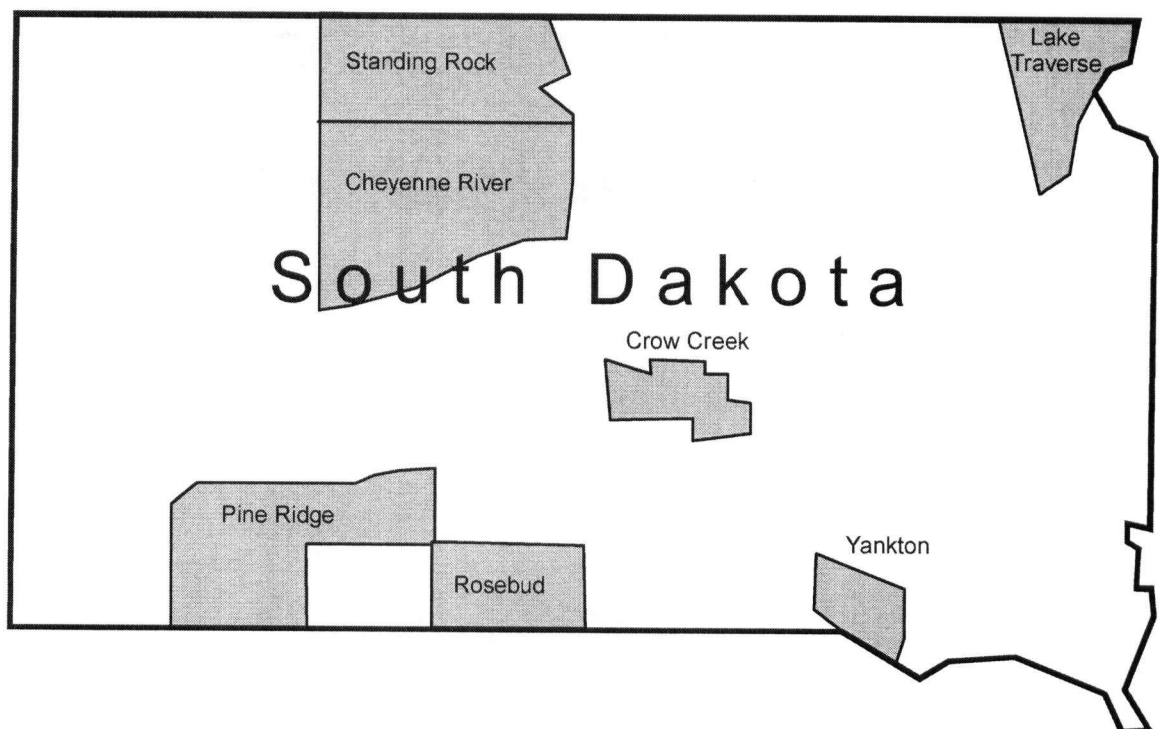


Figure 14. Map of Reservations in South Dakota



Figure 15. Map of United States of America



Figure 16. Map of Guanajuato, Mexico and Coleman, Texas

Appendix B - Census Data

People QuickFacts	Shannon County	South Dakota
Population, 2000	12,466	754,844
Population, percent change, 1990 to 2000	25.90%	8.50%
Persons under 5 years old, percent, 2000	10.90%	6.80%
Persons under 18 years old, percent, 2000	45.30%	26.80%
Persons 65 years old and over, percent, 2000	4.80%	14.30%
White persons, percent, 2000 (a)	4.50%	88.70%
Black or African American persons, percent, 2000 (a)	0.10%	0.60%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2000 (a)	94.20%	8.30%
Persons reporting some other race, percent, 2000 (a)	0.20%	0.50%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2000	0.90%	1.30%
Female population, percent, 2000	50.10%	50.40%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2000 (b)	1.40%	1.40%
White persons, not of Hispanic/Latino origin, percent, 2000	4.40%	88.00%
High school graduates, persons 25 years and over, 1990	2,523	331,780
College graduates, persons 25 years and over, 1990	453	73,891
Housing units, 2000	3,123	323,208
Homeownership rate, 2000	49.60%	68.20%
Households, 2000	2,785	290,245
Persons per household, 2000	4.36	2.5
Households with persons under 18 years, percent, 2000	68.80%	34.80%
Median household money income, 1997 model-based estimate	\$17,814	\$31,354
Persons below poverty, percent, 1997 model-based estimate	42.90%	14.00%
Children below poverty, percent, 1997 model-based estimate	46.20%	19.00%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, County Business Patterns, 1997 Economic Census, Minority- and Women-Owned Business, Building Permits, Consolidated Federal Funds Report, 1997 Census of Governments

Geographic area	Total population	Race								Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
		One race							Two or more races	
		Total	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some other race		
Allen CDP, Bennett County	419	412	18	0	394	0	0	0	7	6
Martin city, Bennett County	1,106	1,025	597	7	416	1	0	4	81	38
Pine Ridge CDP, Shannon County	3,171	3,128	118	3	2,987	1	3	16	43	57
South Dakota (000's)	755	745	669	5	62	4	0	4	10	11

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, County Business Patterns, 1997 Economic Census, Minority- and Women-Owned Business, Building Permits, Consolidated Federal Funds Report, 1997 Census of Governments

Appendix C - Timeline of Significant Events

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1780	Smallpox epidemic (winter counts)	First date for Robinson's Winter Counts (1775-1885)		
1799		First recorded date for Spider's Winter Counts (1759-1956); Also for Big Missouri Winter Counts (1796-1926)		
1803	Louisiana purchase			
1805	Indian delegation to Washington			
1812				War of 1812
1823				James Fennimore Cooper, The Leather Stocking Tales
1838			Philip Red Bear and other great-grandparents born in this time period	
1846		George Sword (Oglala or Lakota) is born and later provides ethnographic information to Dr. James R. Walker		Buffalo Bill Cody born in Iowa

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1849	Fort Laramie sold to U.S. army from American Fur Company; gold rush in California meant travelling through South Dakota			
1851	Horse Creek Treaty (tribal ownerships of Northern Plains)			
1854	Grattan fight and Mormon cow incident (charges of theft and hostilities)		Philip Red Bear (Melda's great-grandfather) serves as a U.S. Indian Scout around this time	
1856	Harney treaty at Fort Pierre (not ratified)			
1857	Summer campaign against Cheyennes, Lakota-Omaha battle			
1858	Gold discovered in Colorado	Charles A. Eastman born (Santee Sioux); becomes doctor and writer		

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1859				Charles Darwin, On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life
1860	Epidemic			
1862	Santee Sioux uprising in Minnesota; Abraham Lincoln (who in the same week signed the Emancipation Proclamation) both pardoned and sentenced Dakota patriots to public execution in Minnesota			
1864	Lakota/Cheyenne raids, beginning of organized defense, Sand Creek Massacre	George Bushotter (Lakota) provides ethnographic material		James W. Lynd, "The Religion of the Dakotas"

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1865	Two Face and Black Foot hung at Fort Laramie			
1866	Fetterman fight, Red Cloud's war on Bozeman Trail (1866-1868)			Samuel Pond (missionary) writes ethnography of Dakota
1867	Fort Laramie treaty council			Gideon Pond, "Dakota Superstitions"
1868	Fort Laramie treaty signed (establish Great Sioux Reservation from Missouri River west to Wyoming border) resulting from Bozeman Trail victory; Shipment of supplies (256 wool blankets to replace buffalo robes and 548 yards of calico to buckskin garments)			
1869	Brules to Whetstone Agency; first children to enter school		Charles Red Bear/Runs Along the Edge (Melda's grandfather) is born	Stephen Riggs provides ethnography of Dakota

