

DAILY LIFE OF CHAM VILLAGE GIRLS:
LEARNING TO 'THINK' WITH STORIES

by

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my late husband Alan who opened me to the world of Cambodia, to my sister Holly who is the bravest woman I know, and to the ten Cham village girls and two assistants who shared their village life with me.

If I accept you as you are, I will make you worse; however if I treat you as though you are what you are capable of becoming, I help you become that.

*** Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) German Philosopher ***

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ABSTRACT

Cambodia has a small group of Muslims within its Buddhist majority population; locally known as Cham (from Champa Kingdom) or Khmer Islām. Little scholarly attention has been invested in understanding the daily lives and typical activities (occupations) of Muslim girls living in impoverished conditions in Cambodian villages. This nested narrative inquiry/autoethnography investigates their daily life and occupations. Girls in one Cham village co-constructed illustrated stories with me. Narrative inquiry necessitates living alongside participants in 'the midst' of their experiences within the temporality/sociality/locality of their three-dimensional narrative inquiry space their daily lives. Autoethnography requires weaving together the personal with the cultural to arrive at new understandings of the 'other'. An 'occupational lens' view of their daily-life stories reveals details about the girls while the story of how I did the study in an unknown language and country reveals my journey from an ethnocentric to more a culture-centric understanding.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

APT – Appropriate Paper Technology

DC-Cam – Documentation Centre of Cambodia (now: Sleuk Rith Institute)

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GRISP – Global Rice Science Partnership

LICADHO - Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

OCCU – Occupational Therapy course

WSP – Water and Sanitation Program

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I am also grateful to Melina Czmoniewicz-Klippel (2009) for her thoughtful and careful consideration and illumination of the best global and research-available definition of childhood, of her in-depth discussion of the ways we include children in research, for her perspective on the implications of gender, and for choosing Cambodia as a site for a grounded theory study that utilized an occupational justice perspective.

CHAPTER 1

Cambodia is a country in South East Asia with a population of approximately 14 million, and an area of about 180,000 square kilometers¹. It shares borders with Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos and has a 443 kilometer coastline on the Gulf of Thailand. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia (Royal Government of Cambodia, 2010) allows citizens to follow the religion of their choice:

Khmer citizens of both sexes shall have the full right of belief. Freedom of belief and religious practice shall be guaranteed by the State, provided that such freedom and religious practice do not impinge on other beliefs or religions, on public order and security. Buddhism is State's religion.

Chapter III: On the rights and duties of Khmer citizens, Article 43. (p. 14)

There is a small group of followers of Islām within the country (Blengsli, 2009; Trankell and Oveson, 2004), estimated at between one and two percent of the population. Over the past two decades, research published in English about Cambodia has predominantly inquired into the Buddhist majority. Scholars who focus on the Muslim ethnic minority living there, have devoted themselves predominantly to the study of adults. While reports, such as Blengsli's (2009) extensive examination of Islāmic education and politics in Cambodia, may include information about educational opportunities for girls, and discuss prevailing attitudes towards girls' education, they do not explore more intimate details of day to day life. This has led to a gap, in that little is known about the

¹ See: <http://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/profiles/Cambodia/Geography>. See Appendix C for a map of Cambodia and Appendix I for factual information about Cambodia.

daily life activities or occupations of Muslim girls growing up in rural settings in Cambodia.

This is important for a number of educated and well-intentioned people from outside the country, who may not follow Islām, yet are interested in volunteering or working on development related projects with Muslims. Having access to a body of literature that includes details about young Cambodian Muslims' values, lifestyle, barriers and opportunities, would provide a useful starting point for preparation to live and work in rural settings with them. There is no easily found, high quality, scholarly English language literature with this type of information at present. A thorough search of articles and books in English published over the past twenty years produced no resources specifically about Cham village girls.

I was introduced to Cambodia in 2012 by my late husband when we travelled there together to look into the possibilities for making it our retirement home. One experience in particular had a deep and lasting effect on me. A brief encounter with a teenage girl living with severe physical disabilities in a Muslim fishing village created moral and ethical questions in my mind. I felt a need to respond in a compassionate and effectual way, but had significant uncertainty about what might be the best action to take. I am confident in my professional occupational therapy knowledge and skills in my own familiar Canadian setting, yet hesitant to intervene in Cambodia. When occupational therapists and other professionals encounter uncertainty they may decide to turn to an alternative type of knowledge known as *phronesis*.

Phronesis encompasses the practical knowledge that is gained through experience. It develops over time, from taking actions then deeply reflecting on

the outcomes to add insight from lessons learned to a reserve of practice wisdom (Kemmis, 2012, Kinsella & Pitman, 2012). This thesis explores my journey of gaining practical wisdom, phronesis, through inquiring into the daily lives and occupations of Cham Muslim girls living in a fishing village in Cambodia. The complex and nuanced context of Cambodian life includes a long tradition of oral story-telling (Chandler, 1976, 1984) which is congruent with the choice of narrative based methodologies.

I required a story-based methodology broad enough to encompass three groups, and it was challenging to find the best option. It had to focus outward for the stories of village girls and research assistants, and it also had to focus inwards on me while incorporating the intercultural aspects of my learning journey. My search for a single methodology that could fulfil all these needs was unsuccessful. I needed a combination of narrative inquiry and autoethnography. With both inward and outward focus, and the inclusion of culture, this was a good fit for my study. A mixed methodology allowed me to engage in a multi-faceted narrative investigation, and to gain multiple perspectives. This study comprises the storied details of daily life for village girls, stories of the research assistants' involvement, and my own intercultural transformative learning experiences. It is presented with the backdrop of a very detailed exploration of Cambodian culture, as well as the history of Muslims in Cambodia and a thick description of the village where the study was situated.

Cambodian culture is highly dependent on relationships, as opposed to other cultures that have a more materialistic base. Narrative inquiry is known as a 'relational methodology' (Clandinin, Cave, & Berendonk, 2017), making it congruent with the context and setting. As a researcher, I bring a strength and

familiarity with storied styles of communication to this investigation. The study design layers a combination of narrative methodologies upon a complex and nuanced cultural context, with the intention of uncovering rich details in an inclusive manner.

Seeking practical wisdom through interculturally shared stories depends on the praxis of spending time living along side people from a different culture. Clandinin (2006) calls this being “in the midst,” and according to her, “[b]eing in the field, that is, engaging with participants, is walking into the midst of stories” (p. 47). This leads to the important area of relational ethics. Given (2008) defines relational ethics as “the dimensions of doing what is right within the context of relationships” (p. 794). When relationality, the interaction between people, forms the core arena of investigation in research, then traditional institutional ethics frameworks may not provide the most suitable fit (McNamee & Gergen, 1999). Inquirers typically relate to participants from a stance of ‘studying’ them. However, it is the relationship and the quality of human connection that often determines how much is shared and how far below the superficial an investigation will penetrate.

Reciprocity is necessary in order for participants to feel like equal partners and not like passive subjects. There must be a balance of *taking from* and *giving to*. As I entered into the homes and spaces of a Muslim fishing village in Cambodia, I willingly accepted that there would be a cost attached to achieving connectedness. Them giving trust to me, would mean I had to assume some relational responsibility, and honour the bond in return. There is a two-way trust relationship needed in narrative inquiry, it should not be taken lightly. This is fitting for a context that treats relationality as primary. It is essential given the

power differential conferred by my positionality. I am to be perceived as a respected 'teacher' by people in the village, a *barang*² wealthy enough to travel to Cambodia by airplane. This relational responsibility I have towards people in the study village is a commitment to continuing connection and relationship that is a more durable and meaningful bond than the typically brief research encounter denotes (Ebihara, 1968, 1990). I wanted a theoretical foundation for navigating and managing this reciprocity and relationality during my Cambodian research, which led me to Moustakas (1994, 1995).

Moustakas (1995, pp. 81-88) describes the complexities and nuances of relationships as "being-in, being-for, and being-with". *Being-in* holds layers of meaning reminiscent of 'being-in-love-with' someone; it means being smitten, holding them in awe and in wonder, an appreciative appraisal. *Being-for* adds the dimension of advocacy or the willingness to openly speak up and stand up in someone's defense. *Being-with* recognizes the commonality at the deepest level of our shared humanity, our oneness and solidarity. Moustakas' (1995) model gives me a framework that expects me to see Cambodian villagers in a positive light, it demands a high standard of placing myself 'on their side'. Most importantly, it allows me to identify *with* them as equals (Moustakas, 1995, p. 84). This framework for relationships helped me to navigate a way around mindlessly reflecting their looking up towards me, by preventing me from, however inadvertently, looking down on them.

² *Barang* is the Khmer word for foreigner, see Appendix B- Glossary entry for more details.

This leads to the concept of worldview, which is defined differently by individuals according to their core values and deeply held beliefs. In the ocean of definitions of 'worldview', Oxford online dictionary describes it as: "a particular philosophy of life or conception of the world"³. Many explorers of the concept rely upon religion as their starting point (Naugle, 2002; Sire & Ebooks, 2015). This makes sense given the depth and intransigence of people's religious views and values. Ishii, Cook, and Klopff (2003) offer a variation in their religio-cosmological approach that separates Eastern from Western worldviews primarily on the basis of pantheism (Eastern) versus monotheism (Western) (pp. 33-34). This simplifies an otherwise complex task, but remains inadequate and unsuitable in the case of Islām in Cambodia, which is a monotheistic religion in an otherwise Eastern paradigm culture. Naquib al-Attas (2001, p. 2) explains that a Muslim worldview is inclusive of both this world and the next (*al-dunyā* and *al-ākhirah*), a "vision of reality and truth that appears before our mind's eye revealing what existence is all about; for it is the world of existence in its totality that Islām is projecting." There is no separation between the sacred and the secular, nor between the intellectual and the emotional in Islām; making their worldview unique.

A Muslim worldview is something new to me, having been raised in a Christian home in Canada. The tenets of a Muslim worldview include *tawhid*⁴, the oneness of God; *ummah* the global community of believers, and expectations for how to respond to 'the disadvantaged' which includes disabled persons. I did not fully understand the implications of this at the inception of my research journey, the process of enacting the study transformed me. This is shown in the practical

³ Oxford online dictionary definition may be found at:
https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/world_view.

⁴ See Appendix B- Glossary entries for Tawhid, and Worldview.

wisdom I was able to acquire. I recognize that being familiar enough with the basic values and beliefs of the village girls and their families is an important prerequisite to being able to 'step into their shoes' as is required in Clandinin's (2007) style of narrative inquiry. The shared three-dimensional narrative inquiry space, an imaginary but useful device of her design, gives us the ability to travel backwards and forwards through time on the temporal axis. It gives us the ability to travel inwards to the personal and outwards to the social aspects of our being. And it provides a third dimension of the 'place' where stories transpire.

Working with people in the places where their stories transpire is widely available through "volunteer tourism" (Benson, 2011) as well as through "service education abroad programs" (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011). Different professionals and community development intervenors are guided in interventions and setting priorities by their selected philosophies and paradigms. Occupational therapists and occupational scientists who engage in enabling occupations in low resource community settings often select an occupational justice paradigm (Czmoniewicz-Klippel, 2011; Thibeault, 2013). This term was coined and defined by Townsend and Wilcock (2004) merging the values of occupational therapy/science with those of social justice. The concept is grounded in Western individualism, and personal agency. It is based on the connection between health (well-being) and meaningful engagement in occupations and proposes that all people have a right to access opportunities that will allow them to achieve self-actualization. Gupta (2016) has critically analyzed the evolving ideas related to occupational justice. I am hopeful that what I learn through exploring the daily lives of Cham village girls can add to these evolving ideas.

CHAPTER 2

GUIDED TOUR OF THE CHAPTERS

This chapter provides an overview of all the following chapters. The study takes place predominantly in Cambodia, therefore the chapter by chapter synopsis is characterized as a guided tour, as if one is going to sojourn in another land. It will introduce readers to each of the main topics endeavouring to give an overall *big picture* view before a detailed description of the topics is presented.

Chapter 3 contains the justification for the study, which immediately follows this guided tour. It comprises descriptions that outline personal, practical, and social-theoretical reasons underpinning my pursuit of this investigation. I follow the pattern described by Clandinin & Rosiek (2007) to use this exercise to explore my narrative beginnings for the study. Clandinin and Connelly (1990), along with her colleagues since 1990, have been advocating a specific 'map' to follow for researchers using her variant of narrative inquiry as a methodology, (Clandinin et al., 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000,; Clandinin & Huber, 2002; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). According to this style, a narrative inquiry begins with the researcher describing the personal, practical, and social-theoretical reasons for undertaking the study, while concomitantly exploring who they are in the research. I will explore who I am in the research more fully while describing narrative inquiry and autoethnography methodologies in Chapter 5⁵. Cambodia's history and lifestyles may not be familiar to readers who have not spent time

⁵ See Burwash (2013), *Doing Occupation*, for an example of an occupational therapy dissertation that utilized Clandinin's style of narrative inquiry as its methodology.

there, yet grasping some of its complexities will facilitate understanding this study.

An overview of Cambodian life and culture is offered in Chapter 4. My approach to describing Cambodia, and its context, links strongly with the 'thinking in stories' methodologies I used for this study. I want readers to see Cambodia through story, both through mine, and through stories of six diverse writers. These writers span a time period from the eleventh century to the present day and include: a diplomat, an ethnographer, an historian, a literary researcher, a celebrity, and an occupational therapy researcher. The diversity is intended to give a multi-perspectival view. In order to approach, understand, and begin to make meanings from what I experienced in Cambodia, I have armed myself with a complex view of Cambodian life and culture. Each writer contributed the 'gift' of their unique perspective, I accepted and incorporated these. Throughout the study, I depended on the combined wisdom of these six writers to augment what I was learning through my direct experience.

I have three rationales in mind in providing such detailed descriptions of the context. The first is to introduce readers to some of the complexities and nuances of life in the country of Cambodia, while simultaneously imitating some of the 'round-about' process I followed while attempting to learn about Cambodia myself. Understanding Cambodia well enough to write about it credibly is, and has been, a slow paced, challenging and meandering path. It resembles a 'going around in circles'⁶ while slowly penetrating through some of its many layers

⁶ Repeating the circular pattern of Cambodian traditional dance forms, the lamton (or ramvong). See Ebihara, 1990, note 7).

towards a better and deeper fathoming of a portion of the historical, relational, complex, confusing and sometimes compelling ways of life there.

This first rationale for introducing Cambodia through complexity and nuance, is helpful preparation for exploring a hidden but influential element of the Cambodian experience. The second rationale is related to questions and questioning. An important, although largely unexamined, aspect of Cambodian culture for researchers is the unique Cambodian context for questions themselves (Government of Canada, 2014). This includes the complexity and nuance of both asking and answering questions there.

Historical events such as the Pol Pot years of genocide and destruction from 1974-79 (Chandler, 2008), and the rote-learning based educational system (In, 2012; Pan, 2010), have combined with other aspects of Cambodian culture to influence the fundamental meaning of questions, how they are to be asked, how they are to be answered. The second rationale for this chapter is to provide helpful background and examples of the meaning of questions in Cambodia.

The third rationale for this chapter is to provide an historical background for the Cham Muslims of Cambodia, and to describe the specific village where the research took place. Clandinin et al., (2016) call locality the 'spaciality' dimension of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space⁷. This is where Clandinin & Connelly (1990, 2000, 2007) and Clandinin et al., (2016) purport that narrative inquiries take place. The final section of this chapter provides

⁷ Clandinin (2013) and Clandinin et al. (2016) imagine and employ a three-dimensional space to contain narrative inquiries which is comprised of three axes. There is a temporal axis (past, present, future or the 'forward and backward' line), a personal-social axis (intra and inter-personal, or the 'inward and outward' line), and a location axis (geographical, cultural, and philosophical spaces of the inquirer and the participants).

background of 'locality' as the *place dimension* of Clandinin' & Connelly's (1990) and Clandinin et al.'s (2000, 2007, 2013, 2016) three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. It provides specifics about the particular village setting of this study, including the surrounding schools that participants attend.

In Chapter 5, I will describe and discuss the architecture of the study, which is a mixture of two qualitative methodologies: narrative inquiry and autoethnography. This chapter has four sections. Section 1 tells the story of how I came to these methodologies and continues with a demonstration of Clandinin's three-dimensional narrative inquiry space using myself as an example. This section explores more fully the '*who am I in the research*' question. Section 2 discusses distillation as a method for data analysis, situating the analysis of my data within a narrative analysis framework based on Polkinghorne (in Kim, 2016, p. 196) and Mishler's typology (in Kim, 2016, p. 198). It explains how I came to utilize distillation in this study. Section 3 explores the methods I used to ensure verisimilitude and trustworthiness. Section 4 presents the rationale for my mixed methodology of narrative inquiry combined with autoethnography and my use of photographic images, along with rationales for other aspects of the study.

Chapter 6 provides a chronology of data collection, in order to describe and explain in detail specifically what transpired during the fieldwork in Cambodia. This part of my thesis answers the question: "How was the data collected?" It is divided into four sections according to the main time periods that divide the mechanics of how the fieldwork progressed. It follows the order of operations as the study transpired. The four periods are: Part 1 - preparation phase, Part 2 - beginning fieldwork phase, Part 3 - middle fieldwork phase, and Part 4 - ending fieldwork phase.

This chapter provides added layers of depth augmenting descriptions of the other aspects of the study through a step by step chronology demonstrating the processes involved in actualizing the methods used during the fieldwork. The processes were enacted in order to answer the first four research questions, that ask “what stories do the participants tell?”.

The full transcript⁸ of two story sessions with one of the village girl participants, Apple, is provided in Appendix K. The first is a story generation session and the second is a story verification session. Reading this account in its entirety, while it is many pages in length, can bring the realities of experiencing fieldwork in a village to life, adding the dimension of *feel*⁹ to the description. The full account complete with roosters and hammering in the background provides a template, an important foundational understanding, for how the data collection proceeded; as it was similar for all of the sessions with village girls. Presenting it in its entirety adds to the diversity of information offered as a means to satisfying standards of transparency and verisimilitude for the study.¹⁰

Chapter 7 follows with an overview of the findings as stories. It comprises a synopsis of the data collected during fieldwork in Cambodia in the form of twelve stories, then my autoethnography, followed by an outline of the limitations of the study. The data collected in Cambodia is presented in the order the stories were heard from all the participants. The girl’s stories are followed by the

⁸ All transcriptions of the English parts of recordings made in the field were completed by me, in Canada, where I did not have access to translation services from my research assistant Den. Future translation of the Khmer parts of recordings could be undertaken subject to sufficient time and money resources, or my acquisition of sufficient Khmer language skills.

⁹ See Appendix B- Glossary – Meaning in Motion, Bochner & Ellis, (2016).

¹⁰ See section on rigour in the research in Chapter 5..

research assistants' stories, and then my autoethnography which is a synopsis of practical wisdom, phronesis, I gained through enacting this study. In keeping with Clandinin's model of how to report a narrative inquiry, the stories, descriptions, and my 'thinking with story' reactions try to convey the experience of being 'in the midst'. This invites readers to join me and *feel*¹¹ as I put myself in the girls' shoes to live for myself the stories of daily life they are telling me. Additional contextual background information is woven into the stories in order to facilitate thinking about them in terms of the axes of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space.

In Part 3 of this chapter, I provide a detailed discussion of what I learned through the process of conducting the research. This is practical wisdom, phronesis, gained through the praxis or action of conducting research with Cambodian participants. It is gathered together and offered as my autoethnography to highlight the content and process. My practical wisdom learned, appears in a parallel format to the Cambodian participants' stories, i.e., my learnings were taken from field-learning to interim-learning to research learning. In addition to this discrete section that has the 'autoethnography' label, other aspects of my story of performing the research exist at many points throughout the document. I have maintained notebooks, reflected during listening, telling and explaining about the project to others, and written both paper and electronic versions of thoughts, feelings, ideas and insights as they occurred. A select sample of some of the reflections I wrote during the stages of the research process are provided verbatim in Appendix M. References to specific parts of these reflections are given in footnotes as appropriate throughout this document. Reading these reflections in their entirety is an option, similar to

¹¹ See 'Meaning in Motion' entry in Appendix B- Glossary, Bochner & Ellis (2016).

following a single thread of a tapestry, that can provide a sense of some of the transformations in thinking, feeling, and behaving that I have experienced throughout the research process.

In Part 4 of this chapter, to end the presentation of the findings, I offer a brief discussion of four limitations to this study. These include: issues about the sample selection; my knowledge, skill, and experience level; the scope and depth of the study; and the study's Western or Eurocentrism.

Chapter 8 follows with a further discussion of the data. It is divided into three sections that include a brief synopsis of the findings, comparing and contrasting worldviews, then insights and strategies. In Section 1, I will begin by summarizing and following on from the answers to research questions 1 – 5 about “what stories do they tell” and “the larger storyline informing practice”. Following a synopsis of findings I will focus further discussion on the assistants, then the village girls. My autoethnography, practical wisdom acquisition, hinges on understanding worldview in more complex and nuanced ways. I present an alternative culture-centric Chinese knot model for consideration when pursuing intercultural study. In Section 2 of Chapter 8, I compare and contrast worldviews and perspectives and introduce the concepts of Asiatic, (Miike, 2007, 2009); Miike & Chen, 2006), and ‘culture-centric’ (Kuo & Chew, 2009) models as alternatives to predominantly employed ‘Eurocentric’ or ‘Western’-centric approaches to research.

It is only possible to begin to answer Question 5, regarding insights and strategies for occupational therapists and scientists implementing community development, with these combined understandings of village daily life and

worldviews in mind. Possible strategies are suggested and briefly explored in Section 3.

The Conclusions are offered in Chapter 9 where I will provide a summary of contributions, implications informing occupational therapy and occupational science practice, some initial steps for sharing study findings. I then offer suggestions and advice for researchers going into Cambodia, and end with some ideas for future initiatives.

CHAPTER 3

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

Introduction.

Crafting a narrative inquiry study begins with the autobiographical examination of its underpinnings. Three dimensions are required: the personal, the practical and the social. To quote Clandinin (2013), in order to adequately answer the “so what?” and “who cares?” questions of a study; “we need to justify our studies: personally, in terms of why this narrative inquiry matters to us as individuals; practically, in terms of what difference this research might make to practice; and socially or theoretically, in terms of what difference this research might make to theoretical understandings or to making situations more socially just (p. 35). In the following section, I will explore these three dimensions.

Personal justification.

The story behind the need for this study makes it personally compelling. The first time I travelled to Cambodia was in February 2012. I had occasion to visit Dr. Mav, a Khmer doctor, who, through our conversation as fellow health practitioners, revealed he was involved in a community development project of his instigation. It was located in what he referred to as ‘the ugliest village’. At my request, he took me there on the back of his motorcycle for a visit one afternoon. The living conditions, with huts on stilts, no clean water source, and no sanitation except the lone toilet encased in a small concrete block building (financed through funds donated to the doctor by people in Japan where he had studied public health), were at once truly ugly and totally unforgettable. It was normal and typical for a village in Cambodia where there is no garbage collection; still, shocking to me despite my extensive world travels. Plastic bottles and other

garbage covered virtually every inch of ground, more washed up constantly by flooding from the river. The garbage was overwhelming.

I took refuge in my familiar mental space¹² and I asked if there were any people with disabilities in the village. I was taken to the home of a girl of 17 who could not walk. She was a virtual prisoner in a house on stilts. I asked if she attended school, the answer was no. The look in her eyes of longing and despair penetrated very deep, and stayed with me for many months afterward. It had the same haunting relentless presence as the image of the little girl in the pink¹³ coat from the movie *Schindler's List* (Lustig, Molen & Spielberg, 2004). I was told that someone had given her a wheelchair in the past; but that was a long-gone casualty of such harsh conditions, and I could see that she never really left that house on stilts.

I felt in my core that this momentary encounter called for a compassionate response and I agonized for a long time over what would be the good and right thing to do. The village elder who took me to meet her said, "we want to help her but we don't know how, so we bring her food." I could see that with little exercise and this kind of constant feeding, albeit well intentioned and social, the actual result would make caring for her in such conditions even more difficult.

¹² My *internalness* (see Appendix B- Glossary entry for more detailed discussion) includes both a professional aspect from my clinical work, and a personal one as the daughter of a blind mother. I have always explored disability issues in my travels.

¹³ Reviewing the movie recently led me to the new revelation that her coat is red, and to the related reflection that I was protecting myself all this time by only seeing it as pink, which is a happy colour for me, and does not have the bloody associations of the colour red. See: <http://www.oskarschindler.com/13.htm> for background about this now iconic image.

In sharp contrast to the overwhelming garbage and the plight of one girl in a doorway, the brightest and most hopeful sight in the village was the young girls with sparkling eyes and big smiles who appeared in small groups in almost every building the doctor showed me as we toured the village. Many hours of reading, reflecting, and reasoning ensued as I tried to make sense of the experience and searched for an adequate response.

Practical justification.