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1870	Red Cloud and Spotted Tail to Washington; Ella Deloria notes a Rosebud and Pine Ridge joint Sundance sometime in the 1870s; conversions to Christianity throughout next fifty years		Howard Red Bear indicates that his father, Philip Red Bear, knew of a Sundance occurring when he was a young man around this time	
1871	Brule agency moved to White River country, Nebraska; buffalo virtually extinct and Lakota are confined to reservation			Edward Tylor, Primitive Culture (among founders of modern anthropology; use of word "culture" in the anthropological sense)
1872			Mary Runs Along the Edge is born (sister of Melda's grandfather)	
1873	Lakota-Pawnee fight			
1874	Gold discovered in Black Hills; Custer marches into Black Hills		Howard Red Bear/Runs Along the Edge (brother of Melda's grandfather) is born (1874-1968)	

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1875	Failure of Black Hills Treaty Commission, Episcopalians to Brules at Beaver Creek Agency			
1876	Fight with Crook on Rosebud Creek; Custer defeated at Battle of Little Big Horn; Army pursues Lakota and Cheyenne; Spotted Tail visits Indian Territory; Sitting Bull as leader		Howard Red Bear (brother of Melda's grandfather) serves as a soldier at Fort Crook	
1877	Crazy Horse surrenders to Fort Robinson and is murdered; "unceded Indian territory" guaranteed in Fort Laramie treaty is taken over in efforts to secure gold in Black Hills; Sitting Bull flees to Canada			

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1878	Dull Knives of Cheyenne territory moved north to join up with Lakota of Pine Ridge; Lakota confined to Pine Ridge Reservation			
1879	Cheyenne outbreak at Fort Robinson; Little Thunder dies; Hampton Institute; children sent to residential (or industrial) schools			
1880	Red Cloud (Teton) holds a Sundance	Bible translated into Dakota language		

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1881	Sitting Bull extradited from Canada and sent to Standing Rock Reservation; Crow Dog kills Spotted Tail and sent to trial in Deadwood; Supreme Court decision denying federal jurisdiction on reservations; ban on Sundance and other religious ceremonies			
1884	Pine Ridge Reservation divided into nine districts			
1885	Major Crimes Act regarding federal/tribal prosecution of crimes (related to Crow Dog case); Sitting Bull returns to Canada and tours with Buffalo Bill Show			

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1887	Dawes Allotment Act intended to parcel land for farming to those living on reservation; Buffalo Bill Show tours Europe and Black Elk is on tour		Likely that Red Bear land was parceled at this time	
1889	Act put in place to decrease size of reservation to present boundaries (2.8 million acres)		Approximate date that the log cabin was built 'down east' near Allen, South Dakota	
1890	Ghost Dancing (messianic movement to bring back ancestors and tradition) on Lakota reservations; Sitting Bull killed; Massacre at Wounded Knee		Howard Red Bear reports witnessing aftermath of massacre at Wounded Knee	

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1891	Two head of cattle issued to every man, woman and child; dependency on government rations amidst efforts to start up farming and ranching	Sophia Alice Callahan (Creek), Wynema: A Child of the Forest (first novel written by a Native woman; done so in protest over the Wounded Knee Massacre		
1893	Schools, churches and government programs intensified between 1891 and 1934; first day school for Indians started on Pine Ridge	Charles A. Eastman (Santee Sioux) "Recollections of the Wild Life"		Chicago World Fair; Stephen R. Riggs, Dakota Grammar, Texts and Ethnography
1894		Charles A. Eastman (Santee Sioux) "Mythology of the Sioux"		James Dorsey, Sioux Indian Religion

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1896	Dr. James R. Walker arrives in Pine Ridge as physician in charge of 7000 people during epidemics who sought help from traditional healers and eventually undertook recording of ethnographic material	George Sword (Lakota) works with James R. Walker on Lakota Religion; Thomas Tyon and other Lakota collaborate as well		James Mooney, The Ghost-Dance Religion and The Sioux Outbreak of 1890 (for Bureau of Ethnology)
1897	Act prohibiting sale of liquor and intoxicants to Indians (later used in cases involving the use of peyote)			
1900		Gertrude Bonnin (Yankton Sioux) "An Indian Teacher Among Indians"; Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux) "The Story of Little Big Horn"; Lane Deer born (later collaborates on book)		

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1901		Gertrude Bonnin (Yankton Sioux) "The Soft-Hearted Sioux"		
1902		Gertrude Bonnin (Yankton Sioux) "Why I am a Pagan"; Charles A. Eastman (Santee Sioux) Indian Boyhood		
1903				James Dorsey, A Study of Siouan Cults
1904	Introduction of peyote in Allen, South Dakota		Charles Red Bear instrumental in introduction of peyote to Pine Ridge Reservation	
1905				Franz Boas associated with American Museum of Natural History until 1905
1906			Solomon Red Bear born (Melda's father)	

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1908				Samuel Pond (missionary), The Dakota or Sioux in Minnesota as They were in 1834
1909		Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux) with Elaine Goodale Eastman, Wigwam Evenings	Esteban Perez Trejo (Lupe's father) born in Guanajuato, Mexico	
1910		George Sword dies		Mexican Revolution
1911	8000 Indians serve in WWI	Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux) "The Indian and the Moral Code" and "A Canoe Trip among the Northern Ojibways"		Frances Densmore, ethnomusicologist, collects sound recordings on Standing Rock Reservation and Sisseton Reservation, South Dakota (1911-1914)
1912	Martin as county seat over Allen			Clark Wissler, Societies and Ceremonial Associations in the Oglala Division of the Teton Dakota"

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1913	First schools on Pine Ridge Reservation	Gertrude Bonnin-Simmons (Yankton Sioux) with William Hanson, Sun-Dance, an Indian Opera; Chief Red Cloud (Oglala) with Jospeh Dixon "Chief Red Cloud" in The Vanishing Race: The Last Great Indian Council; Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux) Indian Child Life	Cliofas Martinez (Lupe's mother) born in Coleman, Texas; reports of children going to school with "Fatty" and Solomon Red Bear (Melda's father)	Paul Radin begins ethnographic work in areas of the United States and Canada
1916	Deadwood Trial regarding use of peyote	Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux), From Deep Woods to Civilization	Charles Red Bear gives up parcel of Red Bear land for legal fees incurred with Deadwood Trial for use of peyote	

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1917		George Sword (Oglala) with James R. Walker in The Sun Dance and Other Ceremonies of the Oglala Division of the Teton Dakota; Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux) "A Sioux Woman's Love for her Grandchild"	Isaac Red Bear, son of Howard Red Bear, is born	
1918	Native American Church legally incorporated in Utah, Colorado and Nevada		Frances Densmore, Teton Sioux Music	Schism developed between the Bureau of American Ethnology and the Bureau of Indian Affairs over Deadwood trial and the use of peyote

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1919	Two girls run away from St. Francis School and suffer from the cold; 367 peyotists or 5 percent, out of a total of 7,340, in Pine Ridge	Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux) "The American Eagle: An Indian Symbol," "The Indian's Plea for Freedom" and "Justice for the Sioux"; Gertrude Bonnin "America, Home of the Red Man"		
1921		Gertrude Bonnin (Yankton Sioux) American Indian Stories		
1922	Sioux peyotists decided to incorporate a church in each county, beginning with Native American Church of Allen South Dakota, incorporated on October 5, 1922		Charles Red Bear involved in incorporating Native American Church in Allen, South Dakota	

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1923	Arizona, Montana and North and South Dakota passed laws prohibiting the use of peyote	Legislation in North and South Dakota against peyote was engineered by Gertrude Bonnin and Congressman Gandy		
1924	Citizenship Act gives all Indians full citizenship			Paul Radin, Monotheism Among Primitive Peoples
1926		Pte-San-Waste-Win (Hunkpapa) with James McLaughlin "Mrs. Spotted Horn Bull's View of the Custer Tragedy" in My Friend the Indian		
1928		Luther Standing Bear (Brule), My People the Sioux		
1931		Luther Standing Bear (Brule), My Indian Boyhood		

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1932		Ella Deloria (Yankton), Dakota Texts (in two languages); (Nicholas) Black Elk (Oglala) with John Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks		
1933		Luther Standing Bear (Brule), Land of the Spotted Eagle		
1934	Wheeler-Howard Act (Indian Reorganization Act) to control leasing of land based on John Collier's "Circular on Indian Religious Freedom and Indian Culture"; Sundance allowed with specific restrictions; American Horse Day School in Allen	Luther Standing Bear (Brule), Stories of the Sioux		

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1937		George Bushotter (Lakota), Teton Myths; Ella Deloria, "Dakota Commentary on Walker's Texts"	Account of Philip (who was in his nineties) and Mary Red Bear running a Native American Church ceremony around this time	
1938			Lupe Trejo is born on May 14, 1938 in Coleman, Texas	
1939		Eugene Buechel, S.J., A Grammar of Lakota	Melda Red Bear/Runs Along the Edge is born in Allen, South Dakota	
1941	WWII begins; 25,000 Indians serve in WWII (as well as code-talkers)	Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux), "Report on Sacajawea"; Legends of the Mighty Sioux compiled by Indian Workers on the WPA South Dakota Writers' Project	Isaac Red Bear, son of Howard Red Bear, is killed serving in World War II	

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1944	WWII ends	Ella Deloria (Yankton), Speaking of Indians; Waterlily		
1946		Oscar One Bull (Teton) with H. Inez Hilger, "The Narrative of Oscar One Bull"		
1947		Flying Hawk (Oglala) with M.I. McCreight, Firewater and Forked Tongues: A Sioux Chief Interprets U.S. History		
1948			Sam Moves Camp is born (runs memorial Sundance for Lupe Trejo in 2000)	
1949			Blizzard in Alliance, Nebraska, where Crow Dog and Red Bear families were working	

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1950		Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux), "A Half-Forgotten Lincoln Story"	Albert Red Bear (Melda's brother) marries Christine Crow Dog	
1952	Piercing officially allowed in Sundance			
1953		Black Elk (Oglala) with Joseph Epes Brown, Black Elk's The Sacred Pipe	Melda Trejo mourns the death of Hank Williams as a young girl	
1954			Melda's parents move to Scottsbluff, Nebraska	
1955	Federal Indian Relocation Program (1956-1982) geared towards moving population from reservation to urban cities (Cleveland, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles)		Melda goes to Pine Ridge Powwow and Pine Ridge Sundance (1955-1957); Mr. and Mrs. Bailey start church in Scottsbluff, Nebraska	Seventy-five books written by Native writers between 1890 and 1955 (Heflin 6)

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1957			Melda places second in Pine Ridge Powwow Beauty Contest; Lucille Red Bear (Melda's sister) dies	
1958			Melda & Lupe Trejo live together (marry in 1979); Robert Trejo born (Melda and Lupe's son)	
1959			Lucy Trejo born (Melda and Lupe's daughter)	
1960			Debbie Trejo born (daughter)	Stephen Feraca, "The Yuwipi Cult"
1962			Ruben Trejo born (son)	
1963			Raymond Trejo born (son)	
1964			Lupe, Jr. (Peto) born (son)	Royal Hassrick, The Sioux

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1965			Richard born 1965 (died as infant) (Melda and Lupe's son)	
1966	New Frontier and related social programs geared towards improving social conditions	Howard Red Bear records recollections of Crazy Horse, later published in To Kill an Eagle: Indian Views on The Last Days of Crazy Horse (1981)	Lupe experiences vision of eagle and decides to stop drinking; begins to follow Lakota spiritual practices	
1967			Barbara Trejo born (Melda and Lupe's daughter)	
1968			Howard Red Bear (brother of Melda's grandfather) dies; Lupe's mother ill; Norman and Clifas Red Bear seek the help of Reuben Fire Thunder; Jimmy Trejo born (Melda and Lupe's son)	

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1969	41,000 Indians serve in Vietnam	Vine Deloria, Jr. (Lakota), Custer Died for Your Sins; Pete Catches (Lakota) with Ed McGaa		
1971	Frank Fools Crow holds a Sundance	Joseph H. Cash and Herbert T. Hoover, eds., To Be An Indian: An Oral History		
1972	Dick Wilson, head of BIA administration in Pine Ridge bans Sundance to combat efforts of AIM members to begin Sundances		Marcus Red Bear Trejo born (Melda and Lupe's son); Solomon Red Bear dies (Melda's father)	Sally McCluskey, "Black Elk Speaks and So Does John Neihardt" (debate around authorship/authenticity); James Officer, ed., Anthropology and the American Indian
1973	Siege of Wounded Knee by A.I.M. members & supporters; Sundance at Crow Dog's Paradise, Rosebud Reservation			

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1976	Sundance in Porcupine, South Dakota	Ben Black Bear, Sr. (Lakota) and Ronnie Theisz, Songs and Dances of the Lakota; John (Fire) Lame Deer (Lakota) with Richard Erdoes, Lame Deer: Seeker of Visions		
1977				William K. Powers, Oglala Religion
1978	US Congress passes Indian Religious Freedom Act		Reuben Fire Thunder runs a Sundance near Allen 1978 and 1979 (not Melda and Lupe's Sundance)	Elaine Goodale Eastman, Sister to the Sioux; Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present.
1979	Several hundred people attending tribal Sundance in Porcupine, Pine Ridge Reservation		Melda and Lupe Trejo officially marry after living together since 1958	Ake Hultkrantz, The Religion of the American Indians

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1980			Lupe Trejo begins to Sundance at Crow Dog's Paradise; Sarah Thunder Hawk's son runs a Ghost Dance attended by Lupe and sons	Emily H. Lewis, Wo' Wakita: Reservation Recollections: A People's History of the Allen Issue Station District on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation of South Dakota; James R. Walker, Lakota Belief and Ritual
1981	24,000 Indians serve in Operation Desert Storm	Edward Kadlecek and Mabell Kadlecek (includes account by Howard Red Bear), To Kill an Eagle: Indian Views on The Last Days of Crazy Horse		Eleanor Burke Leacock, Myths of Male Dominance: Collected Articles on Women Cross-Culturally; H.D. Brumble, American Indian Autobiography. Berkeley
1982				William K. Powers, Yuwipi; James R. Walker, Lakota Society

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1983		Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women		James R. Walker, Lakota Myth; Dennis Tedlock, "The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation in American Indian Religion"
1984		Tim Giago, Notes From Indian Country; Deloria, Vine, Jr., ed., A Sender of Words: Essays in Memory of John G. Neihardt.		Raymond J. DeMallie, The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt (compared Black Elk Speaks to transcripts and raised issues of authenticity and authorship)

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1986				James Clifford, Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography (postmodern revision of anthropology; partial truths, fluid identities, bias of anthropologist); William K. Powers, Sacred Language; Marla Powers, Oglala Woman
1987	Reports of fourteen Sundance on Pine Ridge Reservation (See Clyde Holler's account)			Omer C. Stewart, Peyote Religion: A History; Raymond J. DeMallie, Sioux Indian Religion