What difference might this study make for practice? Like the story of throwing starfish back to the sea teaches, it matters to this one (Eiseley, 1969). I have found inspiration and resonance in this story. It reveals persistence in the face of insurmountable obstacles, and being able to appreciate the importance of every single individual. This is similar to what, I am imagining at the time, will be needed for me to work in Cambodia. Persistence is exemplified by the little boy in Eiseley's (1969) story, as the boy rescues beached starfish by throwing them back into the sea one by one. It is reminiscent of my experiences in Haiti¹⁴ with Healing Hands for Haiti (Healing Hands for Haiti International Foundation Inc., 2018). In the past, I had found an organization to align myself with whereas now, in the absence of a suitable organization, I decided I would begin in Cambodia as a sole practitioner.

Based on my prior experience with bringing rehabilitation to low resource settings such as Haiti, I knew that post-retirement meaningful occupation for me in Cambodia required me to firstly acquire an adequate understanding of the

¹⁴ Based on personal experience participating with teams of rehabilitation professionals from Canada who went to Haiti in 2004, and 2005 under the leadership of Healing Hands for Haiti.

context of daily life there (Thibeault, 2011; VanLeit, & Crowe, 2009). I was advised to find a topic for my thesis that was both compelling and containable, and I wanted to be able to do something effectual to address the needs of the physically disabled girl I had met. The pieces seemed to fit.

I felt uncertainty in the face of this Cambodian clinical challenge. I did not know in that moment what was the good and right thing to do. This led me to seek practical experience. Kemmis (2012) describes a progression from praxis (taking action) to phronesis (acquiring practical wisdom) as the primary means for one to gain the valuable attribute of phronesis. He postulates:

[w]e can only encourage people to submit themselves to the disciplines of individual and collective *praxis*, on the one hand, and, on the other, to submit themselves to the disciplines of reflection and critical self-reflection about what consequences followed when they enacted *praxis*—when they did their best—to bring about the good for each person and the good for humankind through their individual and collective actions. (p.159)

Kemmis (2012) further explains that while phronesis cannot be taught directly, i.e., through classroom instruction, it can be conveyed indirectly when practitioners read accounts of the learning accomplished by their peers. He states that it:

can be learned (still *indirectly*) from *others'* experiences as they are represented in conversations, in history and biography, in art, in case studies, and in the study of cases and case histories in problem-based approaches to learning. (p. 159) (emphasis in original)

I became hopeful, transcending my initial uncertainty and hesitance. I believed that by following a Cambodian based learning path myself, perhaps other therapists might also benefit. My plan included first understanding the context in Cambodia, then finding a way to helpfully apply my rehabilitation knowledge and finally to write about it. The commitment to explore the lives of girls in that particular Cham village in Cambodia took root during my *Critical Perspectives on Inequities in Everyday Life* course in September 2012¹⁵.

My starting point was knowing nothing about the country, the culture, or how I might bring my knowledge and skills to them in a helpful and meaningful way given I would be living [t]here (i.e., in Cambodia). I used this platform and the structure of the course to delve as deeply as possible into the topics of Cambodia, gender equity, education of girls, and the Cham Muslims; culminating in the production of a Wiki on the topic of educating Cham village girls¹⁶.

What I found made it obvious that working towards finding usable, sustainable ways for educated outsiders (such as myself), to intervene effectively in Cambodia was a worthy endeavour. The literature I located also made it clear that a successful study of the daily life of these young people would require and generate both theoretical knowing and practical-experiential knowing (phronesis¹⁷). Despite careful searching of available electronic data bases and

¹⁵ The course ,OCCU 6507, was offered as one option during the coursework phase of my studies, it presented an excellent opportunity to explore issues of all the 'isms' such as racism, ageism, ableism, etc. The course is now required curriculum for a "Diversity and Inclusion Graduate Certificate", see: <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/health/occupational-therapy/programs/graduate-certificates/diversity-and-inclusion.html>

¹⁶ The 'me' writing this, who can look down my list of references and know what is in all of them, realizes that my knowledge and understanding of the topic has grown substantially since the Wiki of 2012.

¹⁷ Practical wisdom that comes from living out what is known, see also Phronesis entry in Appendix B- Glossary.

hard copies of literature published in the past 20 years, I did not find any studies of the daily life of Cham village girls in English. In fact, most studies I could access were conducted by English first language foreigners in Cambodia, and were confined to Buddhist majority participants. This dearth of references about Muslim girls in Cambodia added validation to the idea of contributing something that might begin to address an existing gap in the literature.

Simply put, the practical justification for doing the study hinges on the absence of prior study of this group coupled with practically seeking a meaningful basis for my pending transition to living, and working or volunteering, in Cambodia. The personal and practical aspects are overlapping rather than discrete and separate, as there is a practical part of the personal, and a personal part of the practical.

My research story at this point assumed the dimensions of a quest for information not easily found in published sources. This dilemma demanded a search in places beyond the published literature, it seemed reasonable to begin searching through my narrative imagination.

Narrative imagination as described and delineated by Brockmeier (2009), is a tool that “seamlessly mingles the factual with the fictitious, the real with the possible; in fact, it fuses the real and possible with the impossible” (p. 227). This captured my attention, and I searched again, this time for a framework, or paradigm, that I could use. The obvious starting point was Campbell, (1968) and the ‘Hero’s Quest’ for which he is famous. The fit of a masculine model seemed wrong, however, when both my study participants and I myself were female.

My persistent seeking brought me to Murdock, (2013) as she elaborated her feminine version of an heroic quest. Her description of a quest that a woman might embrace, or take on, was one that was concerned with relationality, and I felt an immediate resonance of her ideas with my inquiry. Murdock offers a perspective based on “healing and integrating all parts of the self”; she describes a quest that “values caring and affiliation rather than conquest and domination” (ibid, p.182). Her description includes the idea that a heroine’s journey is “a continuous cycle of development, growth, and learning” (ibid, p. 5) which seems to fit well with requirements for entering an unknown land and joining with people interculturally. I composed a brief description of what I was setting out to accomplish, my ‘Heroine’s Quest’¹⁸, with the overall goal to “learn how to authentically interact with” Cambodians.

Social and theoretical justification.

People with disabilities living in rural Cambodia have very difficult lives and limited access to services that might help them or their families (Connelly, 2009; Gartrell, 2010; Gartrell & Hoban, 2013; Macleod, Pann, Cantwell & Moore, 2014; Morgan & Tan, 2011; Nordenrot & Ojeda Castro, 2016; Nuth, 2016; Vijghen, 2010). On the other hand, Cambodia is not only a signatory of both the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (2006), they enacted a law in 2009 to protect and promote the rights of people

¹⁸ See Appendix B- Glossary entry for Heroine’s Quest, this device of a learning journey uses narrative imagination (see Glossary entry) to frame my research as a womanly quest, as conceptualized by Murdock (2013). It is Heroine’s Quest—qualitatively different than the masculine Hero’s Quest of Joseph Campbell’s (1968) *Hero With a Thousand Faces* because the focus is: “caring and affiliation rather than conquest and domination” (Murdock, 2013, p. 182).

with disabilities (Royal Government of Cambodia, 2009). There is a Cambodian definition of disability on page two of the English translation:

Persons with disabilities: refers to any persons who lack, lose, or damage any physical or mental functions, which result in a disturbance to their daily life or activities, such as physical, visual, hearing, intellectual impairments, mental disorders and any other types of disabilities toward the insurmountable end of the scale.(p.2)

VanLeit and Crowe (2009) surveyed 1000 households in two Cambodian provinces to gain a clearer picture of the kinds of disabilities, living conditions, and services required and/or available to rural families caring for children with a disability. Their work is founded on the principle that “it is critical to thoroughly understand the country context and develop programs based on actual community realities, interests, and needs” (ibid, p. 85). The success of their work, emphasizing the training and support of local Cambodians, is demonstrated through the sustainability of their interventions. They worked closely with both home visiting nurses, and hospital based physiotherapists as there is no specific occupational therapy service at the hospital in Siem Reap where they were based.

Morgan and Tan (2011) studied 24 families with a child diagnosed with cerebral palsy in three provinces including Kampot province. Their subjects were already receiving rehabilitation, as the researchers identified these families through their contact with The Cambodia Trust¹⁹. Group and individual interviews

¹⁹ This is an organization that has set up Prosthetics and Orthotics Schools in Asia. It is now called Exceed. More information is available at: <http://www.exceed-worldwide.org/what-we-do> . I have visited and toured their facility in Phnom Penh.

were conducted in Khmer, then translated. They found that it was important to ensure that services were provided in a manner sensitive to “the hierarchical nature of Cambodian culture, the emphasis on group relational patterns rather than individual needs and the context of chronic poverty” (ibid, p. 161).

Before attempting to bring to bear the well-intentioned helpfulness from my 30 years of clinical experience in rehabilitation, I knew that I required enough first-hand familiarity with the context to begin to understand what might be effective, sustainable, and/or appreciated (Nuth, 2016; Thibeault, 2011). That was foresight, and it was proven through the experience to be valid and true. It was not sufficient, however, as is obvious now that I have immersed myself in the context and I also have the benefit of hindsight (Freeman, 2010). The key to transformative learning as Mezirow (1990) describes it, is the critical self-reflective piece (p. xix). My Cambodia experience compelled me to exercise every available nuance of reflectivity, to carefully examine my assumptions about the meanings of what I saw.

Prior to completing the study in Cambodia, and before reading more extensively in the area of intercultural communication competence, I had no awareness or realization of how ‘Canadian-centric’ both *I* was, and the *research* was. I was blind to my invisible and taken-for-granted stance towards my study from conception through execution. I was unaware of the effects of mis-education of the ‘West’ regarding Islām (Stonebanks, 2004, 2008), and yet to discover through wider reading some of the effects of what I have experienced of an English language hegemony on scholarship. Graveline (1998), citing Said (1993), reminds us that the paradigms used in inquiries, therefore those represented by

published literature, “have all been drawn from what are considered exclusively Western sources,”(Said, 1993, p. 41).

After the fact, I can see that the entire conception and perhaps even the audacity to foray into a completely different country, language, and religion as a novice researcher, was all based on my invisible but over-riding individualistic and very *me-centred-worldview*. Maybe that is universally true for any and all researchers. Nevertheless, contributing my insights about bridging the chasm between my initial worldview, my unfolding cultural humility, and the need for an appreciation of what culture-centricity may offer to future research in Cambodia is a newly discovered imperative (Kuo & Chew, 2009). This is a justification for the study at a social and theoretical level.

CHAPTER 4

CONTEXTS AND NUANCES OF CAMBODIA

Part 1 - East meets West meets East

Cambodian context through stories.

The “West” has been studying the “East” for centuries. It has a magnetic force of attraction because it appears to be exotic and mysterious, it is definitely not *us* so it must be “Other”. It is natural and human to use our own selves as a measuring stick when trying to understand people and places that are not us. Rupp (2015) cautions us that “if there is no deeply grounded knowledge of those other traditions, the danger is that we will assimilate them into our own views and erroneously assume that we have understood them²⁰” (p. 31).

We, as a collective western society and academy, have used the word ‘Orientalism’ to represent our studies of, as well as our relationship with, the unknown East. Yet no “mechanical gathering of facts would constitute an adequate method for grasping” all the complexities and nuances of ‘The East’ being studied and explored by ‘The West’ according to Edward²¹ Said (1979, p. xxv). His wisdom is respected and often quoted, from a now classic exploration of ‘Orientalism’ in his book by the same name.

²⁰ I experienced this directly when my initial reaction to being told about a Cambodian folk tale about the ‘rabbit and the snails’ included jumping to the faulty assumption that it was the same as my familiar version of the classic fable of the tortoise and the hare. While there are some similarities, there are important fundamental differences that are indicative of the centrality of relationality in Cambodian culture. See Sak-Humphry (2011, p. 10). See also: Appendix M- Reflections about the Research, December 2013.

²¹ I use his first name as a measure of the level of relationship I feel for this scholar, I have listened to his recorded voice so many times as I tried to transition from waking to sleeping, as I was still mind-busy wound up in experiencing my thesis, that referring to him by last name only, feels sterile.

Pause to think about the implications and ramifications of these two elements— complexities—nuances—which are typically and constantly overlooked or glossed over in the Western rush to arrive at a chosen destination. If no ‘mechanical gathering of facts’ can allow us to grasp the complexities and nuances, I believe that stories can. Readers, writers, and sojourners who look at the outer appearance of things and then move on, may miss deeper meanings that are hidden below the surface. Complexities and nuances are revealed through the process of the story-excavating-and-retelling-journey. Delving for storied meanings below the superficial outer layers of their concrete and obvious manifestations requires spending time rather than looking quickly and moving on.

This study and the reporting of it are, by nature and necessity, more to do with process than with content; more to do with journey than destination. I invite you to come with me on the journey, I have crafted it to let you experience some of the realities for yourself through the complexities and nuances I will focus on. Some may seem tedious or frustrating or round-about; this is how it was/is for me and I intentionally include you as a sharing audience to my research-storytelling. I arrived in Cambodia knowing virtually nothing about it. Now six years later I want to describe it to you in the ways and means I learned about it, to take you with me, to build you an image of the layers of it as a foundation context for framing my study of the daily life of a group of Cham²² village girls.

In order to write credibly about Cambodia, I sought to know about its history, about its village life, about its literature, to see exemplary service, and to inform myself of what occupational therapist directed research about children,

²² The Muslim ethnic minority in Cambodia is known by several names including: Khmer Islam, and Cham (Blengsli, 2009). See Appendix B- Glossary entry for Moslem.

conducted in Cambodia, had found to date. I needed stories of Cambodia. Other people from Asia, as well as countless westerners, have come to Cambodia before me with the same need to find out about it, then write credibly about what they found. The stories of these six diverse people who went before me provide some of the building blocks I can use while constructing my own internal 'story language of Cambodia' that will contribute to my sense-making and meaning-making with the stories the village girls will share. I am starting by strategically using these diverse stories: how they touch me, how they challenge, intrigue, and delight me—as I begin to learn how to *think with stories*.²³

Some things have not changed.

Daguan Zhou, diplomat and emissary from China, was one of the first to officially visit and report. He came for a year in 1296 and wrote in detail of what he found. This was later compiled and published by Harris, (Zhou & Harris, 2007). Some remains unchanged. Here is a place to pause and reflect on what that means about Cambodia, its life and its society, the fact that some things are constant between 1296 and today²⁴. Rice is cultivated, families and communities are organized, and proverbs guide decisions and behaviour as it has been done since the 11th century. There is an air of timelessness, and there is prevailing intransigence within Cambodian culture. Thais and Vietnamese, geographic next-door neighbours, have invaded the lands and the culture over the intervening

²³ See Appendix B- Glossary for more details, *thinking with story* uses: story as teacher (Archibald, 2008), story as conceptual language (Frank, 1995), and answers Coles' (1989) *call of story*.

²⁴ I am a fifth generation Canadian, descended from colonials not aboriginals, but with a reasonable grasp of my country's history and quite extensive first-hand travel across its geography, and I can not imagine and name important elements of Canadian society in the year 1296 that are still a part of our contemporary Canadian daily life except the rocks, the trees, and the water.

centuries (Chandler, 2008), sometimes as destroyers and other times as sovereigns.

The French ‘colonializers’²⁵ of the 19th century, influences noted by Chandler, (2008), were invited by the king. He needed outsiders and their strength to shore up weak borders, the land under Cambodian control was shrinking and he feared losing it all. Those outsiders have been replaced in modern times by millions of foreign visitors who land in Siem Reap every year –there for three or four days, just long enough to view the magnificence of Angkor Wat²⁶ and then leave (Sharpley & McGrath, 2017). They contribute the strength of their dollars to a weak economy. The pattern of shoring up weakness with strength from outside, as King Norodom did when he invited the French into Cambodia in 1867, is being repeated in modern times.

Looking at grandeur and garbage.

Every sunrise over Angkor Wat is breath-stoppingly beautiful in its own way. By waiting and watching through a number of them, I have come to understand that spectacular grandeur (the typical tourist experience), as more than a surface image that awes people. Looking deeper, over time I now appreciate it as an important yet superficial outer covering. What it is hiding is the multi-layered onion of deeper relational meanings that makes Cambodia a true “Kingdom of

²⁵ See also: Appendix B- Glossary entry. A neologism combining aspects of exploitation with a singular relish for the task, i.e., colonizer plus womanizer: outsiders continue to violate Cambodia in addition to exploiting its people and resources (e.g., tricking young girls into slave-like domestic labour in other countries, see Boyle & Titthara, 2011).

²⁶ See Appendix I for my photo of the Angkor temple (Wat) that appears on the Cambodian flag. Angkor Wat is known as one of the largest temple complexes in the world, Siem Reap is the closest town with an airport, see Map of Cambodia, Appendix C.

Wonder” (Welcome to Cambodia, 2010). The grandeur is counter-posed by the ubiquitous garbage, its polar opposite.

Garbage in Cambodia is an unavoidable backdrop, in stark contrast to all the breath-stopping beauty it serves to both accentuate the grandeur, and to spoil it. An expat friend heard from a Cambodian that they perceive two types of garbage, dirty garbage (i.e., compostables) and clean garbage (i.e., plastic and Styrofoam). Dirty garbage is ignored because it will decompose, clean garbage is ignored because it is “clean.”

I have heard personal accounts, tales of how the initial intense impact of noise, chaos, and overwhelming garbage can propel first-time visitors from its capital, Phnom Penh, never to return (Meyn & Dara, 2017). I myself had an abrupt encounter with my ethnocentricity when I literally could not see the flowers for the garbage in the Cham village until a girl of six years opened my eyes (see drawing in Appendix O, and Story of Moon, Chapter 7). The extremes of grandeur and garbage definitely require some time to synthesize and assimilate, perhaps to appreciate, but only with effort and perseverance can they make some meaningful sense.

Sites of slaughter and torture.

Some of those who come to Cambodia leave days later satisfied they can ‘tick it off their bucket list’ and never come back. The same heightened sensitivity that has served me well throughout myriad personal and professional challenges in my life, has kept me from visiting the infamous sites of slaughter and torture through fear of the secondary trauma I would experience by doing so. I am unwilling to risk potentially permanent psychological and emotional scars, and internal images that vividly endure.

Many visitors are attracted to these same places²⁷. They determinedly descend into the darkness of the holocaust through visits to the killing fields and the infamous Tuol Sleng prison, places still toxic with the power to traumatize. Young people in particular are eager to pick up an AK-47 gun and shoot it at a cow²⁸, as commonly advertised in Phnom Penh tuk-tuks²⁹. Yet, other more scholarly visitors seek value not accessible at first and for which they must return again and again. Some stay much longer.

Relationality and reciprocity.

May Ebihara, an American with Japanese roots, was the first professional anthropologist to study Cambodia (Ebihara, 1968). She arrived in 1959 in a village called Svay³⁰ where she stayed for a year and captured a detailed ethnography of life there, before the Pol Pot³¹ years. She then returned from 1989 – 1990 adding to her legacy the layer of village life in the same place as it was rebuilt, able to gift the villagers with photographs of their loved ones lost in the Holocaust (Ebihara, 1990). Her insightful work is so resonant with my own experiences, while coming to understand and appreciate how relationality is central to Cambodian life (Marsten & Ebihara, 2011):

²⁷ See Crane (2016): “Besides the Angkor Wat temple complex, the biggest tourist draws in the country are the infamous “killing fields,” where hundreds of thousands of Cambodians were murdered from 1975 to 1979 under the Khmer Rouge regime, and the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, housed in the former S-21 Prison, where thousands were detained, tortured, and killed” p. 6.

²⁸ See the following link for more information: <http://asiatrips.travel/blog/shooting-cows-in-phnom-penh>

²⁹ A Tuk-tuk is the Thai term for a motorized rickshaw, the Khmer term is ‘*reumork*’ although it is not the word typically used. See also: Appendix B- Glossary entry for *Reumork*.

³⁰ The village name itself has complexity and nuance: “Cambodians identify sexually transmitted diseases under the illness category ‘svay’ (‘mango’ illness).” (Bith & Etkin, 2004, p. 19). Cambodia names a village, a disease, and a fruit all with the same word – a Canadian impossibility.

³¹ The Pol Pot years are 1975-1979. See Appendix I, item 7. See also Chandler (1999) and Short (2005).

I feel a kind of sense of obligation to them and to certain other families. The two young women who worked as housekeepers for me, I felt some obligation to them. And I think they felt I had some obligation to them as well, similar to family members. (p. 211)

Ebihara had a true heart for the people she studied and set both the tone and the stage for later ethnographers, mentoring only select researchers (Ledgerwood, 1990, 1995) that met her exacting relational standards. Certain native Cambodians, along with sojourners and researchers following in her footsteps, have become entranced, enmeshed, embedded, and have subsequently written about the country, their understandings, their adventures, and their transformed selves (Beresford, Cucco & Protta, 2017 – tell about child labour and gender discrimination in the garment industry; Bith & Etkin, 2004 - investigate use of biomedical and traditional therapies; Bour, 2010 - details ethnic identities; Dewitt, 2007 – gives an ethnography of Cambodian women’s strength; Eng, 2013 – tells about Cham identities; Fujimura, 2015 – gives the life stories of four Cambodian women; Hagadorn, 2004 – explores how Khmer Rouge survivors retell culture for the children; Hoefinger, 2013 – reveals details of professional girlfriends and transactional relationships; In, 2012 – reveals critical literacy in elementary education; Nordenrot & Ojeda Castro, 2016 – talk about structural violence, disability, and education; Overland, 2012 – overviews Cambodian resilience; Ozawa, 2010 – explores villager’s trust in health insurance; Pan, 2010 – investigates the effects of child labour on school attendance; Pérez Periero, 2012 – details the diasporic identity and Islāmicity among the Cham; Purnell, 2014 – determines relationships between children’s work involvement and school attendance; So, 2010 – provides an oral history of

Cham Muslim women under the Khmer Rouge; Ten, 2014 – talks about women’s legislative representation; Thon, 2017 – illuminates one woman’s struggle to live her dreams) to name but a few.

Some, like David Chandler, became not only colleagues but friends. He is both a friend to Cambodia, and also to Ebihara. It is reassuring that within and among all the scholars and visitors, the Cambodian cultural emphasis on relationality has the power to penetrate and transform at least some.

Folktales and proverbs.

David Chandler, author of *A History of Cambodia* (2008), is seen as one of the definitive sources on Cambodia in Asian studies circles³². He arrived from California in 1960, to “the sight of cows being chased off the runway by determined women with sticks [that] foreshadowed some of the rickety charm and “otherness” of Cambodia that has nourished [his] affection for the country and its people ever since” (Chandler, 2007). He mastered enough of the nuances of Khmer culture and language to translate folk tales (Chandler, 1976), applying the insights gained to his interpretation of historical events and people’s daily lives (Hansen & Ledgerwood, 2008).

These key perspectives of a historian and an ethnographer, both of whom dig deeply into the meanings of what they encounter, form the basis for my own understandings and actions. Chandler (1976) provided me with translated folktales that he found essential in making meanings, I now have my own growing

³² Ebihara states: “David is *the* major historian of Cambodia” (Hansen & Ledgerwood, 2008, p. xi).

collection of Khmer folk-tales³³ and proverbs. Ebihara developed deep and lasting relationships with her research participants, and there is a sense of her protectiveness³⁴ towards them as she is very selective of which Western researchers she mentors.

Ebihara (1990) used photographs to give something back to the people and community she was living with “in the midst³⁵”. I successfully emulated her, gifting participants with a laminated hard copy of their personal illustrated story.

Eating frogs and dodging puddles.

Some who visit Cambodia are pulled so deeply into the layers, are so affected, that they are inspired to leave a lasting mark. Angelina Jolie, celebrity and ambassador for the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) in 2001, first came to Cambodia for the filming of *Laura Croft: Tomb Raider* in 2000 (West, 2001). She returned the following year and travelled to rural settings in the company of Loung Ung, author of *First They Killed My Father: A daughter of Cambodia remembers* (Ung, 2000). They became friends in the process. It was a journey of personal transformation through dangers, discomforts, and hardships resonant with my own experience of rural Cambodia; and very far from her Hollywood life (Jolie, 2003):

³³ Including “The Mountain of the Men and the Mountain of the Women” which is the favourite of Rabbit, pseudonym for one of the village girl participants. See: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED345573.pdf> for an accessible version.

³⁴ I am conscious of my yearning to protect the village girls from Khmer’s negative attention, see Appendix B- Glossary entry for Moslem. See Chapter 6, Logo rationale, page 135.

³⁵ Clandinin (2006): “Whether inquirers begin with telling stories or living stories, we enter into the midst of stories. Participants’ stories, inquirers’ stories, social, cultural and institutional stories, are all ongoing as narrative inquiries begin. Being in the field, that is, engaging with participants, is walking into the midst of stories” (p. 47).