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1988			First Year of Memorial Sundance cycle (four-year) honoring Reuben Fire Thunder on Red Bear land, near Allen, South Dakota	Raymond J. DeMallie, "Lakota Traditionalism: History and Symbol"; James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture: Ethnography, Literature, and Art; Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"
1989			Melda Trejo moves back to Allen, South Dakota to care for her mother	Julian Rice, Lakota Storytelling: Black Elk, Ella Deloria, Frank Fools Crow; Harry Robinson and Wendy Wickwire, Write It On Your Heart: The Epic World of an Okanagan Storyteller

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1990				Lenore Keeshig-Tobias, "Stop Stealing Native Stories"; William Powers, Voices from the Spirit World; Julie Cruikshank Life Lived Like a Story: Life Stories of Three Yukon Native Elders; Paul Steinmetz, S.J., Pipe, Bible and Peyote Among Lakota People
1991		Mary Crow Dog (Lakota) with Richard Erdoes, Lakota Woman; Madonna Swan (Lakota) with Mark St. Pierre, Madonna Swan: A Lakota Woman's Story; Carolyn Reyer, Cante ohitika Win (Brave-hearted Women): Images of Lakota Women	Jessie Red Bear dies (Melda's mother)	Julian Rice, Black Elk's Story: Distinguishing its Lakota Purpose; Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai, eds., Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History.

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1992		M. Annette Jaimes, ed., "American Indian Women: At the Center of Indigenous Resistance"	1st year of 2nd Sundance cycle (four-year) for Melda and Lupe Trejo's Sundance	Arnold Krupat, Ethnocriticism: Ethnography, History and Literature; Julian Rice, Deer Women and Elk Men: The Lakota Narratives of Ella Deloria; Freda Ahenakew (Cree), Our Grandmothers' Lives as Told in Their Own Words; Ronald Goodman, Lakota Star Knowledge
1993	30 Sundances on Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations; 'Declaration of War Against Exploiters of Lakota Spirituality' submitted to U.N. (see James Fenelon)	Jeannette Armstrong, ed., Looking at the Words of Our People: First Nations Analysis of Literature; Greg Sarris, Keeping Slug Woman Alive		

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1994	Pine Ridge Reservation is currently 1.7 million acres	Severt Young Bear (Lakota) with Ronnie Theisz, Standing in the Light: A Lakota Way of Seeing; Mary Brave Bird [Crow Dog] (Lakota) with Richard Erdoes, Ohitika Woman; Mark Munroe (Lakota) with Carolyn Reyer, An Indian in White America	Larissa Petrillo to Pine Ridge Reservation with Kay and Jaap Koppedrayer; first meeting of Trejo family	Larissa Petrillo's Master's thesis: The Life Stories of a Woman from Rosebud: Names and Naming in 'Lakota Woman' and 'Ohitika Woman'; Julian Rice, "A Ventriloquy of Anthros: Densmore, Dorsey, Lame Deer, and Erdoes"
1995	Police shut down Sundance in Kyle, Pine Ridge Reservation because of large non-Native presence and property rights dispute	Russell Means (Lakota), Where White Men Fear to Tread: The Autobiography of Russell Means; Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, Completing the Circle		Clyde Holler, Black Elk's Religion: The Sun Dance and Lakota Catholicism

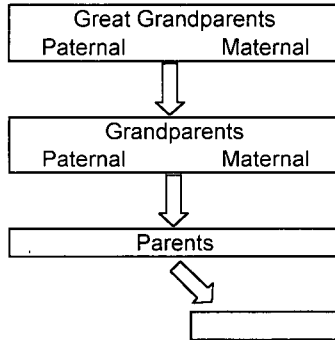
Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1996		Elizabeth Cook-Lynn (Dakota), Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays: A Tribal Voice	1st year of 3rd Sundance cycle (four-year) for Melda and Lupe Trejo's Sundance	Joane Nagel, American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture
1997	43 Sundances on Pine Ridge Reservation; Articles such as printed in Native newspaper, Indian Country Today, which are centered around issue of appropriation of spirituality and non-Native people attending Sundances on Pine Ridge Reservation.		Begin recording of Life Stories	Mikael Kurkiala, 'Building the Nation Back Up': The Politics of Identity on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation; Thomas Biolsi and Larry J. Zimmerman, Indians and Anthropologists : Vine Deloria, Jr., and the Critique of Anthropology

Year	History From Lakota Perspective (taken from various Lakota sources)	Lakota Authorship (including collaborative); Native Criticism	Melda and Lupe's Life Events	Non-Native Material of Relevance
1998		Delphine Red Shirt, Bead on an Anthill: A Lakota Childhood; Devon A. Mihesuah, ed., Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indian.		Raymond A. Bucko, The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge; Julie Cruikshank, The Social Life of Stories;; Roger Spielmann, You're So Fat!: Exploring Ojibwe Discourse; Robert Perks, & Alistair Thomson, The Oral History Reader
1999	President Clinton visits Pine Ridge Reservation		Lupe Trejo dies on April 26, 1999	Herman J. Viola, Little Bighorn Remembered: The Untold Indian Story of Custer's Last Stand
2000			1st year of Memorial Cycle (four-year) for Sundance honoring Lupe Trejo on Red Bear land, near Allen, South Dakota	Ian Frazier, On the Rez (critiqued by Sherman Alexie, Devon Mihesuah, Larissa Petrillo)

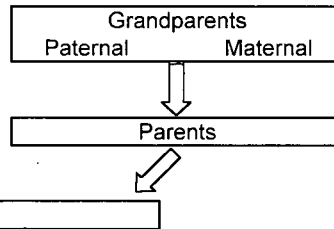
Appendix D - Family Tree

Family Tree Index

Melda Red Bear / Runs Along the Edge



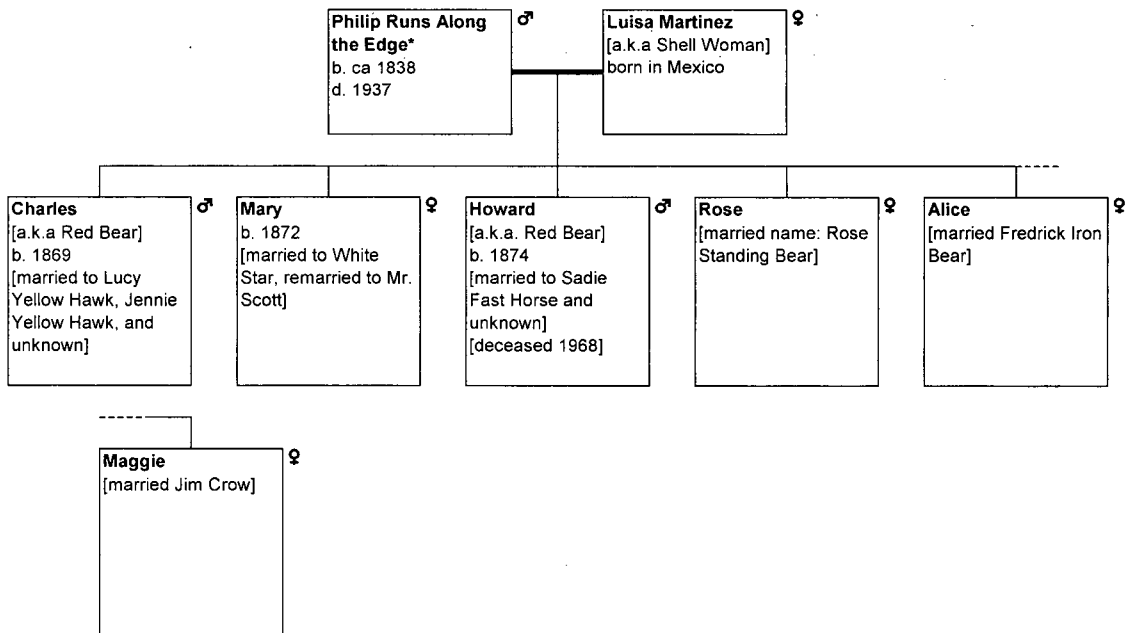
Lupe Trejo



Also included:

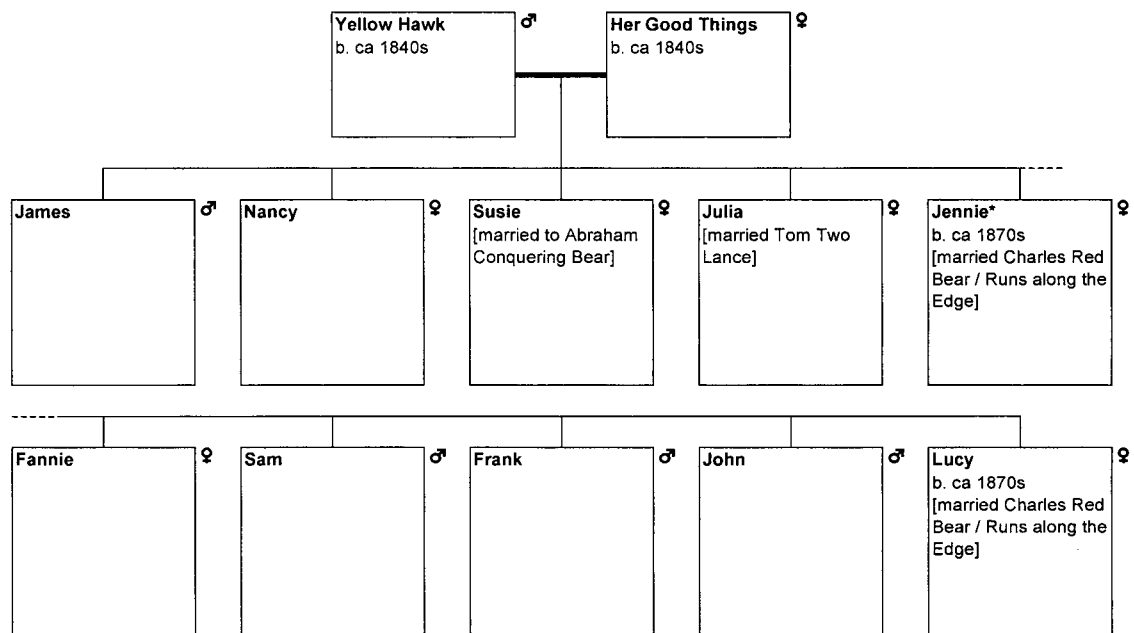
- Melda's Cousins (family line for Rose Red Bear, sister of grandfather Charles Red Bear)
- Melda's Cousins (family line for Howard Red Bear, brother of Melda's grandfather, Charles Red Bear)
- Melda's Cousins (family line for Maggie Red Bear, sister of Melda's grandfather, Charles Red Bear)
- Melda's Brother, Norman and Lupe's Sister, Clifofas
- Melda's Brother, Solomon Junior