It seemed every five minutes we had to walk the bikes, either because the bridges were all so broken or because some of the puddles were way too deep. I was leading, so I hit the puddles first. One was so deep the water reached the top of my thighs. At one point, Loung took her shoes off and started looking for frogs³⁶. (p. 96)

Jolie vividly describes how coming to Cambodia changed and transformed her³⁷. She adopted her first child shortly after this in 2002: a Cambodian baby (Maddox is now a teenager). She subsequently bought 60,000 hectares near Battambang where he came from, to create a wildlife preserve, and was granted Cambodian citizenship in 2008. Ung's book was first published in 2000. Ung then wrote the screenplay for a movie directed by Jolie and assisted by Maddox, with an all-Cambodian cast, in Khmer with English subtitles³⁸. Jolie's words capture a hint of what I have learned is the essence of people here, deep layers of the onion, the hidden-in-plain-view treasure of the 'Kingdom of Wonder' (Jolie, 2003):

I continue to grow more and more in love with everyone here. They know something—something we have forgotten. It is a feeling of community. It is a feeling of deeply appreciating their peace and freedom. (p. 103)

³⁶ Frogs are a common food source in Cambodia, see Neang (2010) for a report on frog consumption and trade in Cambodia. See Appendix M, Importance of Story in my life for my contrasting "dead frogs in jars" story.

³⁷ See "BBC Our World, 2017" documentary titled: *The Power of Memory*, about the making and opening of "First They Killed My Father" where Yalda Hakim interviews Jolie. It was first broadcast March 4, 2017.

³⁸ Jolie's way of working is inclusive and respectful therefore the result is more authentic, unlike the popular movie "The Killing Fields" (Joffé, 1984) which was filmed in English, in Thailand, with a predominantly non-Khmer cast and crew.

A tally of this tour of important visitors shows a diplomat, an ethnographer, a historian and a celebrity who all express how deeply their Cambodian experience affected them. Most long-stay visitors develop a deep affection for this country that is not their place of origin.

Capture consciousness and seduce the heart.

Sharon May, documenting the modern literature of Cambodia (Stewart & May, 2005), came to it through the gauntlet of working at refugee camps on the border with Thailand “in the mid-1980’s after the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime” (May, 2004, p. 27). She explains: “If why I came was unclear, why I stayed was not. In Khmer I would say *chap arom*. I’ve heard the phrase translated as *interesting*, but literally it means “to capture one’s consciousness” (ibid, p. 29).

May eloquently describes a certain encounter with a journalist from the “West” when the long journey back to Phnom Penh in 2002 left her too exhausted to do anything but ‘think’ back at him. She did not find words to deliver the perfect rebuttal to his adamant claim: “You know, there is no tradition of the Western novel in Cambodia. It’s just not a very literate culture³⁹” (May, 2004, p. 27). He never saw beneath the surface, but she did. She knew, even if words escaped her in that moment: “the Khmer term for novel, *pralomlok*, and its literal meaning: a story that is written to seduce the hearts of human beings” (ibid, p. 27).

³⁹ This attitude is epitomized in Schneberg’s poem: What I know (for Som Kim Ly) “But to the U.N. lady, Cambodia is merely a latrine whose stench can be fumigated only by foreigners.” (Schneberg, 2006, p. 26).

Childhood changed by tourism.

A final addition to this diverse group of writers about Cambodia is Melina⁴⁰ Czmoniewicz-Klippel, an occupational therapist (2009, 2010, 2011, 2017). While she is not the only occupational therapist who has written about Cambodia, her writings have continued over the span of a number of years. She studied the lives of children in Siem Reap⁴¹ in an effort to better understand how tourism in a developing world setting can influence and challenge youngsters as they grow through childhood. One of her insights penetrates how the very definitions of childhood used internationally can get in the way as they lead to: “culturally insensitive or imperialistic interventions [that] may result in real, albeit inadvertent, negative child outcomes” (Czmoniewicz-Klippel, 2010, p.151). Melina emigrated to Australia with her family as a child, grew up there, and during her studies to qualify as an occupational therapist she was (Czmoniewicz-Klippel, 2011):

taught to engage with occupationally deprived populations in a manner [she] considered unduly reductionist. That is, [she] was mentored to develop expertise in enabling clients to compensate for their biomedical deficits, with minimal regard for the social and structural determinants of their disabilities. [she] felt (then and now) decidedly uncomfortable in doing things *to* or *for* rather than *with* [her] clients, an approach which inevitably occurs when health

⁴⁰ I use her first name as I have spoken to her directly, and feel a bond of kindred professions.

⁴¹ Siem Reap is the town closest to Angkor Wat, it is host to millions of people each year who are there to experience Angkor Wat sunrises, sunsets, and a lot of climbing and clambering. See Map of Cambodia, Appendix C.

professionals are positioned as experts. (Kindle Locations 16360-16364).

Melina experienced increasing dissonance between her values and the mandate under which she was expected to practice (Czmoniewicz-Klippel, 2011), feelings similar to what I experienced in the Canadian health system leading up to my retirement in 2014. Just prior to leaving the profession entirely, she decided to continue her studies instead, and pursued her research interest in the 'social construction of childhood' (ibid, Kindle location 16378). Melina chose Cambodia as a site for her research because it offered attributes that made sense given her research into "the influence of rapid social change on the social construction of childhood" (ibid, Kindle Location 16378).

She spent ten months in Siem Reap interviewing children through interpreters, both individually and in groups (Czmoniewicz-Klippel, 2010). She also interviewed adults from diverse settings and backgrounds to round out her foundation for understanding what she was observing. She investigated specifically: "how the different generations in Cambodia are negotiating the reconstruction of childhood in concert with rapid economic and cultural globalization" (ibid, 116). Her participants included both girls 'Trying-to-be-good-girls', (p. 339) and boys, 'Bad Boys, Big Trouble', (p. 181) living in a predominantly Buddhist community in a tourist destination town. The similarities in our professional backgrounds and our time spent in Cambodia, however; co-exist with some marked contrasts.

My choice of Cambodia and arrival there came before finding my research interest. I only took eight weeks to complete my fieldwork. Six weeks were spent making almost daily visits to the village, while the remaining two

weeks in Kampot town nearby were needed for all the background tasks at the start and finish. This required using all the vacation time I had from my employment, for data collection. It is a short time measured in weeks, as compared with her 10 months. This was not nearly sufficient according to the disapproval in her voice when I spoke with her (see Reflections- 'Reactions to ...' May 8, 2015, Appendix M). The village in my study is a Muslim village, where no white woman had visited prior to me⁴². It is definitely not a tourist destination. My study focus was on girls only, I recorded their daily lives in pictures as well as words, I captured their actual voices paired with the photographs, and I presented each participant with a laminated copy of her story (in both English and Khmer). Czmoniewicz-Klippel (2010) employed an occupational justice frame in seeking:

to develop a grounded theory model principally so as to go beyond the “descriptive accounts or stories” offered by many ethnographers, which Charmaz and Mitchell (2001, p. 169⁴³) claim are often “boring” and analytically thin. (p. 118)

I found the occupational justice concept, as founded on individual agency and Eurocentric thinking, dissonant with Cambodia's deeply relational culture. An alternative that would be more congruent with relationally based societies and cultures, published in English, was not located in a search of the literature, possibly indicating that it has yet to be developed (Gupta, 2016). Wanting to be anything but “boring and analytically thin”, I have used story as a vehicle for

⁴² Stated by Manco in her story, see Chapter 7, Manco, also Appendix E.

⁴³ This reference is from Melina's dissertation: Charmaz, K., & Mitchell, R. (2001).

arriving at nuance and complexity, while employing an occupational lens to assist with meaning making.

Summary of what I took away from these six writers.

Zhou & Harris (2007) provide me with the clue that many things about the Cambodian way of life have stayed the same over centuries of time. There is a tangible resistance to change in many aspects of Khmer culture. Modern weddings incorporate traditional rituals and everyone dances in the traditional ways, to the traditional prescribed music, and changes their elaborate costumes multiple times to coincide with a series of protocols and rituals⁴⁴. I find this understandable as protecting one's language and culture under colonialism builds a resistance to interference from outsiders, and Cambodia has a long history of being taken over and run by outsiders (Chandler, 2008).

Vietnam, by contrast, allowed the Portuguese missionaries and the French colonials to change its written language into one using Western letters⁴⁵. Cambodia refused to succumb to the same pressures and has kept their Pali and Sanskrit originated script. I take from Zhou, that in Cambodia the strong foundation of doing what has always been done in the ways it has been done, will be a predominant worldview and lifestyle. As stated earlier, Chandler (1976) has given me the gifts of proverb and folk-tale nuances, and a growing appreciation for how these stories and wisdoms interweave and underpin Khmer culture.

⁴⁴ Based on personal attendance at Khmer weddings, including the Khmer Islam wedding of Farina So.

⁴⁵ See Haudricourt (2010) for the most recent translation of Haudricourt's 1949 article on orthography in Vietnam.

Ebihara was a pioneer, able to stay for extended periods in primitive villages which is an inspiration to me, but even more than that she developed deep and lasting relationships with those she studied. She gifted people with photographs of lost loved ones. I take from her the importance of relationality and reciprocity, and determine to emulate her.

Angelina Jolie's journey into Cambodia, her commitment to truly listen, and to give something back, is inspiring in the lengths she goes to in order to be of service. By adopting a Khmer baby, creating a wildlife reserve, becoming a citizen of the country, by engaging local staff and crew to make her cinematic interpretation of *First They Killed My Father* (Panh & Jolie, 2017), alongside the author Loung Ung, she paves the way for others, including me, who want to learn from Cambodians and work together with them in meaningful ways. She speaks of how much and in what ways Cambodia changed her (Jolie, 2003), I welcomed and tried to incorporate the insight of her revelations and felt considerable resonance with her transformation story giving me a sense of validation.

Sharon May (2004) is a role model who I want to take with me as a beacon. She insists on seeing the intrinsic value in Cambodia and Cambodians, even when many Westerners seem to dismiss the country as 'not very valuable' and its people as 'not very capable'. This is my Cambodian context list of wisdoms from them: things stay the same; folk-tales and proverbs have a strong influence; relationality and reciprocity are primary; working with the people means living with them, knowing them on the inside, and seeing them in a positive light. The remaining sojourner is the occupational therapist.

Melina has gifted me with her presence as an occupational therapy scholar in a country that has little direct knowledge or experience with this

profession (Dunleavy, 2007). We have different questions (mine are narrative inquiry ‘wonders’), and use different methods— yet our clinical backgrounds have strong similarities. I take from Czymoniewicz-Klippel (2011) the “trying to be good girls” chronology of what it is like to grow up as a Cambodian Buddhist girl near Siem Reap, and move forward to exploring what it is like to grow up as a Khmer Islām, or Cham, girl in a fishing village near Kampot.

Figure 1: Typical day of Amom, a 14 year old trying-to-be-good girl

- 5:30 or 6 am: Wake up, clean the house, wash dishes from the previous evening
 - 7:30 am: Eat breakfast (leftover rice or instant noodles)
 - 8.30 am: Buy ingredients from the market for cooking and iced coffee for father, cook rice and lunchtime meal, serve father’s lunch
 - 10:30 am: Gather mother and siblings, eat lunch
 - 10:50 am: Rest for 10 or 15 minutes
 - 11 or 11:15 am: Wash dishes
 - 11:30 am: Take a bath, comb hair, change into school uniform
 - 12 midday: Cycle to school
 - 12:30 pm: Clean the classroom, do homework or review lessons
 - 1-5 pm: Attend classes
 - 5-6 pm: English lesson at a town-based NGO school
 - 6-7 pm: Korean lesson at a village-based NGO school
 - 7:15 pm: Cycle home, take a bath
 - 8 pm: Eat dinner, watch television
 - 9:15 pm: Go to bed
- from Czymoniewicz-Klippel (2011) Kindle location 16501

Part 2 - Questions in Cambodia.

It appears simple and straightforward on the surface. The pre-suppositions underlying crafting a research proposal in Canada start with the “question(s)”. Professors, researchers and review boards all assume that one develops and composes questions then proceeds to doing what it takes to answer them, presumably by asking more questions, (although Indigenous methodologies seek alternatives, they remain exceptions and not the rule (Archibald, 2008; Graveline, 1998; Lewis, 2015; Wilson, 2008).

In Western culture, questions beyond factual questions with a single right answer, are easy and natural, but in Cambodia this is not the case⁴⁶. I first discovered this as I tried (through an interpreter) to ask the girls (participants) a series of questions to help me begin to understand the context of their life in the village. It was at once frustrating, unexpected, and amazing. It forced me to consider the role of questions in my own life and culture, and it forced me to figure out how to get to 'stories' with them when their experiential world included factual questions with one right answer and not more.

Their world has questions with one right answer: not the abstract reasoning, not the descriptive details, not the personal opinions or self-generated ideas of imaginations – just the facts (see: Butterfly's story in Chapter 7, also Reflections About Questions, Dec. 2015, Appendix M). The simple answer to "what stories do they tell?" is that they don't tell stories when asked a question about their daily life: they answer factual questions as they have been trained to do. Everything is very concrete.

I could find little published research on this specific nuance of culture and life in Cambodia. It would seem to be important, and could cause significant communication difficulty for those unfamiliar with local ways. In the absence of scholarly discourse exploring Cambodian cultural aspects of this, I offer a small patchwork of vignettes and experiences instead. The Government of Canada (2014) gives advice on its Global Affairs Canada web page from a local

⁴⁶ Living in Cambodia, and reading widely about it, has made me aware that there are complex cultural, historical, political, pedagogical and systemic underpinnings for this that would warrant a thesis of their own to adequately examine. Despite the disparity, I could find little written about the meanings and uses of questions in Cambodia from the scholarly perspective.

perspective. They provide suggestions under the heading of 'country insights'⁴⁷, under each of 16 headings. One explanation under the Conversation heading is given as follows: "In Canadian Culture "YES" means "YES"; "NO" means "NO", but not in Cambodian culture. Therefore, ask 3 times to get the true answer [emphasis from author]."

The local perspective under the Government of Canada (2014) Conversation heading also advises: "Try not to ask direct questions, such as 'do you have wife or children?' or 'how old is that person?'. Try to get acquainted first before asking private questions about the person's name, education, hobbies or skills, preferences. Ask them what they want to drink or eat is normal."

During their research on rural Cambodians' responses to rehabilitation for their disabled children, Morgan and Tan (2011) quote a parent:

The hierarchical nature of the Cambodian culture was reflected in the responses of many participants, who reported that it was not appropriate for parents to question or challenge staff about the treatment their child was receiving. While most parents responded positively to the idea of staff questioning them on the status and needs of their child, parents did not feel it was appropriate that they in turn question staff.

I am afraid to ask questions, because they might think I am interrogating them, but they let us ask any question if we're not clear or don't understand. So I don't ask questions, I'm too afraid to ask

⁴⁷ See more details at: https://international.gc.ca/cil-cai/country_insights-apercus_pays/ci-ic_kh.aspx?lang=eng#cn-1, date modified 2014-11-17.

questions. [Mother of a three year old girl with severe cerebral palsy]
(p. 165).[emphasis in original]

VanLeit and Crowe (2009) describe the care and attention required to develop questions for their survey of rural households with a child who had a disability: “Many survey questions and methods of asking questions had to go through a lengthy process of modification and refinement to better meet the local language and culture of respondents” (pp. 88-89).

The question has historically been used as a lethal weapon in Cambodia, particularly during the Pol Pot years 1975-1979 when many of the millions who were executed had been betrayed by people they knew. Through living there, I have learned that the meaning of the concept and use of questions is so different than what I, as a Canadian student, having grown up being encouraged to ask questions constantly, understand it to be. The entire premise of research questions and finding answers to them hinges on the cultural context and meaning of ‘question’ in the first place.

Pearson (2011), evaluating an Non-Governmental Organization that provides professional development for other groups and agencies in Cambodia, describes it:

As a result of both cultural norms and repressive experiences, Cambodians are not comfortable with exploratory questions. Whereas expatriates think of questions, particularly “Why?” as a learning tool, Cambodians experience them as negative and accusatorial and respond accordingly. As mentioned elsewhere, children are not expected to ask questions of their elders, and thus in many households children’s questions will be met with an angry response, until they learn to stop

asking them. I recall several discussions with one senior Cambodian colleague who was frustrated with his inability to formulate questions during discussions. He said that as a child whenever he asked a question, his mother would be angry with him, so he simply stopped asking. He had buried his curiosity so deep at an early age that he had no idea where to find it again now that he needed it as an adult. Over time through effort and practice, this colleague did manage to develop high-level questioning skills, but many others never manage it. (pp. 91-92)

During the Pol Pot⁴⁸ years, questions were a matter of life and death and children were used as weapons of betrayal to their families. Ratner (2014), who is a consummate Khmer storyteller, in *In the Shadow of the Banyan*, describes the moment her (quasi auto-biographical) character gives the real name of her father to a soldier, setting in motion a chain of events leading to his execution⁴⁹:

I blinked, confused for a second or two—we have no house, so how could there be a head?—but before I could answer, Papa said, “I am.” “Klah . . .”—a breathless objection from Big Uncle. He started to come forward, but Papa told him firmly, “Arun, stay back.” Big Uncle retreated into his place by the window. Again Papa told the soldier, “I’m the head of the household, Comrade.” “Is he your father?” the soldier demanded. “Yes,” I let out, gulping down a fistful of air in turn. Papa’s hands grew cold and heavy on my shoulders. I heard heartbeats, fast and thumping, but I couldn’t be sure if they belonged to me or to Papa, or even the soldier.

⁴⁸ See Appendix I, item 7, see also Chandler (1999) and Short (2005).

⁴⁹ Schools were a common execution site, I wonder if there is any relationship to how empty of children and community members all the school yards are outside the specific hours of school. Further, every time I ask a question in Cambodia, it is with an uneasy awareness of all the layers of these ghosts surrounding me.

“What’s his name?” Again, Papa opened his mouth to speak and again the soldier yelled him down. “SILENCE!—I’m asking the girl!” He turned back to me. “Your father’s name!” “Ayuravann,” I whispered, regretting it as soon as it came out of my mouth. Mechas Klah—the “Tiger Prince,” as Papa was known among family members and close friends—would have sounded more impressive, intimidating. “Full name,” the soldier demanded. “Your father’s full name.” “Sisowath Ayuravann,” I rattled, saying the surname first, as Cambodians do. “And I’m Sisowath Ayuravann Vattaaraami.” I thought if I just went ahead and also gave him my full name, then I would compensate for my earlier slowness. (p. 98)
[emphasis is from original]

Her personal experience with questions, resonant with the majority of Cambodians over age 35, left deep and lifelong scars. Coming from outside gives me a different perspective. Nonetheless, it is distracting and confusing to walk through busy streets in the capital city with questions coming at me from all directions. At times, it feels as if questions are a weapon being used against me. When I walk anywhere in Phnom Penh, there are two defining questions that are directed at me; sometimes they feel like a barrage of bullets. “What is your nay?”: the standard version of people who want to practice their English on me, stated in their typical ‘drop the final-consonant-sound’ confusing way—would be the first. The second: “Madame, Tuk Tuk?” comes at me in a chorus from many driver’s voices and feels like it should be printed on the front of my T-shirt as my submission to receiving my new first and last names.

I searched diligently with little success to find a reference that related to the meaning of questions and/or questioning in Cambodia. Pearson (2011), in

the context of professional development for Cambodian staff learning about capacity development, explains that:

[i]n Cambodian culture, asking questions is prohibited by fear of causing people of higher status to risk losing face if they do not know the answer. Nowhere embodies this prohibition more strongly than the classroom, where students dare not question their teacher about anything. The student's task is simply to write down what the teacher has said. (pp. 13-14)

Den⁵⁰ invites me to observe in his classroom while he is teaching an English lesson to a grade eight class. He has written a list of vocabulary words on the battered white-board. He reads them one by one and the children repeat after him. When he asks them what the words mean, the answer is silence. One by one, he defines the words in a concrete fashion. The class dutifully writes the list down in their notebooks: end of lesson. He tells me that it is not unusual for girls in his class to start to cry⁵¹ when he singles them out and directs a question at them. He reasons that they are '*too shy*'. In the 'statement of fact-repetition-record it' official pedagogy, there is no room for exploration or discussion nor for any back and forth interplay between teacher and student, or student and student. This is the way things are done, and the way it is expected. There is one, and only one, correct answer for each question in school.

⁵⁰ My research assistant, Den, through our times together including sharing in life and death of our loved ones, has become both colleague co-teacher and something between friend and family over the course of our relationship. The deep bond and lasting nature of our 'relationality' is resonant with what Ebihara (1968, 1990) described based on her experiences as a researcher.

⁵¹ See Chapter 6, page 150; see also Morningstar's story, Chapter 7, for an example as this happened with her.

Pearson (2011) sheds light on this by describing the efforts her staff had to devote to learning how to ask questions in adulthood, she illuminates this arduous process clearly. This is the context for questions in Cambodia. From my perspective and experience, the security (face saving) provided by limiting questioning in general, and by further limiting all questions to those having one right answer, comes at a high cost. This deep and long-lasting deficit follows from stifling curiosity and creativity, as the prevention of asking questions is not limited to overt discourse. It equally prevents the imaginative thinking behind crafting them, it permeates the way things are done, prevents development of imagination, and appears to put an effective stranglehold on the field of possibilities for young people in Cambodian culture.

My research questions turn outward to Cambodian participants, then they turn inward towards me according to the 'personal—social' axis of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. My experience of conducting the research study and what I learned as a result of doing it has been encapsulated in a section labeled: 'my autoethnography' as a means of highlighting both the content and process of practical wisdom, phronesis, acquisition. In contrast, my lived experience of doing the study is not as structured and containable as this might suggest as it has permeated all aspects of my daily life for the duration of this study. One of the most profound and lasting of my changes is the new understanding and respect I have for the meanings of questions and questioning. Through conducting the study, I gradually respond to the Cambodian context for questions and questioning by learning to take an indirect approach to asking about things, and by learning to listen with my eyes, and with my 'third ear' as Archibald (2008, p. 76) calls the heart.

Part 3: Locality

Introduction to the Cham Muslims of Cambodia.

“Who are the Chams? Why are there Chams in Cambodia? Where did the Chams come from? How have the Chams and the Khmers dealt with one another in the past?” are all questions about the Cham’s historical background that anthropologist William Collins set out to answer in his detailed 1996 paper about them, which has endured as part of a book (Sukhum, 2009). I had the same ‘wonders’ based on my time with young Muslim girls in their very poor fishing village setting.

In seeking answers I am trying to understand the ‘past’ (temporal) part of their three-dimensional narrative inquiry space(s). At the same time, I also wonder how much of their own historical roots the girls are aware of, since neither Cham history nor Khmer history are part of the curriculum in public school. I wonder whether and how much of their ancient roots are even passed down to them in the traditional ways of oral transmissions in a country that lost so much of itself, ripped apart in a few years under the Khmer Rouge. I enter the worldview of people, and walk in their shoes if I possibly can, in order to arrive at the kind of meaning-making I am striving for as described by Bochner,(in Bochner & Ellis (2012), in his explanation of the importance of “meaning in motion⁵²” (p. 155). Two major components of Cham identity (and therefore worldview) are their historical roots, and their Islāmic values, beliefs, and practices. I will briefly explore both historical roots and values, for Cham at the level of the country in general, then for their specific village near Kampot. I will

⁵² Bochner defines “meaning[s] in motion” as evocative writings that let a reader feel what it is like to do or be someone/somewhere/somewhen rather than just receive information about it. See Appendix B- Glossary for more details.

conclude the chapter with a description of the village itself as I found it, and the local schools, to clarify the locality aspect of their three-dimensional narrative inquiry space.

Historical background of the Cham Muslims of Cambodia.

Historically, the Kingdom of Champa spanned time from about the second to the nineteenth centuries in an area “along the narrow coast in what is now central Vietnam” (Bruckmayr, 2006, p. 1). Much evidence has been lost over time, yet ideas and legends like the “mystical Kerik⁵³ tree, which gave supernatural powers and energy to the Cham king and its people since ancestral times” described by Seise (2009, pp. 6-7), live on with scholars. Some artifacts lie buried underwater or underground (Treasures of Champa Kingdom, 2015⁵⁴). Childress (2017), presents a fanciful, sweeping alternative description of the Cham empire that avers their influence extended around the world; he imagines that “the mysterious Cham, or Champa, peoples of Southeast Asia formed a megalith-building, seagoing empire that extended into Indonesia, Fiji, Tonga, Micronesia, and beyond—a transoceanic power that reached Mexico, the American Southwest and South America⁵⁵.” It is as unbelievable to me, his tale of them spanning the globe, as it is sad to me that the version of Cinderella written in Cham that was found by Leclère⁵⁶ during his tenure as “Resident”, has become the English *Angkat, a Cambodian Cinderella* (Cohen, 2014).

⁵³ Seise (2009, pp. 6 -7) relates a long sad tale of betrayal by the foreign wife of the king, once he cut down the Kerik tree— her people could successfully take over his kingdom.