Melda's Paternal Great Grandparents



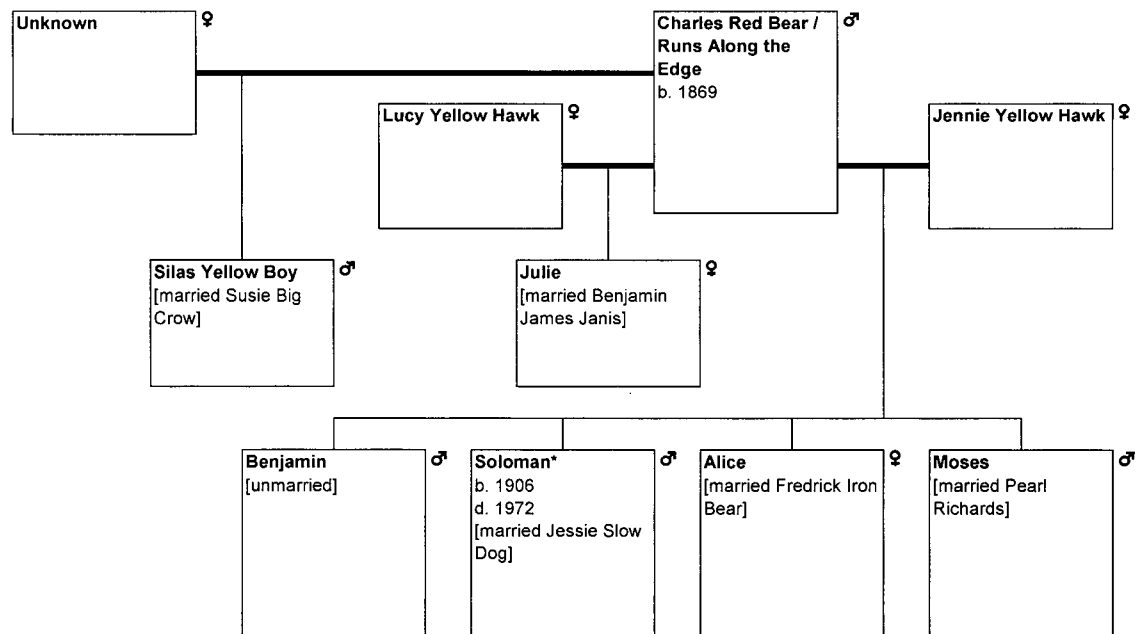
* Melda's grandfather

Melda's Maternal Great Grandparents



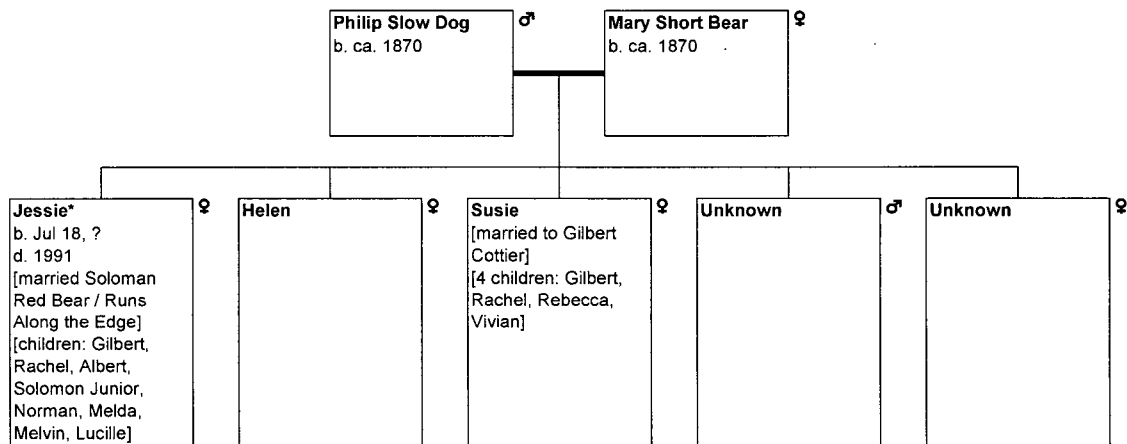
* Melda's grandmother

Melda's Paternal Grandparents



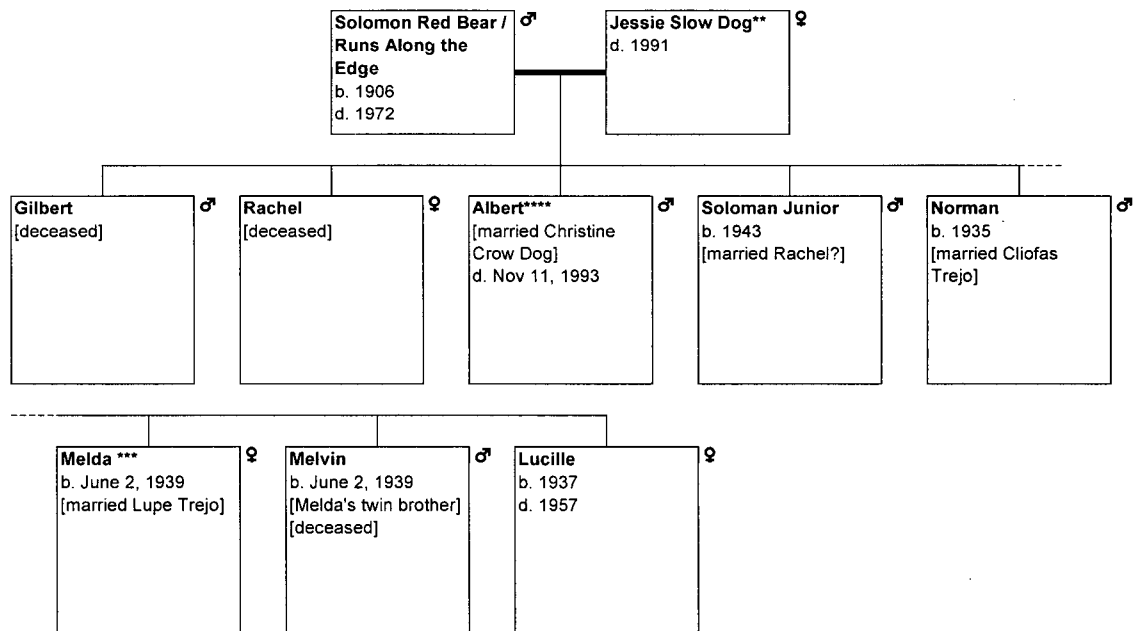
* Melda's father

Melda's Maternal Grandparents



* Melda's mother

Melda's Parents

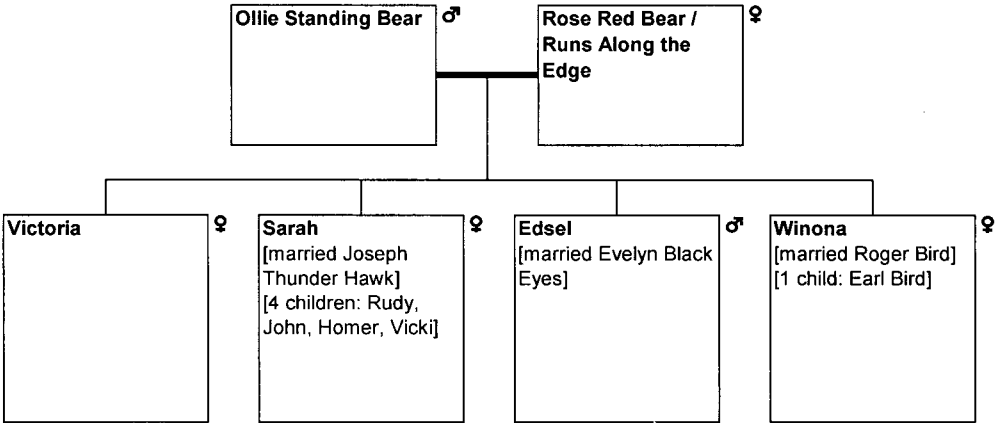


** In addition to raising her own children, Jessie helped in raising Sarah, Rebecca Cottier, Bertha, Madelyn Slow Dog, Janie Red Willow

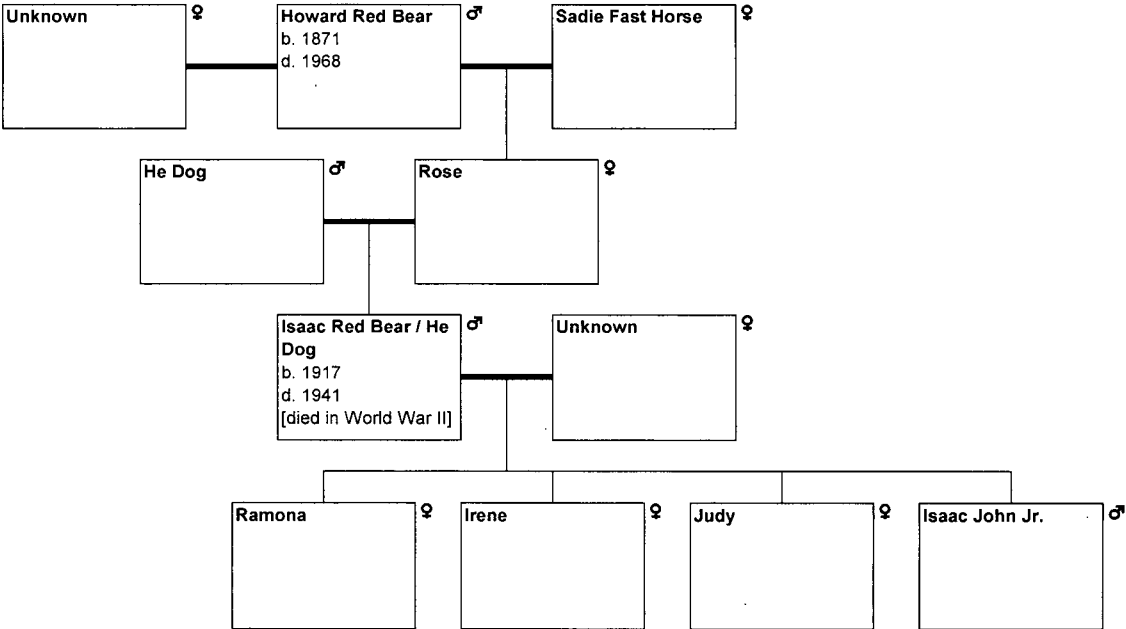
*** Children: Robert, Lucy, Debbie, Ruben, Raymond, Lupe Jr., Manuel, Barbara, Jimmy, Marcus

**** Children: Bernadine, Rachel, Albert Jr (Gooksie), Sharon, Billy, Gloria, Kenneth (Choppy), Clifas (male), Benny, Willma (Gergis)

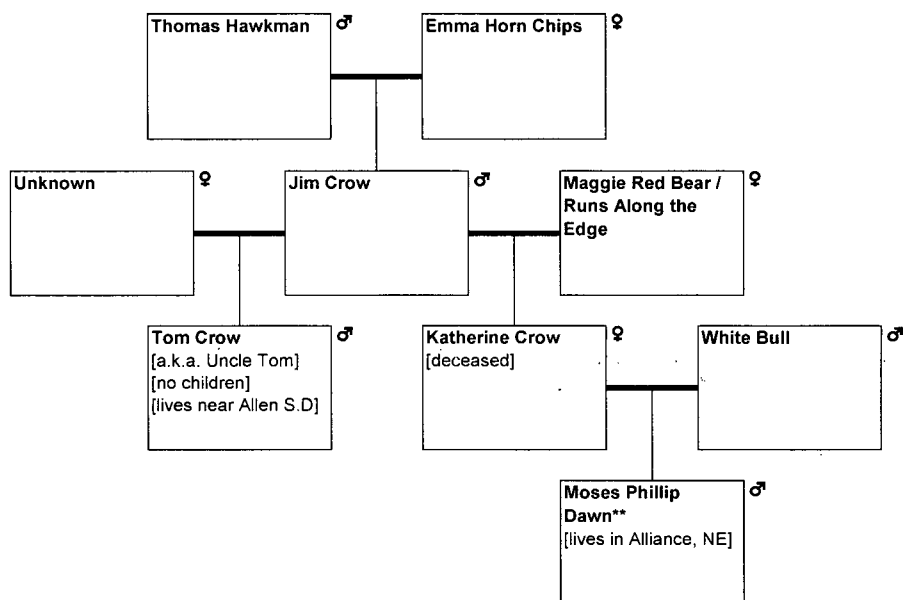
Melda's Cousins (family line for Rose Red Bear, sister of grandfather Charles Red Bear)



Melda's Cousins (family line for Howard Red Bear, brother of Melda's grandfather, Charles Red Bear)



Melda's Cousins (family line for Maggie Red Bear, sister of Melda's grandfather, Charles Red Bear)

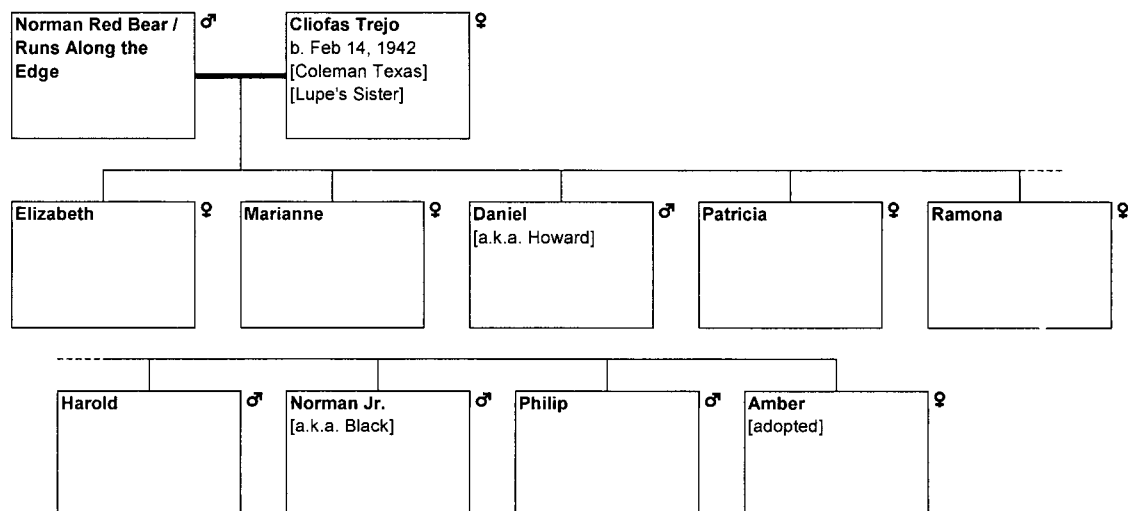


** Grandchildren: Schuyler David, Lela Mae, Jerry James, Mildred Patricia, Gerald Wayne, Blaine Beth, Sharla Kay, Shane Phillip (deceased), Sharon Katherin (deceased)

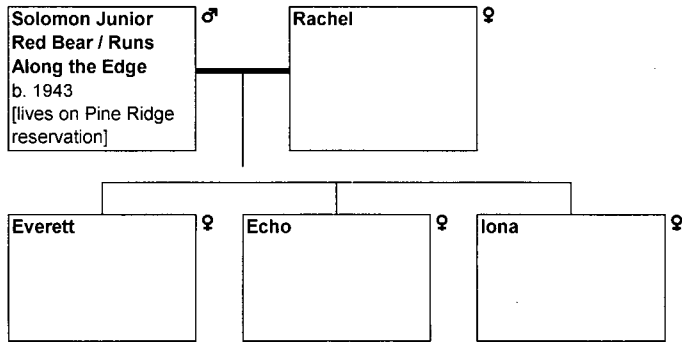
** Great-grandchildren: Kevin, Christopher, Schuyler David Jr., Henrietta Charlene, Waylon Gene, Angel Kay, Felicia Mae, Christopher James, Twylite Beth, Jerri Lynn, Anthony Greg, Timothy Lee, Charmaine Catherine, Glibert Wayne, Alexis Belle, Amanda Grace Wyhatt Lee, Mary Katherine (deceased), Joanna Jade, William Joseph, Kimberly Kay, Daniel Jr. Samuel David (deceased)

** Great-great-grandchildren: Joshua Tyrone, Moses Tyrell, Shayla Katherine, Sharon Louise, Christopher Guadalupe, Baby Schmidt Elainna Alize, Brandon Lee, Isian Seth, Natasha Marie, Schuyler, Dominic Phillip, Angelica Mae, Baby Dawn-Debusk

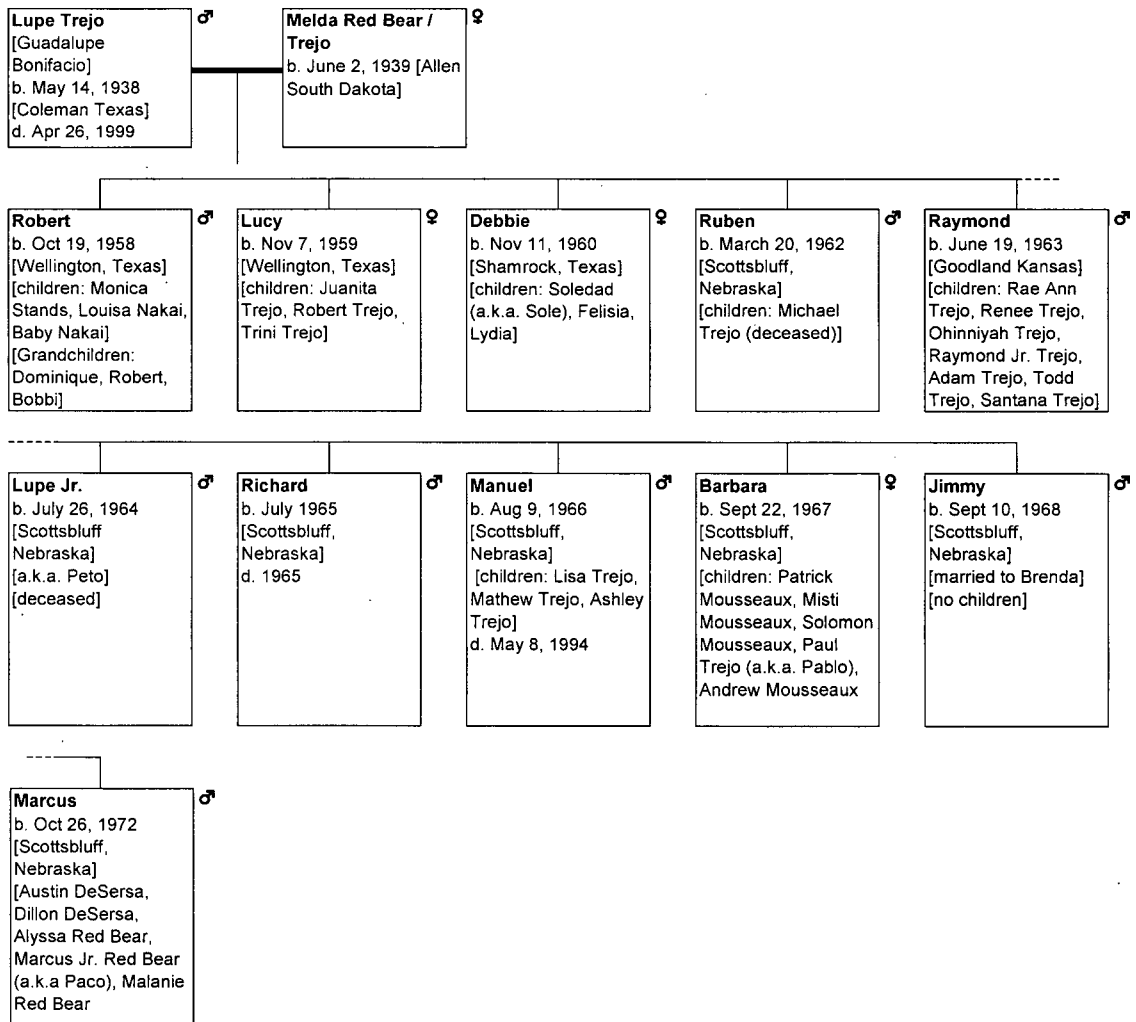
Melda's Brother, Norman and Lupe's Sister, Clifofas