⁵⁴ This is a 20 minute video account of their lost treasures, see:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGRpeBDzcok>

⁵⁵ See <https://player.fm/series/earth-ancients/david-hatcher-childress-the-lost-world-of-cham> for an audio version.

⁵⁶ Adhémard Leclère was appointed by the French colonial government as administrator, he was in Kampot from 1886-1890. He is described as a diplomat, economist, politician and ethnologist.

The significance of a Cham Cinderella story written in their traditional language, discovered by the same French administrator that governed their village in the 1800s, may not be immediately obvious. However, when looking for the stories that Cham village girls tell about their daily life, it is also important to be aware of the stories that they do not tell. The fact that this story is not to be found anywhere in the village, the school, nor in the Kampot teacher training library reveals an obvious gap in what narrative imagination might have to contribute to Cham girls formulating their hopes and dreams. This is a sharp contrast to the presence in virtually every North American home of princess stories in every media, and the popularity of being and becoming a princess for little girls in Western countries.

Kingdom of Champa peoples are credited with discovering the best ways to cultivate rice in harsh conditions, still used today. They sent a fast maturing drought resistant variety of rice to Song Dynasty China as tribute (Barker, 2011). They created a hybrid culture, and followed a blend of their original animistic roots with the imported Hindu/Brahman religion and culture. Their metal and stonework is apparently as unrivalled as it is unknown, the scant remnants of their monument building are visible at My Son, near present day Danang (Hubert, 2012). A collection of gold carved temple adornments is in Hungary⁵⁷. Their Royal Treasures that had to be abandoned and entrusted to hill tribes when they fled from what is now Vietnam to Cambodia (Collins, 1996, citing Gay). They may be seen only rarely when (Collins, 1996, citing Gay, 1988):

⁵⁷ Dr. Zelnick is a "former diplomat, a businessman and an art collector with a passion for Asian art, culture and customs." "Over 1000 pieces selected from his private collection may be seen at the Zelnik Istvan Southeast Asian Gold Museum: <http://visitbudapest.travel/arts-entertainment/budapest-museums/zelnik-istvan-southeast-asian-gold-museum/>

...the Hindu Chams in Vietnam evidently still celebrate what is called the Katé festival on the precincts of the Po Klong Garai temple near Phanrang. On that occasion the Montagnard guardians of the royal treasure apparently bring some of the objects out of hiding so they can be venerated by the festival participants (Gay, 1988: 55). (pp. 34-36)

The Cham language is related to the Austronesian (Malaysia, Indonesia) group of languages; in contrast to the Mon-Khmer Austroasiatic group of languages that form the basis of what is now spoken in Cambodia and Vietnam. Collins (1996) describes how four waves of Cham people, displaced by the Vietnamese push southward to expand their territorial borders, fled to Cambodia over the centuries. There are few official documents backing up this diaspora, however, it is speculated that it was the first of these groups who arrived near Kampot, joined with the Malaysian traders who were already settled there, and were Islāmized by them based on their shared linguistic roots (Collins, 1996; Bruckmayr, 2006).

Most of the Cambodian villages comprised of descendants of the Cham now follow Sunni Islām, unlike their counterparts in Vietnam who maintain their Hindu/Brahmanic religious roots. The current Grand Mufti, Sos Kamry, explains that “most Cambodian Muslims consider themselves Shafi’i Sunnis, and are followers of the Shafi’i school of Sunni law” (Mohan & Sonyka, 2014). There are now over 220 mosques in Cambodia (Yusuf, 2008, p. 249). Present day educational ties with Malaysia are described by Blengsli (2009) and Bruckmayr (2006), and with Thailand by Stoddard (2008). Kelantan province of Malaysia is a preferred destination for the pursuit of higher Islāmic education. Yusuf (2008) describes the group:

Of the 700,000 Muslims in the country, most are ethnic Chams; of these, about 40 percent reside in Kamong Cham, 20 percent in Kampong Chenang, 15 percent in Kompot Province and about 30,000 in the Phnom Penh area. There are three types of Muslim groups in Cambodia: the Malay-influenced Shafi'i branch constitutes 90 percent of the total Muslim population: the Saudi-Kuwaiti Wahhabi branch represents 6 percent; and the traditional Imam-San branch, who practice a syncretic form of Islām that assimilates ancient Cham culture with mystical Sufi teachings, make up 4 percent. (p. 249)

Stoddard (2008) further clarifies that the group near Kampot are more accurately known as "*Chvea*":

Although they do not claim any origins within the ancient kingdom of Champa, the Cham Chvea constitute the third major group that exist among the Cham today. The Chvea were originally merchants who came from the Malay Peninsula in the areas of Java and Sumatra. Their movement into Cambodia precedes even that of the Cham proper in 1471. The term *Chvea* is likely a reference to their origins in Java. They identify themselves as "Cham" only when that label is loosely applied to mean "Cambodian Muslims." Perhaps more than any other group among the Cham, the Chvea have most fully assimilated into Khmer customs. They all speak Khmer and often refer to themselves as "Khmer Islām" to avoid the stigma of being foreigners. But while the Chvea may be marked by a predisposition to assimilate into Khmer culture, they also maintain close ties with the Muslim Patani Malays of Southern Thailand— a relationship which has had and continues to have an impact on their

religious and cultural orientation, as Malaysian Muslims continue to be engaged in an effort to move the Cambodian Muslim community towards a greater “orthodoxy.” (pp. 238-239)

Description of the village.

Takako (2005) quotes a report now housed in archives in France that was submitted in the 1800s by the presiding official appointed by the French colonial government, the ‘*Résidence*’:

There was a Malay-Cambodian village, *Daun-Tek (Doun-Taok)*, which consisted of groups from *Trapeang-Romeas, Daun-Tek, and Sala-Kev*. *Trapeang-Romeas* was on the *Prek-Kandal-Romeas* River, a branch of the *Prek-Thom*. *Daun-Tek* and *Sala-Kev* were inland, but some Malays of *Daun-Tek* had boats on *Prek-Kandal-Romeas*. In January 1888, it contained 213 inhabitants including 140 Malays, 50 Cambodians and 23 Chinese. There were 55 houses and 7 large sea junks. Inhabitants kept 58 buffalos, 55 cattle, 9 horses and 5 pigs, and yielded 15,000 kg of rice in 1886 and 30,000 in 1887. (p 249)

The village of interest, still known as Dhontok Village, Treykos Commune (where my study took place), currently has a population of 1,429, with 336 houses, and 351 families. Approximately 967 villagers are over the age of 19, and 511 are women (personal email communication from Den, April 27, 2013, from his meeting with the village headman). In general, other people in Cambodia do not think highly of, or look positively, upon their Muslim minority. The people of this village are some of the least resourced in the area.

Dr. Mav⁵⁸ referred to it as: “the ugliest village”. There are no pigs and no dogs in the village today. The villagers fish, meaning they do not have time, nor the land required, to grow their rice the way a majority of Cambodians do. Therefore, they have to have money if they want rice because they must buy it. They follow Islām, living the five pillars of their faith as described in the Qur’ān (Hughes, 2013). This is a simple version: declaration of faith (*shahādah*⁵⁹), five daily prayers (*salah*), almsgiving/charity (*zakah*), fasting in Ramadan (*sawm*) and going to pilgrimage (*hajj*) if one can.

Manco⁶⁰ is an elder in her village now. She was brought there by her husband when he found and married her after the Pol Pot ⁶¹ years. In her words: “I know who is rich and who is poor, who is mean and who is kind.” Her husband teaches village children Arabic and the Qur’ān in a classroom near the mosque; a small stipend from an outside group supports this according to what he told Den.

A narrow dirt road branches to the left off the main road and heads towards the banks of the river where it ends at the village. It is marked by the arch with the letters: CPP for Cambodia People’s Party proclaiming this village’s support for the party in power. The commune office and local clinic are a bit

⁵⁸ Dr. Mav first brought me to the village as I had expressed curiosity to him about his community development project there. See also Appendix B- Glossary entry for Dr. Mav for more details.

⁵⁹ The profession of the faith of Islam: There is only one God, and Mohammed is his prophet. See Appendix B- Glossary entries for shahada, Moslem, and tawhid, for more details.

⁶⁰ Manco (pseudonym chosen by her) is a female village elder who was employed as my second research assistant prior to becoming a participant in the study. See also Appendix B- Glossary entry for Manco for more details.

⁶¹ See Appendix I, item 7, also see Short (2005), and Chandler (1999)..

further along on the main road, just after the turn. The closest pagoda, with beautiful buildings and grounds, and the public primary school (grades 1-6) attached to it, are back towards Kampot town, down a long dirt road on the opposite side of the road to the village (about a one hour walk away). Salt beds are visible from the turn towards the village. Salt work is considered one of the worst jobs in the country, demanding hard physical labour in punishing conditions for minimal remuneration⁶².

To reach the village, a series of sharp turns around the square edges of rice paddies and too-close barbed wire fencing have to be negotiated. The pot holes in the road, more of a wide path at this point, make the ride on a moto even more interesting. Rain, which is plentiful during the rainy season, reduces the roads and paths to veritable roller coaster paths of slippery mud punctuated by puddles of varying and undeterminable depths. The final turn in the road to the village goes past the mosque which has a graveyard, a lotus pool, and a string of buildings used as school rooms surrounding it.

Houses along the road, and more densely clustered along the shore of the river, are raised above the ground on wooden poles or cement columns. Building materials, determined by the wealth of the family, range from bamboo, to wood, to cement, to corrugated tin. Many have a weather-beaten, worn and deteriorated appearance. Few are painted. Stairs up into the houses range from

⁶² None of the study participants were salt-workers, as they must work long hours, making them unavailable, and their children often do not attend school. This version of the salt production vocation is a stark contrast with how the same opportunity looks in Canada, for example, as demonstrated by a cottage industry started by two entrepreneurial women (see:<https://www.maritime-salt.com/>).

wooden ladders to concrete staircases depending on the size and stature of the house.

The space under all the houses is used for a variety of purposes including: sleeping/reclining on beds and hammocks, hanging the clothes in the family wardrobe⁶³, storing vehicles such as motos or bicycles, doing business from selling vegetables to making fishing nets, income generation such as shucking crabs for \$1/kg⁶⁴, raising chickens, storing tools and supplies, gathering with neighbours, and as a landing pad for garbage. Most spaces take on multiple uses depending on the time of day, season of year, or event. There are no mosquito nets in any of the houses I visit, no matter how wealthy the surroundings appear otherwise. Many villagers use large bandages on their foreheads⁶⁵, explained to me as a remedy for headaches that come from coughing.

Some houses project out over the water, some have openings without doors that close them. Many houses have spaces between the floor boards, people cover their floors with sheets of flooring material (vinyl) as they can afford. Most have electricity and televisions, not all are connected to the city water system⁶⁶. There is one solitary village toilet in a building with two squatter stalls, most houses have no sanitation⁶⁷. Other sanitation in the village includes a

⁶³ Typically, they are on hangers, on a clothesline tied to the poles or columns supporting the house.

⁶⁴ Based on observation, Sunflower's mother and elder sisters were performing this task when we visited her home.

⁶⁵ Based on observation of Rose's younger sister, and her mother's explanation for the bandage.

⁶⁶ They purchase water by filling large plastic jugs with water from a neighbour's hose, see Morningstar's story in Chapter 7.

⁶⁷ Dr. Mav provided the funding for this toilet, he received money from Japanese donors when he was studying public health there. See also: wsp.org, the Water and Sanitation

number of three-sided bamboo enclosures without roofs⁶⁸. Babies and very young children have bare bottoms, they relieve themselves on the ground and a sibling or parent scrapes the droppings up with a discarded coconut shell, then the baby is washed, and the shells are discarded⁶⁹. The Water and Sanitation Program (2013, p.2) reports that “open defecation in Cambodia is among the highest in the world.”

Fishing boats, sometimes two or three deep, line the water’s edge. There is plastic garbage visible on every path between the houses, under every house, on the riverside, with no receptacles. Many paths have open-weave bamboo fences along them which provide borders and privacy for the homes, and a measure of containment for chickens. Clothes are dried on these fences⁷⁰. Some ladders up into houses span ponds covered in green slime; there are odours of many kinds and intensities including delicious aromas from cooking food.

Any and all open spaces under and between the houses are used for play, which can be observed at almost all times except when prayer is taking place. Older sisters carry their baby brothers and sisters around on their hips⁷¹. Hop-scotch squares are scratched into the dirt with a stick, or marked on the concrete pad near the mosque with a piece of charcoal⁷². Elastic bands in long chains are used for ‘jumpsies’ and skipping ropes for skipping games. Rabbit’s

Project, part of the World Bank Group’s Global Water Practice, and report of Nov. 2013 on sanitation in Cambodia, available from:

<http://wsp.org/sites/wsp.org/files/publications/Growing-Tall-and-Smart-with-Toilets-Research-Brief.pdf>.

⁶⁸ This type of toilet was observed in Butterfly’s yard, one of the participants.

⁶⁹ Based on observation of Morningstar’s baby brother, and what transpired when he defecated.

⁷⁰ See Morningstar’s story in Chapter 7.

⁷¹ See Appendix H, Morningstar’s story-book, page 4, for photograph of her with baby brother on hip.

⁷² See Butterfly’s story in Chapter 7.

cousin fabricated a mini-pool table from a t-shirt stretched over a wooden plank, in another pastime of their own design groups of boys and girls play an intricate game using discarded cigarette cartons to write directions on.

Men typically go to the mosque for prayer, women more often pray within their homes (see Appendix M, Reflection on Shyness). Teenage boys use the hose located next to the toilet building to wash the mud off of their motos. Carts and cars selling everything from propane tanks to snacks to banking services, frequently pass by on a tour of the main roads in the village which are wide enough to accommodate them. Most of the paths between the houses are only wide enough for a moto or bicycle.

Description of local schools.

The closest public school⁷³ where children go for grades one to six, Tricos Primary School, is one hour's walk, a 20 minute bicycle ride, or less than 10 minutes on a motorcycle away. Seven of the ten girls in the study attend this school. It is beside a pagoda, a common pattern evolved from historical times when pagoda-based education by Buddhist monks was the norm. The typical 'beginning of school meeting' in November each year includes representatives from the local pagoda, the commune office, and the Department of Education as well as the head of school and teaching staff.⁷⁴

⁷³ Cambodia's public school curriculum is in Khmer until grade 7 when an English instruction class is introduced. The Muslim villages typically teach Arabic and the Qur'an to all their children in classrooms near the village mosque, and private donors build entire schools devoted to instruction in Islam. For this village, the private Kuwaiti funded school is across the river.

⁷⁴ Based on personal experience of being invited to participate in the beginning of school meetings at another public school.

The buildings are arranged along three sides of an open square with a garden and playground in the space created in the middle. The compounds are walled and gated, with access through the adjacent pagoda compound during non-teaching hours. Classrooms are kept locked outside of school hours, there is little if any use of the facility other than during instructional times (i.e., little or no extra-curricular or community activity or events⁷⁵). Each classroom has a cement floor, shuttered windows without screens, a whiteboard and rows of wooden benches with attached tables that seat 2 students each. The school bell is typically the metal wheel from a vehicle that is rung by banging it with a stick⁷⁶.

⁷⁵ During the Pol Pot years, school yards became execution grounds, people were told they were to be 're-educated.' See: Caswell (2014).

⁷⁶ See Appendix H: Tenflower's mini-book, page 17 for a photograph of the typical school bell.

CHAPTER 5

MIXED QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGIES

Overview of the chapter's four sections.

The form of this study combines two powerful methodologies in a novel way. The narrative inquiry aspects follow the format outlined by Clandinin (2013; 2016, p. 14) in her extensive writings about what she calls the “three-dimensional narrative inquiry space⁷⁷”. The autoethnography follows from the work of Bochner and Ellis (2016) on evocative autoethnography. Story, and learning to ‘*think with stories*’, is a prominent feature of both. Clandinin’s three-dimensional narrative inquiry space, designated for story-happening and story-analysis, has proven useful as a meeting place for presenting, analyzing, and making meanings from our [the ‘they’ and ‘I’ of this study] juxtaposed respective stories. Clandinin (2013) uses the term ‘stories-to-live-by’ to capture the storied nature of peoples’ lives as they are lived, and as they are told. The four sections of this chapter will provide the following information:

Section 1 will describe key elements of narrative inquiry and autoethnography, then provide an example of how I understand the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space with additional background to address ‘who I am’ in the research explaining how I came to Cambodia. Section 2 will describe distillation as a method of data analysis, within a framework of Polkinghorne’s narrative analysis (in Kim, 2016, p. 196) and Mishler’s typology (in Kim, 2016, p. 198). Section 3 will describe and discuss my rationales for selecting a methodology combining narrative inquiry and autoethnography, for including

⁷⁷ See Appendix B- Glossary, the three dimensions are temporal, personal-social, and spatial (i.e., time, person, and place).

photographic images, for sample selection, for data gathering, and for data analysis Section 4 will provide an overview of rigour in the research by describing verisimilitude and trustworthiness in this study.

Section 1

Narrative inquiry, autoethnography and who I am in the research.

Narrative inquiry.

People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular view of experience as phenomenon under study. (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 477)

Narrative inquiry, as it is being used in this context, follows from extensive work by Clandinin et al. (Caine, Estefan & Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin, 2006, 2007, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly 1998, 2000, 2004; Clandinin & Murphy 2007, 2009; Clandinin & Rosiak, 2007; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). It is inquiry based on practical experience, a “Deweyan theory of experience as central to the epistemology and ontology of narrative inquiry” (Clandinin & Rosiak, 2007, p. 38). As such, it is “both a methodology and a way of understanding experience narratively” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 9). Story is at the heart of people, the way they

live, the way they tell about it, and the way narrative inquirers investigate. As Connelly and Clandinin (1990) describe this, “people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience. (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2).

Comprehensive coverage of this topic including handling of narrative, history of the ‘narrative turn’ (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007), and a “well-established view of narrative inquiry as both methodology and phenomena” (ibid, citing Clandinin, 2007), as it has been exemplified and described by many scholars at length, is found in the *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry* (Clandinin, 2007). A more recent exposition of this methodology is contained in *Understanding Narrative Inquiry: The Crafting and Analysis of Stories as Research*, (Kim, 2016), and in Clandinin et al.’s recent exploration of engaging in narrative enquiries with children and young people (2016).

This particular variant of narrative inquiry differentiates itself from the use of narrative data in other qualitative methodologies (for example phenomenology) and distinguishes itself from the various forms of analysis, sometimes labeled narratology (Herman & Vervaeck, 2005), applied to textual forms of data in qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods studies. My study investigates the whys and hows of village life for Cambodian Muslim girls, through illustrated stories of their daily life occupations. The narrative inquiry proposed here, requires learning to “think with stories” (Bochner & Ellis, 2016; Frank, 1995; Morris, 2001; Rogers, 2016) rather than treating them as an object to be talked about.

The story unfolds at the intersection of our overlapping three-dimensional narrative inquiry spaces as inquirer and participants. Each person (inquirer and participant) has their own unique past-to-present-to-future temporal axis, their own unique inward-to-outward personal social axis, and their own unique place-location-context axis. When there is a joining or sharing of experiences, an encounter occurs “in the midst” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 17).

An “in the midst experience”.

What this means is that an “in the midst experience” is taking place at the nexus of all these simultaneously transpiring relational intersections of backwards and forwards, inwards and outwards, and place or context axes when the village girls share stories with me. The action happens at the overlapping junctions of what Clandinin, based on Dewey, calls “temporality/sociality/locality” axes. The girls’ stories, taken in by me, work on me as I let them affect me, they resonate or ‘dissonate’ with my ‘internalness⁷⁸’. In putting myself into their shoes, I feel what it is to be them and therefore can approach a meaning-making that tries to approximate what it might be like to live as them in their “stories to live by.” These lived stories, Clandinin’s “stories-to-live-by”, are captured to be inquired into: told, then re-told, then re-lived— with the hope that we can make them *better* lived. I link this to the ‘transformation theory’ work of Mezirow (2000) because it is precisely through Clandinin’s sort of self examination and deep reflection with concomitant consideration of those reality propositions that come

⁷⁸ See Appendix B- Glossary entry for ‘internalness’, it is a neologism for my entire being.

more clearly into focus as those most worthy of adoption, that one gains access to transformative learning⁷⁹. As Mezirow, (2000) explains:

Formulating more dependable beliefs about our experience, assessing their contexts, seeking informed agreement on their meaning and justification, and making decisions on the resulting insights are central to the adult learning process. (p. 4)

I was inspired by the potential Cham village girls have that has been kept both hidden and possibly suppressed by the circumstances of their lives. This is consistent with the decolonizing methodologies described by Beeman-Cadwallader, Quigley, Yazzie-Mintz (2012); Lincoln & Gonzales (2008); and Swadener, Kiburu, Njenga (1997) who all work to bring the voices of groups under study into the foreground. One of the principals discussed by Beeman-Cadwallader et al. is portraying people in positive terms through “purposeful representation of communities (p. 12). Chase (2005) emphasizes that narrative inquiry can be used to create spaces for marginalized voices and, in turn, enable questioning of how marginalized groups have been socially constructed and misperceived. I asked the girls directly about their storied daily lives and observed their engagement in activities (occupations). It was done with a soft approach, by entering their world, and reciprocally sharing some of mine. Who they are, and what they have to offer to their community and/or country was as yet undocumented.

In Cambodia, anyone over 35 is a survivor of unspeakable times. Their stories have been recounted in detail mainly by those who escaped to the U.S.A.

⁷⁹ See Appendix B- Glossary entry for transformative learning, it refers to adult learning through self-reflection and the resultant internal changes.

(DePaul and Dith Pran, 1997). There is an entire genre of survivor accounts, in one of them Him, (2000), tells how she interviewed hundreds of survivors as part of research studies into post traumatic stress. Graphic details of torture and hardship are included in her book "*When Broken Glass Floats.*" While many escaped, more remained in Cambodia after the Pol Pot times. Most of the older women of the Cham, remained in Cambodia. They have been interviewed about their experiences in the holocaust⁸⁰ and their lives as Muslim women as part of oral history research conducted under the auspices of the Documentation Centre of Cambodia⁸¹ (So, 2011). My research was built around a belief that their daughters or grand-daughters, the young, also have important stories to tell about their daily life that will contribute to the beginnings of an understanding for all "outsiders" both within Cambodia itself, and globally. Narrative inquiry offered a way to access these stories in a respectful and relevant way, and provided a path to analyzing, presenting, and potentially utilizing the details in a valuable way.

Including self in the study.

There remained, however, a gap between the focus on my Cambodian story-maker subjects and the inclusion of my own experiences as an integral part of the research. Self-stories are known as autobiographies. This genre or style of writing and reporting has crossed the divide between the literary and the academic through a methodology labelled autobiographical narrative (Cloonan, Fox, Ohi & Haise, 2017). If I wrote about what happened to me within the context

⁸⁰ This refers to the years 1974-1979 when Pol Pot took over the country. See Appendix I, item 7. See also Short (2005), and Chandler (1999).

⁸¹ DC-Cam has devoted itself to preserving documentation of Cambodia's holocaust in order to prevent such a thing from ever happening again. It is now known as the Sleuk Rith Institute, see: <http://www.cambodiasri.org/> . See also Appendix B- Glossary entry for Sleuk Rith Institute.

of this study by only emphasizing the 'me', I would be using autobiographical narrative as my methodology. It is a powerful methodology well described and discussed by Nash (2011) as "scholarly personal narrative, or SPN". Clandinin and Huber (in press) describe autobiographical narrative inquiry, quoting Bruner (2004), and Freeman (2007), as "a special form of narrative inquiry [that] is closely related to autoethnography. They expand on this:

Understanding "life as narrative" led Bruner (2004) to posit that "the stories we tell about our lives ... [are] our 'autobiographies'" (p. 691). Yet, narrative inquirers understand that telling stories is not an untethered process. How people tell their stories and what their stories tell is shaped by "cultural conventions and language usage ... [and] reflect the prevailing theories about 'possible lives' that are part of one's culture" (p. 694). Audience also shapes autobiographical narrative inquiry. Who the characters are in people's stories, the plotlines people choose to tell and the audiences to whom they tell, all influence autobiographical narrative inquiry. As Freeman (2007) writes about autobiographical narrative inquiry "the interpretation and writing of the personal past ... is ... a product of the present and the interests, needs, and wishes that attend it. This present, however—along with the self whose present it is—is itself transformed in and through the process" (pp. 137-138). These ideas, highlighted in autobiographical narrative inquiry, are also present in narrative inquiries undertaken with others but are often less visible. (pp. 6-7)

This is a helpful description of autobiographical narrative inquiry, however, there is still a missing component that is crucial for my study. The missing component

from autobiographical narrative, as a methodology, is culture. This is what led me to autoethnography.

Autoethnography – including both self and culture.

Autoethnography has been differentiated from scholarly personal narrative by Chang (2011, p. 7), through the essence that is found in its name: “ethno” means that it incorporates an emphasis on culture. Manning & Adams (2015) define it as:

a research method that foregrounds the researcher’s personal experience (*auto*) as it is embedded within, and informed by, cultural entities and con/texts (*ethno*) and as it is expressed through writing, performance, or other creative means (*graphy*) p. 188 (emphasis by author).

Chang (2008, p. 48) admonishes that: “autoethnography should be ethnographic in its methodological orientation, cultural in its interpretive orientation, and autobiographical in its content orientation.”

What is required for high quality autoethnography.

I can write about the experience, integrating my self, the culture, and my writing. However, I remain uncertain about how to ensure the quality of my work. I *wonder*: what makes any autoethnography of an excellent caliber, writing that is worthy of the work and the other participants, rather than basic or mediocre in its quality? To this question, Bochner (in Bochner and Ellis, 2012) provides insight, and an almost impossible standard, when he describes what he looks for when evaluating autoethnography:

First I look for abundant, concrete details. I want to feel the flesh and blood emotions of people coping with life's contingencies. I am attracted to structurally complex narratives that are told in a temporal framework representing the curve of time. I also reflect on the author's emotional credibility, vulnerability, and honesty. I expect evocative autoethnographers to examine their actions and dig underneath them, displaying the self on the page, taking a measure of life's limitations, of the cultural scripts that resist transformation, of contradictory feelings, ambivalence, and layers of subjectivity, squeezing comedy out of life's tragedies. I also prefer narratives that express a tale of two selves, one that shows a believable journey from who I was to who I am, and how a life course can be reimagined or transformed by crisis. I hold the author to a demanding standard of ethical self-consciousness ... I want the writer to show concern for how other people in the teller's story are portrayed, for the kind of person one becomes in telling one's story, and to provide a space for the listener's becoming. And finally, I want a story that moves me, my heart and belly as well as my head; I want a story that doesn't just refer to subjective life, but instead acts it out in ways that show me what life feels like now and what it can mean. (pp. 212-213)

These are the principles I have used in developing and presenting my own part of this research. I have incorporated abundant concrete details, spanning the 6 years duration, including my vulnerabilities told in an honest way through my reflections (see Appendix M). The layered learnings I have experienced during the research process, my practical wisdom or phronesis, are

presented in a separate section in Chapter 7, the findings chapter, called my autoethnography.

Integrated, as appropriate, throughout the text I have examined my actions, understandings, and portray who I was at the beginning as well as my transformed self at the end. I have tried to explain what it *'felt'* like by using metaphors, diagrams, and descriptions of my emotional and internal reactions to some of the small things that happened (e.g., having my flip-flops taken, not going into a leaky boat, not bathing in the village). I have explored and described how it feels to recognize and confront my ethno-centric self, and my search for a better way to be (e.g., the garbage among the flowers story, (See Drawing in Appendix O, see Chapter 7, Story of Moon.)

Foregrounding story while not dissecting it, thinking *with* stories, and Clandinin's focus on holistic multi-faceted and dynamic understandings of people within the rich context of their times and places: these were highly compatible with my research questions, and the complexity inherent in a foreign country and culture. As Andrews, Squire, and Tamboukou (2013, p.1) warn: "unlike other qualitative research perspectives, narrative research offers no overall rules about suitable materials or modes of investigation, or the best level at which to study stories."

Myself in the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space.

Clandinin (2013) illuminates the starting point, where the researcher describes and maps out their own three-dimensional narrative inquiry space as 'narrative beginnings'. This section discusses my narrative beginnings. The combination of my rationales for what methods and methodologies to use, and

how to use them, with my understanding and personal version of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space are the starting place or foundation for this inquiry. When I made the commitment to pursue graduate studies in 2010, it was a good choice in the moment. Completing the employment phase of my life and transitioning to retirement coupled with making sense of my elapsed life-to-date, properly set the stage for attempting to build a future with a satisfying amount of meaning and purpose.

These are three tasks that encapsulate the (past/present/future) temporality dimension of my recent life in what Clandinin (2002, p. 134) calls 'three-dimensional narrative inquiry space' (1. time/temporality, 2. person/sociality, 3. place/locality). The 'me' writing this has achieved those tasks (retirement transition, life review, future purpose), largely through the living out of the process of designing and conducting my first research which was situated in Cambodia. The experiences of my childhood are in the more distant past with other important elements that can be revealed through an exploration of my temporality and sociality axes.

Temporality.

I look along my life-line backwards into the past, and forwards into the future to understand the mechanics of this dimension. I am trying to grasp what Clandinin means, trying to understand it in terms of who I am, based on my experiences through time. Ricoeur (1984) in his book: 'Time and Narrative' (p. 3), reminds us of the 'temporal character of human experience'. His writing is based on the confessions of St. Augustine for a concept of time and Aristotle's poetics for a concept of narrative – complex to grasp albeit seminal work for researchers

employing narrative. Time can be lived as the linear passing of hours, days, or even years, but it is so much more.

It means so much more to me. Sometimes my memories of childhood play as a video in the theatre of my mind in a way I call '*fluid flow*', other times they appear as still photos in a way I call '*freeze frame*'. In their elusive and fluid nature of a lifetime's single moments, my memories are sequential yet reduced to a flow of points that disappear like grains of sand through an hourglass. This is as much a part of time the way *I* experience time, and how it works inside my mind, as are the captured memories of images that mark my thresholds, achievements, rites of passage. I have so many moments, a rich tapestry of my birthdays, my first day of school, ballet recitals, school graduations, my wedding day, childbirth, travels around the world. These are my photographic moment-images, frozen and always dependable in their photo album comforting anchor-like sameness. Meaning-making, I have come to understand, happens in the 'spaces in between' *fluid-flow* and *freeze-frame*. No one image or form can hold all the meaning or meanings of an experience; however, one image can trigger an avalanche of memories.

By definition, temporality is not a static but rather a kinetic force as time elapses and we are all in the process of 'becoming'. I have discovered it is helpful, if not essential for sanity, to have certain 'freeze-frame' views. Like my 'now' time that has become an anchor point for me. These are semi-stable platforms that can contribute to clarity and frame key events to be described—especially helpful when crossing to another culture. My childhood as first-born daughter of a blind mother profoundly influences how I perceive and interact with people who have disabilities. More detail is provided in Appendix M within my

reflection on the importance of story in my life. First hand experience in a family with a person with a disability, and the importance of story in my life, are key factors in who I am in the research.

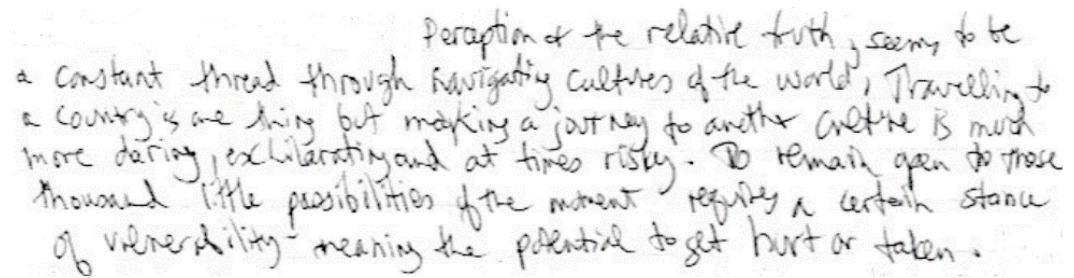
Sociality

I have experienced the invisible yet painful kind of social isolation by not being understood throughout my entire life. Story is what I need and want. Story is at the heart of how I live and make sense of the world around me. I understand more now as an adult, and can recognize the root of others so frequently misunderstanding me. Even before I could embrace and use the power of the language of words to be understood in the world, I learned in story. Story is still my mother tongue, in the way described by LeGuin (1989):

It is a language always on the verge of silence and often on the verge of song. It is the language stories are told in. It is the language spoken by all children and most women, and so I call it the mother tongue, for we learn it from our mothers, and speak it to our kids. (p.160)

Expression faces us outward and links us with others. However, the sociality axis looks both outward and inward. Looking inward to the personal, I see all the ways I have been transformed by my enriched childhood, liberal upbringing and many years of travel around the world. I have experienced through this extensive world travel (Morgan, 2011), that while going to another country is easy, it is complicated at the best of times to enter another culture. A reflection from my journal dated Saturday, Dec. 1, 2012, Havana, Cuba illustrates this:

Figure 2—Journal Reflection, 2012, Havana, Cuba



Perception of the relative truth, seems to be a constant thread through navigating cultures of the world. Travelling to a country is one thing but making a journey to another culture is much more daring, exhilarating and at times risky. To remain open to those thousand little possibilities of the moment requires a certain stance of vulnerability - meaning the potential to get hurt or taken.

Looking outward to the social part of this axis, I am aware from the myriad times I have done it, of how entering another culture demands all my attention and resources. I stay open to those 'thousand little possibilities of the moment' as I noted in my journal, even though there are times of hardship and some painful lessons involved. Being in an unfamiliar place I see myself requiring heightened sensitivity, wonder, and humility (Gallardo, 2014) in order to depart leaving benefits rather than damages on both sides. This is representative of the second of Clandinin's three dimensions: sociality.

Travel has taught me much about being social. My personal and family travels began as a child of 18 months when I squeezed out of a gap in the backyard fence to explore the lane behind our house. The helpful neighbours quickly alerted my blind mother to the escape; a lesson that someone is always watching what I do. Our travels as a family continued with summer vacations camping in a tent, on road trips from coast to coast in Canada. Every new campground was like a new country and making friends was my training ground for intercultural encounters as an adult. As a school girl I was mean to Betty, my classmate from Holland, which led to her mother inviting me over for a lesson in cultural empathy. As a teenager, I left home at 16 and hitch-hiked across the country to Winnipeg. This taught me many lessons from the 'learning laboratory

of life,' and was the beginning of my explorations of the lives of First Nations people in cities.

As an adult, my travels include two and a half years of world travel with my husband and young son (1987-1989), and solo journeys from Stockholm to Istanbul by train (2002), to Nigeria (2006), and to Zanzibar and Kyrgyzstan (2007). I have been the travel companion for my mother who is blind, on a ten day sojourn in New York city, and for my sister, who was visually impaired at the time, during a two week adventure in Cuba.

My occupational therapy oriented global experiences include two visits to Haiti (2004, 2005) as part of the Healing Hands for Haiti International Foundation (2018) train the trainer rehabilitation project.⁸² I continued in a teaching role by delivering workshops in 'Appropriate Paper Technology (APT)⁸³' methods to construct rehabilitation equipment from cardboard in Nigeria (2006) and Zanzibar (2007). I mentor a colleague in Lagos, Nigeria; one from Dhaka, Bangladesh who has since moved to Canada; and I visited another in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (2007). I have attended the World Federation of Occupational Therapists Congresses in Montreal, 1998; Stockholm, 2002; and Sydney, Australia, 2006; the Occupational Therapy Africa Region Group Conferences in Zanzibar, 2007, and Zambia, 2012; and the Asia-Pacific Occupational Therapy Conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in 2012. This is in addition to eight trips to Cambodia over the course of conducting this research.

⁸² See <http://www.healinghandsforhaiti.org/education-training/>.

⁸³ See <http://floodmeadows.com/apbt/>. I also brought J. Westmacott to Canada in 2003 to instruct an APT workshop in order to learn the methods from her.

My recreational travel involves visiting Cuba to dance Salsa as often as possible. The combination of adult travel as a mother, a solo woman, a therapist, companion to a person with disabilities, and now as a widow, has given me a wealth of experience in unfamiliar settings and languages to draw on as I engage in my first researcher experience. This is a significant part of who I am in the research.

Seeing the world 'holistically' is a routine based on my natural predispositions and tendencies coupled with training and clinical practice as an occupational therapist. Learning, knowing, and understanding the deepest depths of one part of the whole, is never as satisfying to me as finding out everything, or as much as possible, about all the parts, and appreciating the big picture. My approach to learning is based on the combination of holistic thinking and the drive for excellence, as in all my occupations. Seeking both depth and scope in order to truly *know* the focus of my curiosity, is a fundamental part of who I am in the research.

I understand this combination of the personal and social, kinetic in its interplay, as a kaleidoscopic multiplicity of all those complex and often messy relational aspects of being, and living, 'human'. I am aware that I change myself as needed so that I '*fit in*' wherever I am⁸⁴. I can visualize myself as a 'cosmopolitan chameleon'⁸⁵ constantly changing to suit the environment I am in: from villas to villages. The personal and social dimensions for most participants in my study, by sharp contrast, are steeped in their sameness experience of one

⁸⁴ See Reflections on Head Scarves in Appendix M.

⁸⁵ Hoefinger (2013) describes how it is for her doing research in Cambodia: "I felt myself to be a type of chameleon, changing colours to fit into different environments and settings - each identity situationally specific, yet all a part of who I am as a whole" (p. 44).

home, one village, one path to school, one religion, and one set of expectations for comportment, dress, and behavior.

I can see how different our experiences of childhood are. Theirs are steeped in what Czmoniewicz-Klippel (2010, 2011) dubbed: “trying to be good girls”; and what is exemplified in the ‘*Chbap Srey*⁸⁶’ code (Chandler, 1984; Moore, 2013, pp. 14-17). In order to let myself experience what life might be like for them, to metaphorically *step into their shoes*, I know I will have to make a space available for it by temporarily letting go of the me I know I am. It feels exciting and frightening, at least daunting, at the same time.

Lugones (1987) describes this process as “*playful ‘world travelling’*”, she purports [that it is] only “by travelling to their “world” [that] we can understand *what it is to be them and what it is to be ourselves in their eyes*” (p. 17). In her view the successful journey requires giving up arrogance and replacing it with love, as she explains it, “[k]nowing other women’s “worlds” is part of knowing them and knowing them is part of loving them” (p. 17) (emphasis and punctuation are the author’s).

Locality.

Looking towards Canada, I see my roots, the familiar place I come from. Looking towards Cambodia, I see an unfamiliar, confusing, and sometimes overwhelming country that very little in my life experience prepares me for. Clandinin’s third dimension is locality, when she describes it as ‘the place where the action happens’ it sounds like a discrete piece of geography with specific

⁸⁶ *Srey* means woman, *Chbap* means normative poem, in effect this is the social and cultural law of how women must behave. See Appendix B- Glossary entry on *Chbap Srey* for more details. See Chandler (1986) and Moore (2013) for detailed discussion of all the *Chbaps* and of girls moving beyond *Chbap Srey*, respectively.

coordinates and boundaries (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990, p. 8). I understand it more broadly, in order to effectively encompass the two countries, contexts and cultures in my study. Locality, or place, becomes a kinetic axis for me; there is a 'coming from' (Canada) part as well as a 'going to' (Cambodia) part⁸⁷. I write about Cambodia as [t]here because a word with both places captures my two realities, and it allows my physical location to align with narrative imagination when I am reviewing, reliving, and re-telling things that happened [t]here⁸⁸.

My understanding and appreciation for my roots, my culture, my privilege as a Canadian, define the platform I start from in any sojourn elsewhere. There is a power differential, evident when the village girls understand me and respect me as a 'teacher'. Positionality is an ever present part of 'place' to me. Locality in the broader sense might also include my worldview, my cosmology/axiology/ontology/epistemology⁸⁹ as both person and scholar. Living as my 'Canadian normal' self, these things are unobtrusively taken for granted, invisible and implicit. When I enter my 'Cambodian normal' self, that all changes as hugely as my geographic location half-way around the globe does. Every single implicit and invisible aspect of 'Canadian-ness' becomes a potential hurdle to be recognized and surmounted in order to navigate the other world of Cambodia in all of its textures, contexts and nuances. The participants in my study, in sharp contrast, live in a more static and contained locality in a small

⁸⁷ Also a coming back to Canada part and a presenting Cambodia part (see juxtaposition of the Final Meeting and Poster Presentation in Appendix F). Den participated in my poster session by Skype, that was the only way to bring him with me to Canada without the expense of a plane ticket.

⁸⁸ I use this textual device to denote that I am both here and there, i.e. writing about Cambodia while in Cambodia, or while in Canada planning future time in Cambodia.

⁸⁹ From my *internalness*, I see worldview as a perspective or way of looking at and thinking about the world, cosmology as the origin of the universe, axiology as one's values, ontology as the nature of being, epistemology as the nature and limits of knowledge (See Appendix B- Glossary for further discussion).

Muslim village beside a river in rural Cambodia. The boundaries of their world help to explain their worldview, the one I will be stepping into. Aspiring to global citizenship, coming from a place of privilege, defines mine.

I use myself, and the village girl participants, as an initial example to introduce and explain the elements of Clandinin's concept of 'three dimensional narrative inquiry space'— as I have come to appreciate it. This is, and has been, a lot to embrace even for myself, thinking in three axes as I explore all of our individual and collective 'stories to live by'. The complexity increases because simultaneously, there are all the same three dimensions of time, person, and place, for each of the other players in this study. And the complexity has to be considered, appreciated, factored in and integrated. Ten girls in the village, village elder, research assistant – all have their own individual as well as overlapping collective temporality/sociality/locality dimensions to be illuminated as we experience each other and as I try to explore our encounters and hopefully arrive transformed at a new 'story to live by'.

Who I am in the research.

I am a white middle-class woman who grew up in Ontario, Canada with a younger brother and sister, a father who was a chemical engineer and a homemaker mother who had lost her vision at age 18. My childhood home was enriched and tolerant, and the stories and storytelling traditions of my Irish ancestors were as much a part of my nurturing as the food on the table. My favourite show on our small black and white television was the Glooscap Tales program of First Nations legends. During my formative years, I was exposed to countless crafts and homemaking activities that I began to imitate as I read the instructions aloud to my mother. I was profoundly influenced by both of my

parents, and their core values of integrity, respect, and doing one's best. I eventually left home, married and completed an occupational therapy undergraduate degree in Edmonton, Alberta. A few years later, my husband, four year old son and I travelled the world for two and a half years. When we returned to Canada, I became the primary income earner. In 2014, I retired from a 30 year clinical career as an occupational therapist.

My husband announced in 2009 that we would retire in Cambodia, based on his search for a warm place for us to settle. I had developed a research proposal for a Master's degree program at Dalhousie University and was ready to begin investigating the intersection of aging women and social partner dancing. My husband implored me to revise this to do a study in Cambodia instead. He encouraged me to redo my research proposal and focus on Cambodia so that we could be together as I did the writing.

We travelled to Cambodia together in 2012, and I found a new research interest that was both "compelling and containable"⁹⁰ as had been directed by my supervisor. Unfortunately, he passed away in June 2014 in Cambodia, while I was still in the process of retiring from my work in Canada in order to join him. Our last time together was during the data collection fieldwork phase in August-September 2013. The completion of this research without his presence and support represents my transition to a new lifestyle⁹¹ as well as to a transformed worldview.

⁹⁰ Hindsight reveals that it is very compelling, yet not easily containable.

⁹¹ I have been dividing my time between Canada and Cambodia for the past several years.

During that visit in 2012, I encountered a young Cambodian girl with severe physical disabilities living in a house-on-stilts in a Muslim village. The village elder, *Manco*⁹², took me to meet the girl and told me: “We want to help her but we do not know how, so we bring her food.” A profound desire to make a meaningful and compassionate response to the anguish and longing I met in the girl’s gaze was the initial impetus for my research. The question was: How could I accomplish the task? I wondered if stories could help.

I knew that a deeper understanding of the complex Cambodian cultural context was required, and would be instrumental in allowing me to use my skills in Cambodia in a positive and productive way. I felt a combination of uncertainty melded with the determination to contribute something of value. Lengthy study, deliberation, and investigation of two main topics—namely the education of girls in Cambodia, and the difficulties experienced by people with disabilities in Khmer⁹³ culture—helped me begin to develop this deeper understanding. Spending time living in Cambodia and cultivating relationships with people there also contributed. Explorations of the literature, combined with time spent in the country, convinced me that I needed to focus on acquiring a better understanding of the context of daily life in Cambodia, in that village, before my clinical experience would be of service. VanLeit and Crowe (2009) concur, they state that:

⁹² I subsequently engaged her services as a research assistant. *Manco* is the Khmer word for rooster.

⁹³ Cambodia is a majority Buddhist country, its population is predominantly descended from Angkorians who left traces of their civilization at Angkor Wat. Khmer (pronounced: *Khemaï*) is their name for their culture. See diagram of religions in Appendix I, number 4. See also Appendix B- Glossary entries for Khmer, Kampuchea, and Buddhism.

There is a tendency for westerners to come to developing countries with assumptions, preconceptions, and well-meaning plans about how to help. In fact, it is critical to thoroughly understand the country context and develop programs based on actual community realities, interests, and needs. (p. 87)

My research questions focus broadly on discovering the stories the various participants tell, and exploring how these stories, combined with the practical wisdom I acquired, might inform community developers in their future work with Cambodian Muslims. Narrative inquiries begin with wonders. I wondered what stories village girls would tell of their daily lives. I wondered what stories my research assistant and a female village elder (who also assisted in the research) might tell about their involvement with the project. Making a 'telling from the told' (Mishler, 1995, p. 102), and the process that was required to do so, comprises my own autoethnographic story of conducting the research. The research aims to integrate all of these gathered stories, with my lived experience and the practical wisdom (phronesis) I gained, into helpful suggestions for future community development intervention. In this way, both my learning from the stories and the processes of finding, understanding, and presenting the stories to others will be captured.

Using storytelling to get to the heart of my research questions was a natural choice for me. I had no local language skills, but was familiar with the power of pictures and stories as a universal bridge to non-verbal children, based on my personal background and clinical work. I could see parallels between

communicating effectively with children who were non-verbal, and with children speaking a language I did not know (i.e., Khmer, pronounced as *Khemai*⁹⁴).

For a number of years I had successfully used an iPad in my clinical work with children of all abilities in schools, homes, and community settings in New Brunswick. Years of working with children experiencing autism spectrum disorders had made me aware of the power of using pictures for communication. I suspected that taking photographs and making stories together about village girls' daily lives would be a positive and fruitful way to engage while learning from others about their world. Use of an iPad allowed us to navigate effectively the consent/assent and story-making processes. It allowed us to create illustrated stories quickly and easily that captured the participants' actual voices. The selected application (app) *Stories About Me*⁹⁵ allowed participants to review, replay, and revise their stories as needed, at the touch or swipe of a fingertip. Despite that practical exposure, there was a lot I did not know. I found I had to forge ahead and do things I had never done before in the fieldwork. The same curiosity and willingness to experiment that is a hallmark of my clinical career, is part of who I am in the research.

I believe people are equals, it is one of my core values, passed down by my parents. Therefore, I sought a methodology that would equalize the participation between myself, my assistants in the field, and the young girls living in the fieldwork site (the village where I encountered that girl with disabilities). I have always loved being in the spotlight, performing and expressing creativity are a strong element of who I am in the research as well. Many times, acting out

⁹⁴ See Appendix A - Note on transliteration. See Appendix B - Glossary entry on Khmer Language (p. 256) for details regarding the language itself.

⁹⁵ See Appendix D for a review of this iPad Application.

through gestures and comic portrayals has helped to convey meanings when I can't rely on language. It is congruent with my performative self, that I wanted to include not only the group of girls and the assistants who made the study possible, but also my own journey as a student aspiring to become a researcher and as a western woman and retired occupational therapist seeking to find authentic ways to intervene in Cambodia to assist people with disabilities. I spent eight weeks completing the data collection⁹⁶, and more than five years working to understand my experiences in Cambodia completely and thoroughly enough to write about them credibly. The tenacity to see things through and a refusal to settle for less than excellence as the minimum acceptable standard for all my endeavours— these are both factors in who I am in the research. This aspect of my being is strongly influenced by my late father who lived these values, and taught me by example. Simply put, I love a challenge.

I could prepare ahead of time for some aspects of the research. However, there was important new information that I discovered through the process of spending time in Cambodia and specifically in the village. Other information, that resulted from retrospective reflection combined with comprehensive reading and study once the fieldwork data collection phase was completed, was instrumental in improving my insight and honing my understanding. Cambodia was neither a familiar setting nor culture. I was seeing things, and people were doing things that made absolutely no sense based on 'Canadian-normal'. I could not use my Canada-based knowledge of how things work as it did not apply in that new context. In fact, it required awareness and consistent vigilance in order to learn

⁹⁶ Six weeks were allocated to visits to the village to meet with participants, two weeks were allocated to necessary background tasks and were performed in Kampot town and nearby locations.

how to actively resist ingrained tendencies to assume that what I was seeing, those activities or ideas with a similar initial appearance, fit with my existing understandings when they, in fact, did not⁹⁷.

Section 2 –

Data analysis by distillation.

Introduction and review of how I chose this method.

The field texts are the raw form of answering my research question: ‘what stories do they tell?’; they give me my starting point for creating research-text stories and then inquiring into them. I chose to keep all ten girls and two assistants and their stories in my analysis. There are over a hundred pages in their books. The overall field texts also include the assistants’ stories, my notebook and journal entries and reflections, the recordings of our sessions, my sessions with Den to review and plan, emails sent to my faculty advisor, and discussions with my trusted confidante. Distillation, as my method of analysis, allows me to present all twelve, i.e., ten village girls and two local assistants. It honours my relational responsibility to them, as I understand it, and my commitment to demonstrate that I listened and heard what each participant told me.