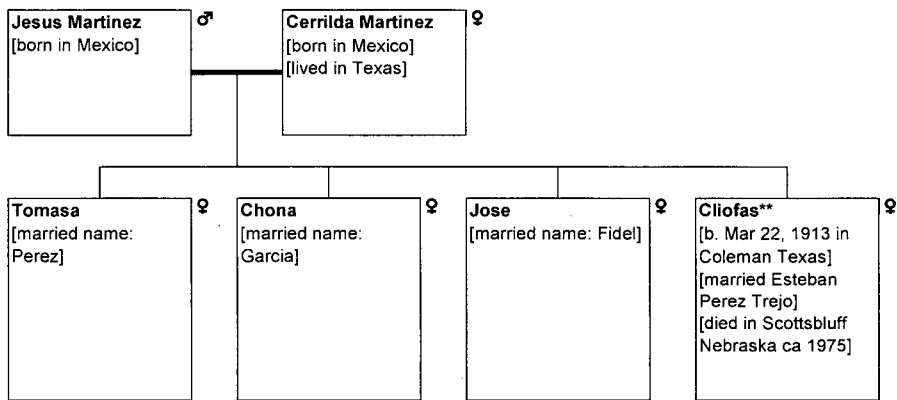
Melda's Brother, Solomon Junior



Lupe and Melda's Children

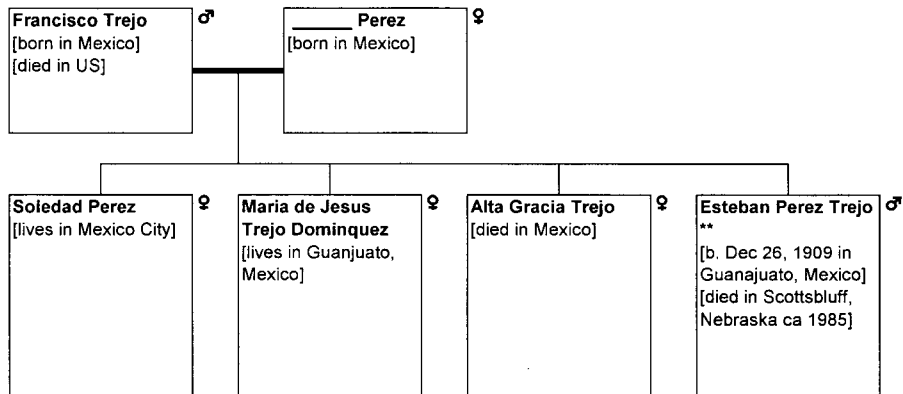


Lupe's Maternal Grandparents



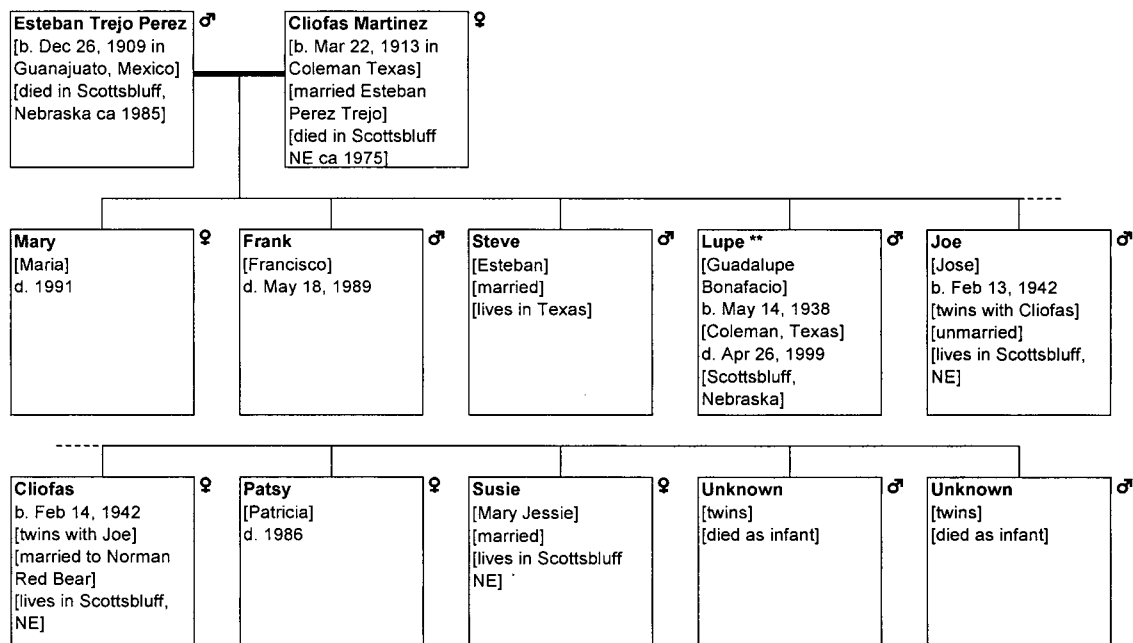
** Children: Mary, Frank, Steve, Lupe, Joe, Clifas, Patsy, Susie, unknown twins

Lupe's Paternal Grandparents



** Children: Mary, Frank, Steve, Lupe, Joe, Clifas, Patsy, Susie, unknown twins

Lupe's Parents



** Children: Robert, Lucy, Debbie, Ruben, Raymond, Lupe Jr., Manuel, Barbara, Jimmy, Marcus

Appendix E - Ethics Forms

Study Procedures:

- sessions will be held at my convenience in a location where I feel comfortable
- as many sessions as necessary will be undertaken over a period of approximately one year, at intervals of a few months
- Larissa Petrillo will be present at the sessions and any other people that I choose to have present
- Larissa Petrillo will record the sessions with a tape recorder
- Larissa Petrillo will simply listen to the stories, will not guide or elicit information with questions, and will respect the information that I choose to include or exclude
- after the recording of the sessions, Larissa Petrillo will transcribe them
- I will be asked to read the transcripts or listen to the tapes to decide on any information I would like to add or edit
- I will be shown the final version and asked for any comments and will be free to once again ask for any changes
- a copy of the final version will be given to myself and anybody else that I feel should have a copy
- a final version will also be used as part of the graduate thesis for Larissa Petrillo and will be available at the UBC library
- any other use of the material beyond that which occurs as part of the graduate work for Larissa Petrillo will be cleared with me first
- these are MY stories and I have input into the project and am able to request changes in any procedures

Confidentiality:

Any information resulting from this research study that is not part of the final transcripts will be kept strictly confidential. I will be given a copy of the tapes. Larissa Petrillo will have the only other copy and they will be secured with her personal possessions.

Remuneration/Compensation:

Not applicable.