Manankil-Rankin (2016) describes her process of entering into the ‘stories to live by’ of her participants as an act of embodiment. Drawing on Caldwell’s (2012) exposition on agency and embodiment based on Deweyan philosophy,

⁹⁷ One example occurred with the Cambodian folktale of the rabbit and the snails, I erroneously assumed it matched my familiar tale of the *Hare and the Tortoise*, see Appendix M, Reflections.

Manankil-Rankin (2016) explains how she proceeded to get inside her participants to better understand them:

[She] created the narrative account for each co-participant by reading across meeting transcripts (field texts) from that co-participant to reflect on how [they] answered [her] inquiry puzzle. This reflection was rather emotional and may be called an act of embodiment. Caldwell (2012) refers to embodiment as the capacity to feel an experience through one's entire being and sense of self. For [Manankil-Rankin], embodying the co-participant stories meant experiencing deep empathy for the co-participant, sensing the feeling in [her] body, and awakening to [their] experience as if [she] was there with [them]. In order to bring this embodied experience to life, [she] composed a letter for each co-participant, using [their] own words, as a form of co-constructed analysis. This was [her] narrative account.(p. 63)

Distillation and how I used it.

The definition of *distillation* according to the Oxford online dictionary is: “the extraction of the essential meaning or most important aspects of something, as in the film is a distillation of personal experiences”⁹⁸. This is how I approached the data. I was looking for the essence, the most important aspects, the potent version not the watered down one.

I experienced an internal conflict like a tug-of-war, the opposition between what is typical or expected, and what feels like a better fit. This happened during the analysis phase of my study. I had to make a decision that would influence

⁹⁸ Oxford online dictionary definition can be found at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/distillation>.

everything from that point forward. I decided to fall back on my practical wisdom, and turned away from the path of expectations. The original plan to use Atlas-ti to assist with analysis did not prove to be a good fit. I was back in Canada, far from the girls and unable to check with them regarding what things meant. The idea of chopping a story into small pieces and then having to re-construct it felt totally wrong.

I looked at the hard copy master version of all the colourful pages over and over. I listened to the audio tapes complete with all the roosters and the hammers in the background. Manankil-Rankin (2016, p. 63) wrote a letter as if she were the participant speaking. I wondered if I could say each girl's story in a sentence, and if so what would it be? This led to the version I have called "interim" texts, which allowed me to carry the complete set of stories with me on one page. That was my working version of the stories for the next two years. The next level of distillation came as a result of writing the research report, and having the requirement to do "data analysis". I felt an immediate resonance, a rightness-of-fit, when I stumbled upon the six-word story form.

I subscribe to many sources of information from the internet that pertain to stories, story-telling, performative research, and narrative inquiry in addition to contents pages from scholarly journals. One of them is an online magazine called: *Narrative*⁹⁹ and I was interested when I noticed their six-word story section.

The six-word story form offers an appealing option. It has been used by Simmons and Chen (2013) as a teaching and learning tool in the context of

⁹⁹ Narrative Magazine can be found at: <http://www.narrativemagazine.com/>.

increasing intercultural awareness and understanding among undergraduate students. Kiberenge et al. (2015) used it with anaesthesiologists to “foster professionalism in medicine through creative writing” (p. 222). McNeill (2013) describes the history of a recent advent of six-word memoir in the electronic magazine *SMITH*, and how it has grown in popularity and avid contributor-followers in a short time.

McNeill (2013) claims the six-word story satisfies an otherwise unmet craving for the details of people’s lives, it forms a modern technology-based form of social connectedness in American culture. She describes it as “this insatiable interest in memory and meaning-making in multiple digital forms” (p. 151). It is a potent and popular contemporary literary style that now appears in entire books (Fershleiser & Smith, 2008). Distilling a life, a mundane, or an important moment of a life, down to just six words is both challenging and rewarding. Refer to Appendix G for a collage of photographs of participants superimposed with the six-word stories I distilled from our sessions. A lot can be shown on one page in this condensed form.

By distilling and condensing each girl’s story into its essence (or an essence, since some selection of what to focus on was needed), I now have a set of six-word stories. I have lived with them for less time than I have had with the other (longer and larger) stories, yet it is these potent and intense smaller stories that excite my creative self in new ways. The tables have turned, the story from each of them is now in a form that can become my teacher as Archibald (2008) has described.

The research texts, distilled down from the field texts first into one or two sentence interim texts, and then from the interim texts distilled down further to six-word stories, provide a starting point for analysis within the three-dimensional

narrative inquiry space. However, a framework for understanding and using narrative analysis is still needed. The best source I have found for this is by Jeong-Hee Kim, Chapter 6: Narrative Data Analysis and Interpretation “Flirting” with Data (Kim, 2016, pp. 185-224).

Analysis of narrative or narrative analysis?

Kim (2016, p. 196) presents Polkinghorne’s two types of analysis: *analysis of narratives* and *narrative analysis*, as a useful starting point in determining how to make sense of narrative data. In this study, I did not want to “describe the categories of particular themes”, “uncover commonalities across multiple sources of data”, nor “produce general knowledge from a set of particulars found in a collection of stories” (ibid, pp. 196-197). This is the result of using a “paradigmatic mode of analysis” (ibid, p. 196), also called “*analysis of narratives*” (ibid, p. 196).

Rather, what I was seeking matches “the purpose of the narrative mode of analysis...to help the reader understand why and how things happened in the way they did, and why and how our participants acted in the way they did” (ibid, p. 197). We lived together, as Clandinin (2010, p. 81) describes it: “in the midst” of our intersecting “three-dimensional narrative inquiry spaces”.

Mishler’s narrative typology.

Kim (2016) continues with her exploration of narrative analysis by presenting “Mishler’s narrative typology” (ibid, p. 198). In this model, there are three categories available. Category one is called “Reference and temporal order: The telling and the told” which offers four methods (recapitulating the told in the telling, reconstructing the told from the telling, imposing a told on the telling, and making a telling from the told). Category two is called “Textual coherence and structure: Narrative strategies”; it offers two methods (textual

poetics, and discourse linguistics). Category three is called “Narrative Functions: Contexts and Consequences”. It offers four methods (narrativization of experience, narrative and culture, storytelling in interactional and institutional contexts, and the politics of narrative (ibid, p. 198).

Making a telling from the told.

I found that the best fit with my study was Method 4 in Category 1: Making a telling from the told (inferring a story, ibid, p. 198). In this method: “it is the researcher who is representing a temporal ordering of real events, a told, as a narrative—it is his or her telling that is the story” (Mishler, 1995, p. 102). Typically, according to Kim (2016), this method is used when there are large amounts of non-textual data to be analyzed, such as archival photographs. The researcher is the crucible for transforming this non-verbal matter into a recognizable story or stories. This resonates with what I did, immersing myself in daily life in the village, ‘listening with my eyes’ when I did not understand what was being said, capturing photographs to document my understanding, then distilling what I heard down to its essence or most important aspects. They told me what I asked once I had ascertained how to pose questions¹⁰⁰, and once there was a basic relationship of trust between us.

They had to get used to me too, there had to be both relationality and reciprocity to make things work. If I noted that transition from arriving in the village with a feeling I was in a strange place, to that new feeling of finding it both welcoming and familiar¹⁰¹ it is probable they felt those things towards me as well.

¹⁰⁰ See Chapter 4 - Questions in Cambodia, page 49..

¹⁰¹ See Appendix M, Reflections on Relationships, Entering the village, Sept. 28, 2013: “I notice how my response to arriving in the village in the morning, and their reception of that arrival, changes over time. The indifference and awkwardness of our first few days of going there is gradually replaced with a sense of eager anticipation on my part and a joyful reception on theirs.”

I was looking for the context of village life in its nuances and complexity, and in order to find it I had to blend the girls' answers to questions I asked with the totality of everything I saw, did, and felt while we were together. I also layered *my* stories and *their* stories into one master multi-perspectival three-dimensional narrative inquiry space, in order to begin to unravel all the meanings.

In a world of same language intercommunication, we would have had more interplay. Instead, I made decisions about what was the most important information in each story, what was included, what was in the spotlight. It is a task I look forward to in the future, presenting my distilled stories back to them for their feedback. I did as Lugones (1987) suggested and engaged in playful "world" travelling by using my imagination to become *them* in their lives. Only after doing so did I begin to distill their stories down to their essences. By selecting elements and presenting them in the form of six-word stories, I could include a whole story for each participant. I reiterate that this was a critical element for me; each participant and their story is equally important. I am operating within a relational ethics framework (McNamee & Gergen, 1999)¹⁰², in keeping with my hopes for the future dissemination of my work in the country where it takes place. I did not want to risk having any of the participants feeling left out.

My relationship to the participants, their village, the elders, and with Cambodia in general, does not end with the successful completion of my degree, nor does my responsibility. Owning the creating of the stories feels right to my '*internalness*' and it is consistent with my thinking that if the study is translated

¹⁰² McNamee and Gergen (1999) contend: "relationally responsible actions function to sustain and enhance those forms of interchange out of which meaning is continuously generated" (p. 199).

into Khmer, and the participants read it, I want them to know I am fully acknowledging that it is my story of them and not necessarily their story of themselves. I set out with lofty intentions of co-creating stories. I did my best within the limitations and features of the setting and given it was intercultural communication. The final analysis shows, it is me telling the story of them, rather than them telling the story of them. This is an appropriate application of a framework for analysis, the method of “making a telling from the told”, described by Mishler (1995) and recapitulated more recently by Kim (2016).

Rationale for using distillation.

The primary rationale for using distillation is to preserve *story* as a whole. The story obtained from each participant was not broken apart into themes and fragments before, during, or as a method of analysis, which would have provided multiple places for distortion given the need for translation between Khmer and English. Instead, the raw data forms of their stories were distilled down to an interim form of one or two sentences, then distilled further to a six-word story.

Placed alongside and interrelated with my autoethnography of doing the study, this composite collection of stories serves my ultimate research goal. The overall objective is to use information about the lives of a specific, vulnerable population to develop a larger storyline that can inform the occupational science/occupational therapy perspective on community development. Appreciating story as ‘pedagogy’ (Archibald, 2008), rather than as another form of data to be analyzed is pivotal to this application. When story is appreciated as pedagogy, as Frank describes it, “stories take on their own life and become teachers” (Frank, 2008, p. 190).

Section 3 –

Other Rationales.

Section three begins with a brief description of my rationale for using a mixed qualitative methodology and for the inclusion of photographic images. It explains how these are a good fit for the Cambodian setting, and how my personal values are exemplified and enacted. This is followed by brief descriptions of the rationales for the sample selection and data gathering/story gathering process I utilized.

A hybrid mixed methodology.

This study employs a combination of two qualitative methods: narrative inquiry and autoethnography. Augmenting the basic structure of narrative inquiry with additional elements from autoethnography offered the flexibility I required to meet the intercultural demands of my project. The integration of two major research methodologies also gave me a means to ensure the study was as inclusive as possible of the *me* in the process I lived when entering another culture as a stranger and inquiring into it. Part of my purpose for investigating the village girls' daily life occupations was to be able to understand their context well enough myself, in order to assist with enabling occupations in Cambodia in the future. There are many unmet rehabilitation and participation needs [t]here for villagers with disabilities¹⁰³. The girls' stories of daily life, the assistant's stories of their involvement, and my story of encountering and understanding their collective context, are equally required here in order to succeed with answering

¹⁰³ See Chapter 3, Justification for the study, social and theoretical justification, p. 25..

question five in a manner helpful to future development work. Both elements, the ‘they’ and the ‘I’, are vital to the rounded research study I conducted.

The primary rationale for selecting these methodologies is their ‘*goodness of fit*’ with each other and with the setting. The two selected approaches are compatible with each other because they share common ground in their storied basis for inquiry and interpretation (Chang, 2008; Kim, 2016). They are compatible with the culture in Cambodia because they are founded on relational aspects, just as navigating daily life in Cambodia relies primarily on the relational, rather than the more structural, objective, individualistic or material-based aspects of community life¹⁰⁴. Cambodia has a centuries-long tradition of oral story-telling and of the passing down of moral codes of conduct to the people through the voices of monks, for example through the *Chbap*¹⁰⁵ and The *Gatiloke*¹⁰⁶. Both the culture and the methodologies I chose are based on relationality, as Clandinin (2013) explains: “[n]arrative inquiry is situated in relationships and in community, and it attends to notions of expertise and knowing in relational and participatory ways” (ibid, p. 13).

The basis in story is thoroughly compatible with my own worldview, personal heritage, and internal language¹⁰⁷. Further, in congruence with my personal and professional values, inclusivity is exemplified in this study by

¹⁰⁴ See Chapter 4 for an exploration of the primacy of relationality in Cambodian culture.

¹⁰⁵ *Chbap* form a genre of Cambodian literature, containing a set of didactic or normative codes for different groups, e.g., *Chbap Srey* are the woman codes. See Appendix B- Glossary: *Chbap Srey* for more detail.

¹⁰⁶ The *Gatiloke* is a collection of 112 folktales used by Cambodian Buddhist monks as “speech-teach” sermons—examples of right and wrong, good and bad. The word “Gatiloke” reflects this: *Gati* means “the way,” and *loke* means “the world.” Freely translated, “Gatiloke” means “the right way for the people of the world to live” (Carrison & Chheap, 1987, p. 12). See Appendix B- Glossary for more detail.

¹⁰⁷ See Appendix M – Reflection on the importance of story in my life, May, 2017.

presenting all participants' stories in their entirety. This is made possible by having the two research assistants '*put on an additional hat*' and become participants in their own right once their task of assistant is over. Neither of them had any prior experience with research or researchers, meaning that we all shared the adventure of attempting a task we had never done before.

Photographs in the study.

Photographic images are integral to this inquiry (Bach, 2001, 2007), as capturing occupational images forms an essential component of my exploration of the daily life of village girls in Cambodia. I am aware, as explored in my Reflections on the Research, Dec. 2013 (Appendix M), of the complete inadequacy of word-based descriptors alone used for daily activities such as 'doing dishes', 'cooking rice', or 'going to school' to capture accurately how they are enacted in an unfamiliar setting and culture. An image quickly and effectively bridges the communication gap between people who do not share a common verbal language. It has a power of its own because it can be understood directly without words, but it can also be enhanced with words. As Bach (2001) explains: "[v]iewing the girls' photographs evokes words, but the story is not bound by them" (ibid, p.7). In this case it is possible, if not preferable, to use both words and images. Starting with the captured image, words can add another available meaning-making option, another way to approach an image, to react to it, to interpret, analyze, and discuss meanings derived from images. Based on and beginning from photographic images, words then provide a powerful option and remain a useful vehicle for meaning-making in this study.

The photographs not only build a powerful bridge to understanding by illustrating the village girls performing their daily life occupations in context.

These pictures, along with seven pictures hand-drawn by them¹⁰⁸, form an emotional bond between us— although we are people without a shared spoken language. The diversity of meanings that are available to be taken from the research images by those viewing them, whether it be readers, myself, or the girls themselves, can add a multi-dimensional quality to the trustworthiness of the inquiry. This combination of nuance and complexity is what I set out to discover. Distortion is inevitable when translation from English to Khmer, and back again from Khmer to English is the only communication option utilized. On the other hand, the picture of a little girl walking to school in flip-flops, cooking rice, washing laundry or caring for a younger sibling in village conditions, conveys a concrete meaning that transcends the distortion of textual interpretation. In addition, a picture she draws of her house, in her village, with the flowers she observes there, can powerfully open the eyes of an ethnocentric and culture blind inquirer, as happened to me.

Early in my research planning, I decided to use images in story-making. An important part of my methodology selection process was hearing Norman Denzin, and participating in workshops with John (“Dramatize the Data”) Saldaña and with Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner at the 2012 Qualitative Inquiry conference in Urbana-Champaign, U.S.A. Their ability to bring research stories to life through self-revelation, images, and performances were relevant to the research questions I was tackling. Though it speaks perhaps more to method than methodology, the installation I experienced there by the artist Michelle Lavoie, of portraits with quotes of their words in larger than life panels, titled “Seeing Stories: a portrait series” influenced me the most (See Appendix P). I

¹⁰⁸ See Appendix O, a collection of drawings made by village girl participants.

was convinced my study must include visual images to be able to tell the story adequately, so I crafted it that way. Others (Bach, 2001, 2007; Bell, 2013) have used images in narrative inquiries. Bach (2001, p. 7) promises: “Photographs slow time into moments, moments that can be studied.”

Kim (2016) describes a number of powerful ways photographic images can be used to enhance narrative inquiries. These include four main methods: photographic narrative, photovoice, archival photographs, and digital storytelling. Photographic narrative is a method where the artist uses images for visual storytelling. Photovoice is a method where participants take photographs and tell their story through them. Archival photographs provide a method where pre-existing photographs are used to explore different perspectives. Digital storytelling presents stories that have been made independently by participants using technology, and which are not changed in any way by the researcher. None of these uses is an exact fit for my study. I had to modify how I would use photographs based on the limitations of the setting and the intercultural communication requirements.

Den was the only participant in the study with any experience of cameras, taking photographs, or using technology to access the internet. It is a limitation of what is feasible, that the more participants control their contributions, the greater the need for ensuring they have the requisite skills with technology. Even learning how to use a camera can require significant pre-teaching. In a setting which demands intercultural communication, this can translate into extra weeks and months of training time. This was not possible or practical for my study given the limited time available and the lack of prior participant experience with photography, technology, or use of the internet.

Kim (2016, p. 150) provides ten reasons to use visual images in research which she adapted from work by Weber (2008, pp. 44-46). These are worth repeating here:

1. Images can be used to capture the ineffable, the hard-to-put-into-words.
2. Images can make us pay attention to things in new ways.
3. Images are likely to be memorable.
4. Images can be used to communicate more holistically, incorporating multiple layers, and evoking stories or questions.
5. Images can enhance empathic understanding and generalizability.
6. Through metaphor and symbol, artistic images can carry theory elegantly and eloquently.
7. Images encourage embodied knowledge.
8. Images can be more accessible than most forms of academic discourse.
9. Images can facilitate reflexivity in research design.
10. Images provoke action for social justice.

I would add to the list of ten reasons to use photographs in research that the possibility to give images back to participants, especially in settings where people do not have free and easy access to collecting photos of themselves, is a significant benefit for participants.

Ebihara (1990) experienced the power of this gifting of photographic images to people who had lost forever the people in the pictures. Giving something back exemplifies reciprocity and is particularly important when working within a relational ethics frame. A relational ethics is conducive to

including children as full contributors and participants in research processes (Czmoniewicz-Klippel, 2009), while the protectionist stance of more traditional institutional ethics can serve to limit child participation. The tension between institutional ethics, childrens' competence, and their research participation is well described by Skelton (2008) in her exploration of how participatory attempts to include children that are in keeping with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 2009), are at odds with institutional ethics (Skelton, 2008, p. 22).

Rationale for sample selection.

I relied on the assistance of a village elder to assist with locating participants. As a stranger and an outsider entering their village, it was a practical, and a necessary, way to proceed. Den, my primary research assistant, suggested it after conferring with Manco (pseudonym for the village elder assistant). Girls spontaneously volunteered to be participants, the first three came forward right away following the reading of the story prompt at the first meeting. During the next twenty-four hours, ten more girls gave their names to Manco.

She had her daughter write a chart of their names (in Khmer) and ages since Manco herself never learned how to read and write. By the next day, she reported that all the parents in the village wanted their daughters to “study” with me. I explained that there was only room for ten girls this time, but that I would return in the future so more girls would have an opportunity to participate. She reported that they were satisfied with that. The ten village girl participants were selected by accepting the first three volunteers, and drawing (names on pieces of

paper in a hat) from a list of ten additional volunteers for the remaining seven places. At the final meeting, a token gift was given to the three volunteers who were not selected¹⁰⁹.

Rationale for the location of data gathering.

The rationale for having interactions with participants in a familiar place was to minimize both the stress and the disruption to their usual routines. Den and I met with each girl in Manco's home. Manco had suggested this option to Den. The large open area in her house became our research base, while all our equipment and extra bags were safe under Manco's watchful eye whenever we made forays to other village places. The warmth of her hospitality, along with the safety and security, quickly made it feel like our 'home in the village', and provided a welcome base of operations. Other community members, including children, were present for the sessions as it is typical for people to come and go from different houses in the village over the normal course of daily life¹¹⁰. Den agreed with my suggestion that we should attempt to 'fit in' rather than try to control who was allowed to be present for our sessions.

The decision to refrain from interfering with the ebb and flow of people coming and going was strategic, and felt both comfortable and right in the informal social structure of a village setting. It was not without its difficulties though, as the numbers and noisiness grew large at times, especially when rainy weather limited play outdoors. The computer and iPad used to record story-

¹⁰⁹ See further discussion about the sample in Chapter 7, the Limitations section.

¹¹⁰ Personal experience and observation when I spent the night with Manco directly following the introductory meeting and before beginning sessions with the first volunteer participant.

sessions with the participants were of high interest to the children. Protecting my technology from wet weather and curious interference demanded hyper-vigilance on my part, it was reassuring to me that Manco was both presiding, and assisting just by being present.

Rationale for using an iPad.

The main rationale for using an iPad was to ensure consistency of delivery of research related information in the Khmer language. The initial meeting included sharing a pre-recorded Khmer language story prompt of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1987) using the Stories About Me App. This served to introduce the technology I planned to use during the upcoming story-making sessions in a fun and rewarding way. The children liked the story, they asked to hear it again. It was also possible to record the Consent/Assent script¹¹¹ using my iPad and the Stories About Me App thereby ensuring that exactly the same script was delivered consistently. Adding pictures of local flowers and pets added some visual interest, which helped with sustaining the girls' attention for the entire script of eight items. The same audio-visual version was used for both consent and assent.

Rationale for the multiple forms used for recording the stories.

The main rationale for having a duplicate of everything was to guard against losing important content. Having an alternate version (e.g. slight variations in image composition, or text as translated), also helps to capture as much complexity and nuance as possible. I predicted it would be important to

¹¹¹ See Appendix N for the English script, iPad 'Stories About Me' Khmer language version is available on request.

have multiple versions of the stories we were collecting, in case something was lost or damaged in the rainy season conditions during fieldwork, and to make sure less complexity and nuance were missed. My research questions meant eliciting stories from Cham village girls to learn more about their daily life and occupations, and to use these stories to explore the barriers and facilitators of occupation impinging on them and affecting them. I made multiple forms of their stories as raw data which were very similar, but not identical due to the different technologies utilized. Following the requisite consent/assent process¹¹², we began the story-creating process with one girl at a time.

First there was an audio recording of our initial session, made on my computer, with accompanying notes I took in my field notebook, as Den translated back and forth. Den and I met later the same day to review recordings. These review sessions took place at my home in Kampot in the evening, when we also planned future 'photo-shoots' to obtain the requisite images. The images, taken in duplicate with a digital camera and the iPad, were added to the Stories About Me iPad App and offered back to the participant for her verbal verification. This comprised an iPad recording of each girl's voice matched with photos of her engaged in daily life tasks. The girls could independently review their completed story using the iPad¹¹³.

Then I created a Powerpoint version on my computer that could be made into a hard copy, whereas the iPad app could not be rendered into a paper version; and a paper version was required to be able to leave a copy of her story

¹¹² See Appendix K for the transcript of this process with Apple, one of the participants; see Chapter 6 for a chronology of the consent/assent process..

¹¹³ The girls smiled during this activity of reviewing their personal story, they appeared to enjoy seeing pictures of themselves and hearing their own voices.

with each girl. The printable Powerpoint version had almost the same photographs as the iPad¹¹⁴ version but with both Khmer and English text. The printed document was laminated for durability and coil-bound. A copy was presented to each participant (of her story) at the final meeting (See Appendix H for reduced-size copies of the books, and Appendix F for a photograph of the final meeting). I retained a master copy for my records.

The village elder's story took the final form of a one-page Khmer language summary of her story as told to Den. The Khmer version was presented to her, while the English translation of the text was maintained by me for inclusion in my thesis report (see Appendix E). She herself does not read, but her husband, son, and daughter can read to her which makes the text accessible. Den's story of working on the research was conveyed to me during a recorded interview at my house. It was transcribed by me, and reviewed by him for accuracy¹¹⁵.

Section 4.

Rigour In the research.

Introduction to verisimilitude and trustworthiness.

A study is evaluated on how carefully and accurately information has been acquired and analyzed. Verisimilitude is the "appearance of being true or

¹¹⁴ The cropping of images was different due to limitations of the iPad App, and the camera angles or magnification had slight variations, however, the main content of images was the same.

¹¹⁵ See excerpts of these transcripts in Chapter 7, Den.

real”¹¹⁶, and trustworthiness is “the ability to be relied on as honest or truthful”¹¹⁷, as defined by the Oxford online dictionary. There must be a good fit between the type of data, the methods used to obtain, verify, and analyze it (Krefting, 1991) and the criteria used to determine how trustworthy it is. I will provide criteria that are a good match with my data and methods, then explain the steps taken to meet these criteria.

Evaluation criteria.

When Guba, (1981) identified concerns related to trustworthiness for qualitative research he also stated “I hope new and better criteria will quickly replace those suggested here,” with the proviso that ‘perfect’ criteria might never be found (ibid, p. 90). His four generic elements of truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality, are presented again by Krefting (1991):

Guba's (1981) model is based on the identification of four aspects of trustworthiness that are relevant to both quantitative and qualitative studies: (a) truth value, (b) applicability, (c) consistency, and (d) neutrality. Based on the philosophical differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches, the model defines different strategies of assessing these criteria in each type of research. These strategies are important to researchers in designing ways of increasing the rigour of their qualitative studies and also for readers to use as a means of

¹¹⁶ The Oxford online dictionary definition may be found at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/verisimilitude>.

¹¹⁷ The Oxford online dictionary definition may be found at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/trustworthiness>.

assessing the value of the findings of qualitative research. (Krefting, 1991, p. 215)

More than 35 years have passed since Guba's important contribution that has functionally become the universal gold standard for judging the quality of what he called "naturalistic" studies (Krefting, 1991; Loh, 2013; Polkinghorne, 2007). This study falls under the umbrella of a type of research that is further specified by Loh (2013) as "situated within the interpretive-constructivist paradigm" (ibid, p.2).

Krefting (1991) advocated strongly for the application of these validity standards to research in the field of occupational therapy. She provided a helpful tabular summary of what Guba had stated (ibid, p. 217). Krefting (1991) further stipulated that there must be a good fit between the combined research data and methods, and the criteria applied to determine a study's trustworthiness (ibid, p. 215). Polkinghorne (2007) explains that "the threats particular to narrative research relate to two areas: the differences in people's experienced meaning and the stories they tell about this meaning and the connections between storied texts and the interpretations of those texts" (p. 471).

More recently, Loh (2013) strived to answer the regular queries directed at narrative research "for its rigour and its quality" by returning to the ideas originated by Guba (1981). Loh further admonishes that it is

...vital for the narrative researcher to ask themselves: How valid is this narrative approach? How valid is the analysis of the data? How valid and reliable is the collection of these "stories," and how can a story be valid as an analysis? If the data is collected through the participants' telling of their "storied experiences," how do I know if they are being truthful? What if

they made up a story or embellish the retelling? Will the research be valid then? (p. 2)

Polkinghorne (2007) reminds us that in fact it is “the readers who make the judgment about the plausibility of a knowledge claim based on the evidence and argument for the claim reported by the researcher” (ibid, p. 484). This is a strong argument for including selected raw data in research reports so that readers can look at it and decide on both trustworthiness and meanings for themselves.

From the collective wisdom of these and many other respected qualitative researchers, the importance of four essential elements emerges. These will be explored regarding the present study. They comprise: 1. having long periods of observation, 2. having multiple sources of data, 3. checking the interpretations made by the researcher again with data sources, and 4. checking the researcher’s interpretations with peers.

1. Having long periods of observation.

In the present study, the fieldwork period was limited by the amount of vacation time I had available as I was engaged in full-time employment. My original two weeks in 2012 with my husband, subsequent six weeks to visit him and gain access to the research site in 2012-2013, and the eight weeks on-site completing data collection in the village in Cambodia in 2013, have been augmented through the intervening years by many months of living within the country. My time living in Cambodia has been spent predominantly in the town of Kampot, with periodic day trips to Kep¹¹⁸ or local temples and tourist attractions. I

¹¹⁸ See Appendix B- Glossary entry for Kep, it is a sea-side resort town near Kampot.

have added to this many brief periods of travel to Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, as well as two months of four-to-five-day stays in a rice-growing community near Kampot, in 2016. Spending many days and nights immersed in Khmer language in a rural village where the community follows Buddhism, gave me a better appreciation for rural life; while admittedly it was not identical to a Muslim fishing village. Nonetheless, there are many similarities due to the climate, weather, primitive conditions regarding sanitation and living arrangements, flora and fauna¹¹⁹, types of foods and flavours (except pork) and of plastic or ceramic dishes and ways of washing dishes and clothes, and so on. I have also travelled between places in a variety of ways, on foot, by bicycle, by moto as a passenger, by boat, on buses, tuk-tuks¹²⁰, air-conditioned cars, and domestic flights. I have yet to ride on the train that goes between Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville.

2. *Having multiple sources of data.*¹²¹

The multiple sources of data used in my study are included in this report through tables, figures, brief quotes interspersed throughout the text, and longer transcriptions attached in Appendices. They include:

- photographs that were taken predominantly in the village, staged with the subjects and participants of the stories to match the content of the story they told me e.g., Tenflower getting bounced off of her bicycle. Alternatively, daily

¹¹⁹ Insects that bite are ubiquitous and can carry deadly diseases such as dengue fever, I used a mosquito net in the rice village as did the family members there. There are no mosquito nets (visible) in the fishing village. The similarities of rural village life predominated, living in a village in Cambodia is similar no matter where it is.

¹²⁰ This is a vehicle comprised of a moto pulling a passenger trailer, see <https://www.cambodiadaily.com/business/tuk-tuks-being-squeezed-by-competition-rise-of-ride-apps-132045/> for a photo.

¹²¹ All transcripts, audio recordings, data impossible to include in a report such as iPad stories, original stamped, signed and dated permission letters for access to the village, my complete field notebook, journals both electronic and paper, as well as peripheral artifacts and information collected while in Cambodia can be made available on request.

life occupations were captured as the task took place e.g., Morningstar washing clothes (See Appendices: F for the final meeting, G for the collage with six-word stories, H for the mini-books)

- photographs *as-the-story*, e.g., taken in the youngest participant's house with her while she told the story of playing with her toys (See: The Story of Moon, Appendix H)
- photographs taken at nearby locations (without participants present) both within the village and in the surrounding area including local schools, rice fields, roads, the river, the fishing boats
- photographs accessed through the internet, generic images to match the one story that took place outside Cambodia in Malaysia (A Story of Sari, see Appendix H)
- drawings made by village girl participants (See Appendix O)
- transcriptions of excerpts from a field notebook kept during the fieldwork (see Appendix L)
- audio recordings of the oral consents and assents
- audio recordings of story generation and story verification sessions for each participant
- transcriptions of one complete story generation session, and the following story validation session, for one participant (Apple, see Appendix K)
- excerpts from transcriptions of the research assistant's story generation interview (See Chapter 7, the findings, section about Den)
- reproductions of excerpts from reflective journals maintained during the research period between 2012 and 2017 (see Appendix M – My Reflections)

- the consent/assent script in English and a copy of the contact card given to participants (see Appendix N)
- the letter reporting findings as of September, 2013, in Khmer and English, that was delivered in person to the Commune Chief, Kampot Town Chief, Department of Labour and Vocational Training, and Department of Women as required by those granting access to the village for the study (see Appendix J)

3. Checking the interpretations made by the researcher again with data sources.

My interpretations were not yet available during my time in Cambodia. Due to the recent completion of 'interpretations', the distance to the fieldwork site, and the present political climate in Cambodia, it has not been feasible nor possible to review these with the participants yet. I have a future plan to do so—by translating the six-word stories into Khmer and returning to the village in an effort to fill this gap; however, this is impossible at the time of writing this report. This inability to check my interpretations is one of the main reasons I selected distillation as my method of transitioning the field texts into research texts. Our 'in the midst' encounters, whereby I let the stories they tell me 'work on me', and I let myself respond from my own past, and personal-social stories to live by from my Canadian life, these happen between their story in raw form and my meaning-making originates prior to formal interpretations are attempted. In this way, their original story is not interpreted prior to its immediate effect on me. Only then do I proceed with the distillation process, which makes our encounter in a joint three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of higher fidelity. I have the perception of staying truer to what they told me. Use of distilling the meaning by

boiling it down to its essence also makes the best of a significant limitation given the impossibility of opportunities to share and go over my interpretations iteratively with them.

During the data collection fieldwork phase, each girl verified her story by telling, for the audio recording of her actual voice, what she saw while she looked at the photographs Den and I had taken (sometimes without her presence) that appeared on the Stories About Me iPad application. The photographs were used to illustrate what she originally told me. I selected the story titles which were translated into Khmer by Den. No participant wanted to change the title of their story or any of the photographs with the exception of Rose who asked that one photograph of her be re-done, which it was. They all received a bound and laminated hard copy of their story with the text in both English and Khmer. A page by page review of my master-copy completed with Den revealed a number of spelling and minor translation errors which did not change the concrete meanings. These errors largely resulted from my working alone with the copy-center staff on completing/compiling the ten books, as Den could not be available to translate on-site. None of the participants have yet seen the interim-text sentence story version, nor the six-word story version of what they shared with me.

Den, my main research assistant, was provided with a transcript of his 'participant' interview only after I had left the fieldwork site due to the short time between completing data collection and my scheduled flight back to Canada. The 'trusted confidante', my now-late husband, gave the document to Den. Den did not want to make any changes. There remains a section of his interview, in Khmer, that has not been translated although he provided a synopsis in English

following his free-expression in Khmer, which is included in his story (see Chapter 7, findings). Manco was interviewed in Khmer by Den once her job as assistant had been formally concluded and she had received a certificate and remuneration as agreed. This interview was conducted by Den in Khmer, it took place at her home in the village, it was audio recorded and a translation into English (see Appendix E) was given to me. She received a paper copy of the Khmer version which had been transcribed by Den. He discussed it with her in my presence and informed me that she did not want to make any changes. He and I reviewed the recording at my home the following evening and I wrote notes of this in my field notebook.

4. Checking the researcher's interpretations with peers.

During the early months of the study, up to and including the fieldwork data collection and until June, 27th, 2014, my late husband fulfilled the role of 'trusted confidante' according to the confidentiality agreement covering this. We were able to freely discuss issues and events that took place in Cambodia, as he was living there and had experience of the culture that exceeded my own. Professional colleagues, including my faculty advisor Dr. Robin Stadnyk and some of my occupational therapy colleagues heard descriptions and/or engaged in email conversations about various aspects of the research during the period up until Dr. Stadnyk's retirement in June, 2017 when I began a relationship with a new advisor. The role of trusted confidante was taken over by my sister, Holly, after my late husband was no longer available, with the requisite confidentiality agreement having been obtained from her.

The presentation of a poster session (Qualitative Health Research conference, Halifax, October 2013) (see Appendix F), a PowerPoint presentation

at the O.T. Atlantic conference in October 2013, an on-line lecture for the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists Lunch and Learn series in February, 2014 (see Appendix Q for a sample page), and an online lecture to occupational therapy students in Australia¹²² have provided opportunities for my peers to experience some of the elements of this study and to provide discussion and feedback for me.

I have sought additional feedback from past professional colleagues outside the occupational therapy profession. Their questions and comments have contributed to my own reflections and thoughts regarding the study itself, how the stories might be interpreted, and how they might be used in the future. Once I had achieved my research text version of the data, I sought input and responses about my 'one page collage of photos with six-word stories' (see Appendix G), from three academic experts in diverse fields who are personally known to me. Johnny Saldaña (Saldaña, 2011) is an expert in ethnotheatre and dramatizing data, Linda Liebenberg (Editor-in-chief, International Journal of Qualitative Methods) is an expert in resilience research, and Dr. Elizabeth Townsend (Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Prince Edward Island and Professor Emerita, School of Occupational Therapy, Dalhousie University), is an expert in enabling occupations. Their feedback and responses are incorporated into my Discussion chapter.

¹²² August 25, 2017, "*Inter-cultural competency: Discovering how to work authentically in Cambodia*", Jocelyn Campbell, guest Lecturer in the Unit 9070 (Occupation in Context), in the Master of Occupational Therapy course, at the University of Canberra, Australia, on-distance modality, 75 minutes.

Additional criteria.

These four criteria, along with my descriptions in consideration and response to them, leave many important questions regarding the study, and how it was conducted, unanswered. I wanted to find criteria that were a better match for the type of research I completed. Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) describe a type of qualitative research they call ‘Writing as Inquiry’ (p.964). I find there is a better fit between my study and the criteria proposed by them in consideration of verisimilitude: substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity, and impact (ibid, p. 964). Their questions are directed at the readers of what has been written, not directly at the writer. It is, as Polkinghorne (2007, p. 484) suggests, “up to the reader to determine the value of a study”. Loh (2013) emphasizes the usefulness factor in his description of what is important in assessing the validity of a narrative study. As Loh (2013) asks, “if the study is not of use then what is the *raison d’être* of the study? (ibid, p. 9).

The usefulness factor.

I have confidence, based on the paucity of other available sources, that the view inside the daily life of Cham village girls offered here through their illustrated stories can add something to the understanding of Muslim village life in Cambodia. The interest of officials I was directed to for permissions, who told me my results should be taught in Cambodian schools, underscores this¹²³. I have grounded my understanding of Cambodia on scholarly investigation of both formal and informal sources combined with living there. It is up to the reader to determine if, as Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) ask, it “seem[s] true—a

¹²³ Personal experience, as translated by Den in the Chief of Kampot’s office.

credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the “real”” (p. 964).

Aesthetic merit.

“Does it have aesthetic merit?” is their next question. I have heard many people who have looked at the master-hard-copy remark on how beautiful it is. I have provided the entire scope in ‘mini’ format to enable readers to make their own artistic assessments. As noted by Richardson and St. Pierre (2005), this research report is intended to be “artistically shaped, satisfying, complex, and not boring” (p. 964). Only readers can determine that based on their response to the presentation. There is a congruence between using story as a basis for inquiry into a culture that has strong oral traditions, that would not be as strong with more fact-based scientific methods.

Researcher held to standards of people studied.

“Does the author hold himself or herself to the standards of knowing and telling of the people he or she has studied?” (ibid, p. 964). My investigations of a Muslim worldview, and cultivating friendships with Muslim scholars are my attempts to begin to be able to do this. During fieldwork I was vigilant about my dress, manners, and attitude of respect and gratitude for the opportunity to join in with village life. Great care was taken with performing the research related tasks such as sampling and data collection in ways that ‘fit in’ as much as possible with their rhythms and routines of daily life.

Impact of the study.

And finally, the impact, what is this study’s potential for facilitating change? I have the sincere hope that these stories might generate many new

questions and possibly alternative actions on the part of community developers. I wonder what it might change if *expatriates* working in foreign places could begin to be able to understand 'story' as pedagogy. The story as a teacher in its own right is the way First Nations people such as Archibald (2008) have understood and described it, rather than story as a piece of 'data' to be manipulated and interpreted. And in addition, I wonder how the concept of occupational justice might be understood differently if it could be seen from various culture-centric perspectives instead of just its present Eurocentric one. I wonder how traditional ideas, novel approaches to understanding differences, and relational meaning perspectives borrowed from Cambodian culture could enhance occupational therapy and occupational science understandings of enabling daily life occupations. These *wonders* will be further explored in the conclusions chapter.

CHAPTER 6

CHRONOLOGY OF DATA COLLECTION

Introduction to a chronology.

The descriptions in this chapter follow the order of operations that took place as the study transpired. The time is divided into four periods: Part 1 - preparation phase, Part 2 - beginning fieldwork phase, Part 3 - middle fieldwork phase, and Part 4 - ending fieldwork phase. A brief explanation of the general background is offered in order to set the stage for the information that follows.

My initial contact with the village was in February, 2012, on my first visit to Cambodia, when Dr. Mav¹²⁴ took me there. I returned seven months later—an expectant ‘researcher-mother’ to a study in gestation. I had a lot of hope and enthusiasm and not much else. What I had was not yet inter-cultural competence; it was not yet cultural humility: yet it made a convincing faux finish on my wall of inexperience and uncertainty. I did not even know where the village was (specifically), I had no Khmer language skills and no familiarity with local customs or culture. What follows is a “just the facts m’am” version of what took place which will make obvious, better than any definition, the difference(s) between what is a story and what is a chronology. I have chosen to present it in short paragraphs to emphasize this contrast, and to keep myself from slipping into story. For me, there is a story or ‘stories-untold’ concealed between each of the lines. In fact, every sentence evokes a wealth of reflections, reminiscences, and insights like a kaleidoscopic view when I read it. When you read it, it is more likely a framework or skeleton with bones and no flesh. The richness of what

¹²⁴ A local doctor, see Appendix B- Glossary for further details.

happened is only revealed through the layers of accompanying stories as told in the other chapters. Photographs and text examples are available in Appendices as noted to add depth and clarity to the descriptions.

Part 1 – preparation for fieldwork phase.

Acquiring a translator/assistant.

During a pre-research preparation visit, in December 2012-January 2013, I recruited a local school teacher who agreed to be my translator/assistant (Den). He identified the village from a photograph and drafted a permission letter with me (English/Khmer versions) to present the study to those in charge (who could grant permission to do the study and grant access to the site).

The copy centre.

The translated permission letter was printed at a local copy center. This local business and one staff member, who duly signed a confidentiality agreement, became our main source of office supplies and the primary support for typing, formatting, printing, copying, and laminating materials related to the study.

Reconnecting with Manco.

Den transported me on his moto¹²⁵, and we visited the village. I re-established contact with the woman, Manco, who had introduced me to the girl with disabilities on my first visit to the village with Dr. Mav.

¹²⁵ Motorcycle in Khmer is: *moa-dtoa*, which sounds like the English vernacular short for it – “moto”. See also Appendix B- Glossary for further details.

Obtaining permissions for access.

We then visited relevant offices (Commune office near the village, The Mayor of Kampot (town) and the Governor of Kampot province's offices in town, and two provincial ministries located out of town: Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, and Ministry of Women's Affairs). We obtained official stamped documents granting the required levels of permission (commune level, Kampot town level, Kampot province level) and thereby arranged for access to the village where the study would take place. This process was all based on advice from my assistant in order to fit with local norms; I was completely reliant on him.

No Cambodian university link.

No involvement of a Cambodian university was sought or required. Dalhousie University has no established links or liaison with a local university; the profession of occupational therapy is mostly unknown and not part of standard medical care in Cambodia and there is no training program available in the country with which I could link,

Facts About the Village.

After I had returned to Canada, my assistant met with the village chief and explained the study. He obtained some facts about the village, namely the number of households (336 houses/351 families), and the number of community members (1,429 people, 967 over age 19, 511 women) to include in my proposal. He obtained preliminary agreement from the female village elder for her participation as research assistant and story contributor.

Proposal approved.

I drafted my research proposal and presented it to the Research Ethics Board of Dalhousie University. Permission was subsequently granted with annual renewals, covering the entire period from my arrival in the village to commence data collection until the present. This was deemed important since Den had dual roles, as assistant and as participant. Ongoing ethical approval was needed to cover our ongoing intermittent contacts during the data analysis and report writing phases of the study. This took place in both Canada and Cambodia between August 2013 and August 2017, as I travelled back and forth between the two countries.

Personal preparations in Canada.

I prepared myself for spending time in the village by selecting appropriate conservative clothing, ensuring I had supports in place for my health (inoculations up to date, strong insect repellent, Vitamin B tablets) and stress management (daily yoga routine, discussing fears with my support team, writing a reflective journal). I purchased water proof bags for my technology as it would be the rainy season during the data collection period.

Initial translation and preparations in Cambodia.

As soon as I arrived in Cambodia in August 2013, Den and I spent several days together translating the description of the study (to be used during the recruitment meeting in the village) and the informed consent/confidentiality forms from English, as approved by the Research Ethics Board (REB), to Khmer which the villagers could understand. We utilized his contacts for assistance with translating the documents. Some of the forms, including the research assistant

agreements, confidentiality agreement, and the separate research assistant 'consent to participate' forms were in text form on paper. Den, the copy center staff member, and my husband (trusted confidante) could read and sign a written consent/confidentiality form. All other consents were oral. The consent (over age 15) or assent (under age 15, with parental consent) process used was to make an audio recording using a small digital recorder of the reading of the forms out loud by Den to each participant one at a time, followed by the participant answering Yes/No confirming their understanding and agreement.

Consent/assent for continuing in the study was repeated at the start of each story session with each participant (Refer to Appendix K: Apple transcript for an example; Refer to Appendix N for the English consent script).

Ages utilized for consent and assent.

The age of 15 was chosen based on discussion with Den, local custom, and with respect for Islāmic practices. Cambodian children are seen as able to have jobs at 15; puberty is the common threshold for maturity in Islām, and I wanted to provide younger girls with parental support for their decision regarding participation.

Use of iPad in consent and assent process.

We used my iPad and the *Stories About Me* application (Limited Cue, 2012, refer to Appendix D) to record the eight Informed Consent/Assent points (Den's voice in Khmer) and I took local pictures both close-up and wide-angle to accompany each point. The result was as efficient and effective a means as I could engineer, to ensure consistency when admitting participants into the study. It was easy for the participants to touch the iPad screen which started playing the

recording of each point. While listening, they could look at the local photograph of familiar subjects (e.g., close-up of cat's whiskers followed by picture of the same cat asleep on the floor; center of a lotus flower in the pond beside the mosque followed by a picture of the entire pond with the mosque in the background). They could easily swipe the screen with a finger to turn pages. This use of the iPad they had first seen during the information/recruitment meeting served to individually introduce them to, and let them interact with, technology we would use to make a recorded version of their story later in the process.

Villagers' unfamiliarity with research.

The very ideas of research, consent/assent, being able to say 'no' or 'stop' are so new and unfamiliar to participants, and the large amount of related information that needed to be presented at once (see Appendix N) and for which they had no previous exposure or context for making sense— these added to the challenge. Den took the ideas in the script (written in English at a grade 9 level) and translated them into Khmer using words that they could understand. In accordance with REB requirements we gave them a 'contact card' in case they wanted or needed to report a problem (see Appendix N, bottom of page). Two villager responses to this card were: "and will the person who answers the phone speak Khmer?", and "my child is sick, can I call this number to get medical attention?" These illustrate the disconnect between our sincere ethical intention to protect participants from harm, and the actual meaning of the experience to them.

Permission to spend the night with Manco.

I asked to spend one night with Manco (she agreed), in order for me to better understand the flow of activity in an entire day/night cycle through immersion in the village setting. We agreed on the following plan: Den would transport me to the village, arriving at 9 a.m.; we would proceed with an information and recruitment meeting. I would remain in the village, at Manco's house, for the remainder of that day and overnight. The consent process and story-sessions would begin at 9 a.m. the following morning when Den would return.

Part 2 – beginning fieldwork.

Recruitment meeting scheduled and completed.

On Friday, we scheduled the recruitment meeting for the following Monday. It would take place under Manco's house. The villagers were invited to attend by Manco, many do not read and write so it was decided not to post a sign. She suggested we give a bottle of water to each person in attendance, Den purchased the water to distribute (500 Riel/12.5 cents per bottle). Some people sat on plastic chairs, some on wooden benches, some on hammocks, some on the ground and some remained standing. I counted 13 women, 6 children, and 3 men at the beginning of the meeting and 25 children at the end of the meeting. Den explained who I was and what the study would entail.

Story prompt.

We played a story prompt of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1987) that I had prepared in advance using the *Stories About Me* app on my iPad. Illustrations from the book (a cardboard version was also passed around) were

accompanied by the pre-recorded voice of a young Khmer girl reading the story aloud. One of the children in the audience ‘turned’ the pages by swiping their finger on the iPad to continue the story. Everyone repeated the “but he was still hungry” part every time it came around. The children drew closer and closer to the screen during the story. When the story was over, I asked if there were any questions. Their answer was: “Can we hear the story again?” So we replayed it.

Participants volunteer.

Three girls volunteered immediately to participate in the study. Others indicated their agreement to participate later to Manco and their names and ages were added to a list compiled by Manco’s adult daughter (Manco is not able to read and write herself). Thirteen names were collected for ten available positions in the study. The first three volunteers were automatically included; the remaining seven names were drawn at random from a hat (see Table 1 below for details about the selected participants). By the next day, Manco reported that every girl in the village wanted to participate (her words were: they want to ‘study with you’¹²⁶). This was resolved when I promised to return to the village in the future and provide additional opportunities. For a summary of participant names, ages, grade levels and their family compositions see Table 1.

Initial consent and/or assent.

Initial consent/assent was obtained, then sessions proceeded with me asking a question in English which Den translated into Khmer, the girl answered in Khmer then Den translated her answer into English. See transcription sample

¹²⁶ They had decided I was a teacher, the explanation that Den gave about my occupational therapy background notwithstanding.

of the English: Appendix K. I used the time that Khmer was being spoken to closely observe body language and non-verbal expressions.

Choice of colour and pseudonym, four themes.

Each girl chose a coloured square of felt and a pseudonym. I used this name/colour identifier to keep them separate in my mind, and as a way to begin to sort and organize my story-ideas based on what they were telling me (Sari/Red; Rose/Orange; Apple/Pink; Sunflower/Light Green etc.). Choices and making choices is the first of four themes (Choices, Wanting, Daily Life, Transformations) taken from the story prompt *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* that were used to structure the story sessions.

Table 1 – Participant information (Participants in the order their stories were recorded)

Name (pseudonym)	Age	Grade completed	Home/Family
Sari	18	Has left school	Mom, dad, younger sister, she left home age 15 – 18 to work in Malaysia
Rose	12	4 (rank 5)	Fisherman dad, mom, younger sister, walks to school, knows time by mom's phone, has never 'slept in'
Sunflower	12	4	Fishermen dad, mom, brother, divorced sister, factory sister, disabled sister, younger sister, walks to school
Apple	10	1	Divorced mom, older brothers 17 and 25 are fishermen, mom has boat/ferry, she goes by boat to school
Butterfly	10	2	Divorced mom, younger sister, grandmother, aunt, baby niece, broken bicycle
Tenflower	12	4	Divorced mom, only child, 8 people in her house which is 'not so big/not so small', bicycle
Rabbit	14	7 (rank 1)	Fisherman dad, mom has shop, big house, 2 younger siblings- brother 7, sister 1, rides family moto
Morningstar	9	1	Fisherman dad, mom, and baby brother, bicycle
Moon	6	1	Fisherman dad, mom, 1 room house by water with holes in floor, walks to school
Star	11	3 (rank 16-17)	Dad is boat mechanic, mom has shop under their home, older sister 21 working in a distant garment factory, older brother 18, motorcycle

Table 2 – Answers to story session questions

Name (pseudonym)	Choice (of colour)	Wanting	Daily life	Transformation
Sari	Red	A job in a factory	Housework, Job search	Factory job
Rose	Orange	To be a teacher	School, housework, Play	Teacher
Sunflower	Light Green	Crayons to colour, hair bow, work in factory	School, childcare, Housework, Play	Factory job
Apple	Light Pink	To be a teacher	School, Help with boat, Sell fruit Play (twist balloons)	Teacher
Butterfly	Yellow	To be a teacher	Childcare, School	Teacher
Tenflower	Turquoise	To be a teacher	School, Bicycle, Help mom, play	Teacher
Rabbit	Dark Green	To be a teacher	School, Reading, Cooking and cleaning, Moto	Teacher
Morningstar	Dark Pink	‘I want to do it all’	School, Childcare, Housework, play	Learn English Interpreter in car factory, tour guide
Moon	Dark Red	To be a teacher	Play and School	Teacher
Star	Purple	Notebook, folk-tale story book, to be a teacher	School, Help with store, solitary play and reading	Teacher

Initial sessions.

Initial sessions took place in Manco's house. The girl we focused on sat across from Den and me in a triangular pattern on a mat on the floor. Various women and children arrived and left during the sessions. There was intrusive background noise from crowing roosters, cheeping baby chickens, pounding hammers, the whine of power tools and chatter from the children and adults sitting on the floor with us. I frequently had one or more girls sitting close/leaning on me and touching my hands and arms.

High vigilance required for technology.

My computer and iPad were kept close beside me. Nevertheless, by the second day some of the little boy observers had the iPad password figured out and it was necessary for me to maintain high vigilance throughout the sessions to protect my technology from possible curious tampering. I also had to be careful and conscientious about wrapping it all in waterproof layers for the ride through the rain back and forth from Kampot town to the village (20 minutes away).

Asking direct questions.

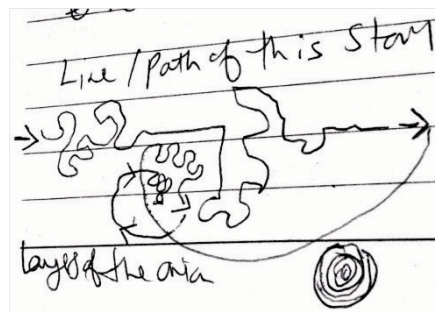
At first, I had no knowledge at all about the context; in effect I didn't know what I didn't know. Asking direct questions that required an opinion, abstract reasoning, meta-cognitive thought processes, or anything other than a factual answer proved problematic. The classic answer to other than factual questions is "I don't know" which saves face for both parties and is culturally congruent for them. It did not help me with information retrieval or finding out about how things work. If I asked, "What does the story mean to you?" referring to *The Very*

Hungry Caterpillar, the girl would retell me the story and Den would inform me, “Khmer girl not good at this.”

What asking questions felt like.

The girls understood and answered questions with one right answer much more easily than open ended or abstract questions, so I quickly learned to ask just those kinds of questions. I was greatly challenged to find out information in indirect ways; it felt like I had to circle around things rather than point at what I wanted to know. See Figure 3 below for my drawing to illustrate what getting to stories felt like.

Figure 3— Drawing from my field notebook



Part 3 – middle stage of fieldwork.

Filling in the context.

As I amassed more facts, I became more proficient with filling in the context. And, as they became more used to me, answering seemed easier for them. Eventually I was able to get answers to opinion questions (e.g., “what is your favourite part of the playground at school? The slide.” (See Appendix H, Moon, p. 18 for an image of the playground).

An exception to the otherwise smooth process.

The sessions proceeded in like fashion, all went smoothly with one small exception. Morningstar initially came with her mother, she began crying when the questions started, so the session was stopped immediately. Den subsequently spoke with her parents and the next day when she came with her father instead of her mother, she had no tears. Den described similar crying responses at times in his classroom when a girl was asked a question, so this was not an unusual reaction within the Cambodian context. Her father made a special request to have a picture of him and his daughter taken (see Appendix H, Morningstar, p. 2).

Youngest participant's story started with images.

Moon's story was done slightly differently as her young age made it more appropriate to start with images and proceed to text. The other stories started with their descriptions that we subsequently made photographs together to illustrate. Moon's story was completed mostly at her home, directly onto the iPad. Additional impromptu spontaneous photographs taken over the course of our days together in the village were subsequently added to her basic story about playing with her toys. The *Stories About Me* app made it easy to make changes to the story, add a picture or revise a voice recording. Any changes to the corresponding master-copy for printing created with my computer were much more difficult and time consuming. I experienced the benefits that having two kinds of technology provided; each type offered specific advantages as well as the security of some overlap in story content.

Story sessions audio-recorded.

The story sessions (initial one, and subsequent ones for story verification) were audio-recorded using a clip-on microphone input to my computer and the free open source software Audacity (Audacity, 2017). My transcription of Apple's sessions is provided in Appendix K as an example. It was a slow and sometimes almost painful process, like pulling hen's teeth, and there were many repetitions to get things clear on both sides.

iPad used for story-making.

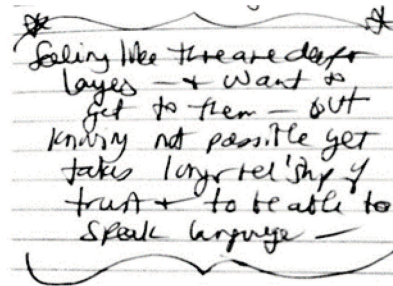
The iPad was used for creating a version of each girl's story with the pictures and their voice in the *Stories About Me* app. This was easy for them to do, and they were happy to be able to see and hear themselves by 'reading' the final version independently with the iPad. There were some difficulties with getting them to speak loud enough to obtain good sound quality for the iPad as an external microphone was not used. My inexperience with all the options for my technology, stress from having anxiety over loss or damage to the equipment, and being overwhelmed with the complexity of juggling tape recorder, computer, iPad, pen and paper, while maintaining focused attention on observing and listening were contributing factors. The results were reasonable, and adequate to support transitioning the field texts to interim texts and finally to research texts.

Researcher's notebook.

I maintained a notebook for questions and observations made during the story sessions which I referred to throughout daily (evening) sessions with Den where we re-listened to the audio recording of each girl's story session together

at my home. We met informally and resolved difficulties, confirmed the translations, discussed questions, clarified the content, and made a plan for the continuation of sessions the following day. I also made entries in my reflective journal as far as time demands and fatigue factors allowed, more often there were reflective notes in my field notebook. Refer to Figure 4 for an example.

Figure 4—Reflective Field Note



The image shows a handwritten note on lined paper, enclosed in a decorative wavy border. The text is written in cursive and reads: "Feeling like there are days / layers - + want to / get to them - but / knowing not possible yet / takes long rel'ship of / trust + to be able to / speak language -".

Village visits.

Typically, Den and I visited the village from Monday to Thursday, for six weeks, in the mornings. We met to review the recordings of that day in the evenings, and we met to review the week and plan the next week on Fridays. He had the weekends off.

Four themes: choices, wanting, daily life, transformation.

Based on *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* story prompt, the four themes: Choices, Wanting, Daily Life, and Transformation provided a loose framework for my story-elicitation questions. Analytic thinking is not taught in school which is based on a rote learning pedagogy, so understandably using themes was unfamiliar to them. I did not ask every participant the exact same questions, rather each session unfolded based on their responses. Other questions included: “What was the best day of your life?” “What is your favourite story?” “Can you draw that?” See Table 3 for details of each girl’s responses to these questions.

Table 3— Answers to additional questions U- unavailable, or unasked

Name (pseudonym)	Favourite Story	Best day of your life	Drawing (refer to Appendix O)
Sari	U	U	(none)
Rose	U	Perfect score on a paper	I am 5 th in my class of 30
Sunflower	U	First day of school	Mouse ate my hair bow, 3 kinds of people
Apple	U	First day of school	Me as a teacher
Butterfly	U	U	Giving my baby niece a bath
Tenflower	Where the Alligator came from ¹²⁷	U	(none)
Rabbit	Mountain of the Men and the Women	Class trip to beach	(none)
Morningstar	Ghost stories	First day of school	(none)
Moon	U	First day of school	Houses on stilts with flowers
Star	Said 'no stories before'	New school uniform	Me as a teacher

¹²⁷ I found out that while there may be a Khmer folktale about it, this also means the Little Mermaid story. Quote from fieldnotes of August 27, 2013 during visit to primary school: "Little Mermaid – book is in the school library (Den says it is the origin of the alligator story Tenflower mentioned). It is in both English and Khmer. At the end, the moral of the story is written in a Buddhistic way: Troubles bring us experiences, while the experiences provide us with wisdom."

First story session.

The first story session (Sari, age 18) was unique in that the action took place far from the village. She spent three years (age 15 to 18) as a nanny in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. I found information and appropriate images on the internet to illustrate her story (see Appendix H for details in the mini-copy of her book). The remaining nine stories took place in the village, and nearby schools.

Photo sessions.

Photo sessions were planned and executed to gather and generate images to illustrate the stories of daily life told to me by the girls. Some were staged (e.g., school is not in session in August but girls got dressed in their school uniforms and walked towards the school), others were impromptu (e.g., Moon with her bag of vitamins, p. 13 of her book).

Drawings.

Drawings (see Appendix O) were used to clarify meanings (e.g., “I am fifth in my class”, “there are three kinds of people”, “a mouse ate my hair bow”). And when the subject matter was sensitive for a photograph, e.g., Butterfly bathing a younger child.

Part 4 – Ending stage of fieldwork.

Replaying and Reviewing Stories with Participants.

When data collection for all the village girl stories was completed, both an iPad version with their actual recorded voices and a laminated Khmer/English colour copy version of their individual story were compiled. Each girl had the opportunity to listen to the *Stories About Me* (iPad version), and each received a

laminated copy of her personal story. They had a chance to review their stories and to make any changes they wanted. Rose wanted a different picture so we took a new photo and substituted it. No one else made any changes.

Copy centre re-visited.

I spent more than two entire days at the copy center (from the moment it opened at 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. closing) working with the staff to correct, type, print, laminate, collate, and bind the ten books to distribute to the participants and make a master copy for myself.

Books final form.

The books (see Appendix H), have images plus captions. Some have one blank page to make up the number of pages required for the double-sided laminated bound copy with a back cover page. The back page of each book is identical except for the background colour and includes the Dalhousie University logo and motto: "*Inspiring Minds*", my email contact information, the date: Sept. 12, 2013; and a 'Story Girls' flower logo I designed for the study with ten different coloured petals corresponding to the ten colours of felt chosen by the girls.

Logo rationale.

The logo resulted from my realization that I was beginning to think of the participants as '*my girls*' in a possessive sense, and I wanted to quickly and graphically shift that perception to one centered on them instead. Each of the ten colours they selected was used for one petal of a flower with the Khmer words for 'Story Girls' around the outer edge, and in English in the centre. Creating a 'story

girls' logo with all ten colours, allowed me to identify *with* them¹²⁸, and to plant a potential beginning seed of imagining them creating their own counter stories in the future (Moustakas, 1995, p. 84). It allowed a solidarity for them, without that insidious possessiveness that '*my girls*' held for me with its obvious nuances of colonialism. Ownership is not the relationship I wanted to emulate in any way. The logo is on the final page of each girl's book, see Appendix H.

Review of finished copy with Den.

Den and I reviewed the finished copy page by page, noting mistakes that were too late to correct (see Appendix H, coloured 'sticky-notes' on various pages). The errors were a result of my being on my own without a translator for two and a half days working with the copy centre staff to get the books produced. I then made the composite photos of the pages of each of the books while standing on a wooden bed at my home, coughing constantly from a respiratory infection I had contracted while in the village. A number of villagers (Apple in particular) had persistent coughs, and I experienced first hand how persistent and uncomfortable that cough could be. The wooden slats are visible only in this version of the books.¹²⁹ Through email conversations with my faculty advisor, it was evident that the only way it might be possible to include all the girl's stories in this form would be if they could be substantially reduced in size.

¹²⁸ In the way Moustakas (1995) describes in his book: *Being-In, Being-For, Being-With*, with the nuances and complexities he suggests for cultivating meaningful relationships.

¹²⁹ There are complexities and nuances related to making these photographs on this bed. This bespoke bed on wheels belonged to a young man from the United Kingdom who had a *moto* accident resulting in near-death from infection and subsequent above knee amputation requiring lengthy repatriation for rehabilitation. We were storing it for him. It was a constant visual reminder in my home of the dangers of riding on *motos*.

The final meeting.

We held a final meeting with the 10 village girl participants and their mothers (see Appendix F). Each girl was presented with \$3 US, a large package of crayons, two notebooks, a zippered pouch with basic school supplies (see Appendix H, Sunflower pp. 10-11), and the laminated colour copy of her book.

Manco's story.

Manco agreed to add her story. She received a certificate and an honorarium for her role as research assistant. Once she had formally stopped her role as a research assistant at the end of the final meeting with the girls, she could (and did) consent to be a participant in the study. This interview was completed in Khmer only without me (meaning there was no need to translate back and forth to English). Den interviewed her in Khmer (audio recorded), transcribed her words (she received a copy), then transcribed her story, and translated and into English (see Appendix E). When we delivered the paper copy of her story, Den first went over it with her and asked if she wanted to make any changes. Manco stated she did not want to make any changes.

Den's story.

Den agreed to add his story. He received a certificate and payment for his role as research assistant. I interviewed him at my home in Kampot. The audio recording was transcribed and given to him to review, by the trusted confidante after I had already returned to Canada. Den did not want to make any changes.

Presenting preliminary results to Cambodian officials.

The deputy acting for the Governor of Kampot Province told me that my results should be delivered to the same offices he had sent me to as part of the permission to access the village process. I was asked to inform the Department of Labour and Vocational Training, and the Department of Women about my study before it started (Den and I did this as part of the obtaining permission process). Similarly, at the end of the study, Den and I visited the same four offices, commune office, Kampot town office, Department of Labour and Vocational Training office, and the Department of Women office, to deliver and discuss the findings (See copy of letter in Khmer and English, Appendix J).

Poster presentation (presenting preliminary findings to Canadian peers).

One month after the conclusion of formal data collection, I presented a poster in Halifax as part of the 19th Annual Qualitative Health Research Conference. (See Appendix F). The poster showcased use of an iPad in an intercultural study, the device was incorporated into the poster as it was attached with velcro onto the panel. Den was able to participate from Cambodia by talking with me via Skype during the poster presentation session; and the voices of the participants were heard as I played some of their iPad stories for people observing my poster. He remains invisible although he makes it all possible, from behind the camera capturing the image of the last meeting (see Appendix F), and behind the iPad at the Qualitative Health Research Conference.

CHAPTER 7

STORIES (FINDINGS)

Introduction to the findings.

This chapter is divided into four parts. The first part presents stories from ten Cham village girls. They appear in three forms, as field texts, interim texts and research texts; each in a distinctive font. Interspersed with the stories is further contextual information that I sought out in order to have a more complete understanding of actions and events in the stories. This enabled me to participate in the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. Part two presents stories from the two research assistants regarding their participation in research, neither of them had been involved with research prior to this study. In part three I present what I learned, my autoethnography. The same progression from field to interim to research text that was used with the stories will be followed with my learning. The final section, part 4, will describe four limitations of the study.

Part 1 - Participants' stories.

I still wonder what it all must have meant for the girls in the village to have a *barang* (stranger, white woman) enter their lives and start to ask questions through an interpreter. It was unheard of, this idea of someone being interested in the daily life of children. Why would someone do that? The common assumption¹³⁰ is that all lives are the same, so why even ask. Having an interruption in the normal routines of life for days and weeks with visitors from outside bringing in their research study and their computer/iPad technology was

¹³⁰ This is based on Den's translated explanations, and my own evolving observations of what is important to villagers, as I watch what they do and begin to make sense of it.

unusual enough, then there were all the questions about things not ever really thought about because they are all just normal patterns.

I will first tell you the skeleton, the chronology, of what I heard from the girls. For this, I will use the third person: she did this, she likes that. This rendition of the photographic field texts into print (see Appendix H) is as close as possible to what appears in their books. It emphasizes that the field texts are raw data that needs to be transformed. Throughout the chapter, each girl's field text will begin with: "...chose the colour... and the title I gave her story" and will be presented in a **different font** in order to offer a cue for transitions between the levels of texts about each participant (field to interim to research). Manco is between the lines and behind the scenes of each girl's story; she makes the whole endeavour possible. Her story is presented in Part 2. I appreciate her generosity and hospitality in opening her home for us to have sessions with the girls, and perceive it as a great gift. Her home provided an inter-space that was familiar within the village, yet without the need to penetrate into the girls' homes right away. That transitional space, a space in-between, parallels the process I used of taking field texts to interim texts to research texts on the path of my inquiry. Den's story, based on an English language interview conducted after he had completed his role as assistant, includes examples of his answers from my transcription of the interview.

Interim texts are a helpful and a necessary (for me) step between the raw data I collected and the stories I will use for this inquiry. Manakil-Rankin (2016, p. 68) describes the "process of constructing a research text" in this way as "a series of reflective cognitive movements that make possible the reformulations that take place in the research journey" (ibid, p. 62). My 'cognitive movements'

started on the periphery, and circled round and round in a shrinking spiral to the essence at the centre of what I heard as the most striking or important essence of what each girl told me. Creating six-word stories through this “boiling it all down to its essence” kind of distillation is a method that allows me to minimize distortions from imposing my own interpretations, I stay focused on what each girl told me as I render the ideas and images into small and potent versions of themselves. In this form, I can include all the stories from all the Cambodian participants. These potent essences, in 6 words each, are the research texts that I will use for meaning-making. Like every storyteller before me, I had to make choices about what to include and what to leave out. Another listener, another storyteller, might find something else; it would be what they were looking for. I condensed and rendered the data instead of systematically slicing and chopping away the bits to be discarded as other processes of data analysis would require.

I was looking for the complexity and nuances of diversity in these stories of daily life. I first crafted a one or two sentence story for each girl in April 2014, six months after leaving the field and based on immersing myself in the data. Immersing myself included listening over and over to the interview recordings, and looking at the laminated pages of their stories in various configurations. I placed them in rows, in circles, and in spirals on the floor of my room. I looked at them from the outside of the circles and spirals toward the centre, and sat in the centre looking and moving outward as I re-played the recordings of our sessions. Each girl chose a coloured felt square as we began our first session, these colours now surrounded me adding a dimension to the kaleidoscopic arrays I created with my hard copy of their books.

The interim texts are selective and smaller than the books, the process took hundreds of pages of images and text and boiled it down, or distilled it, into

ten stories small enough to fit on one page. They are an intermediary step in my understanding that leads to the Narrative Inquiry as outlined by Clandinin and Connolly (2000) and others. I enter the 'stories to live by' of my participants "in the midst", I put myself in their shoes and try on their story, I let the story work on me within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (time/place/person), leading to "wonders" I can articulate. The process is the same for all, but I am selective in reporting details in order to respect and conserve reasonable length while conveying only key points from my vast ocean of possibilities. By distilling their stories down to a concentrated essence, I can include them as ten whole people rather than excising bits and pieces from their collective stories then reassembling them into a single composite¹³¹. I invite you to come with me on this part of the journey into the 'what' that will take us together into a place where we can see and better understand the 'who', or identities, of those in the study. You will meet them through their stories in the same order I did.

Sari chose the colour red
Title: A Story of Sari

Sari, the eldest participant at 18 and first to tell her story to me, volunteered right away at the recruitment meeting. She wanted her story to be told. She joined Manco's family for the night and slept beside me on the floor of Manco's home; her choice¹³². Before getting her consent, we had already slept and woken up together. There is a tangible bond from sleeping and waking in the

¹³¹ This latter would be an example of doing an "inquiry of the narrative" as opposed to a narrative inquiry.

¹³² Lovenheim (2010) having realized he did not know his neighbours at all, went and stayed overnight with the people in his neighbourhood following a shooting, to connect with them so he could write a book about it.

same room with someone¹³³. It was a good place to start. I was convinced her age meant that she was readily able to understand what I was looking for, and I felt a sense of relief about that alongside the excitement of finally getting started on finding stories. Den felt it too, both relief and excitement; this was all totally new for him. I was so unprepared, though, when she started to reveal her tale of travel and work in a distant country.

It was a lot like the rug of expectations being pulled out from under me. I had so many layers of feelings, feelings of surprise (not what I expected at all), dismay (how would we get pictures to illustrate it?), and fear of inadequacy (I know nothing about Cambodian girls working as domestics in Malaysia). It meant an immediate mad scramble on the internet for the next few days to investigate and explore the topic, and source images to illustrate Sari's story. I tried to understand what it might have been like to be her, at fifteen, flying alone and for the first time, landing in a foreign country, living surrounded by strangers when all I had ever known was my village and my family. It meant further long weeks and months of exploring the roles and options for Cambodian girls and women through reading everything from dissertations to poetry to popular novels. Her story worked on me as I began '*thinking with story*', and my own experience of leaving home as a teenager became layered with hers in our three-dimensional narrative inquiry space.

¹³³ O'Leary & Nee (2001, p. 17): "A comparative study of six development programmes in Cambodia concluded that relationships between villagers and practitioners were clearly closer in the one NGO who made it a practice for staff to stay overnight with the villagers (based on: Charya, C. et al., 1998)." (NB: Charya reference not available)

Sari chose the colour red. Title: A Story of Sari. When she was fifteen years old, Sari and her mother heard about the job opportunity on the radio. Her mother took her to Phnom Penh where she stayed in a dormitory with many other young girls (she said 5,000), for a training period¹³⁴. Then they put her on a plane with the group, flew her to Kuala Lumpur, and they were all taken by car to an office. Her female ‘boss’ came there after 19 days and selected her from the group, then took her to the place she would live and work for the next three years. Her job was to care for a three-month-old baby. Her room was large and fancy with two windows and its own bathroom— a sharp contrast to her former lodgings in the village. She was given a phone to use to call her mother and sister back in Cambodia. Her ‘boss’ took her for walks or she would sometimes go out with other domestic workers on her days off. This was her life for three years until another staff at the house poured boiling water on her, and cut her with a knife. Her boss then bought her a plane ticket, and she flew back to Phnom Penh, then returned to her village. Now she has applied for a job in a nearby factory.

This chronology is the raw material for her story. Despite the fancy room and the money (which was paid to her family) she says she does not want to go back there even though they asked her to. The interim text I crafted in April of 2014 is two sentences long: “*The pain caused by the old woman servant’s*

¹³⁴ “Human Rights Watch (2011) research found that prospective migrant workers are typically locked inside these training centers, usually for three to six months before their departure. Trainees often do not have access to adequate health care, food, and water inside the center. Some women and girls experience verbal, psychological, and sometimes physical abuse”(p. 2).

knife as it sliced into my leg was soon smothered in the secret joy that it meant a journey of return and reunion with my family. I was soon back in the fishing village after three long lonely years raising someone else's baby in a foreign country." I distilled the story further into the six-word story form: **WORKING IN MALAYSIA, CAME HOME CUT.**

Inquiring into Sari's story within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space means excavating the temporal, interactional, and locational (time, person, place) aspects within her Cambodian world. Exploitation of young Cambodian girls by brokers who give gifts (e.g., sack of rice, money) in exchange for contracts has a long and sordid history in the country (see Human Rights Watch, 2011; Napier-Moore, International Labour Organization & UN Women, 2017). Hun Sen¹³⁵ imposed a ban on sending domestics to Malaysia in October 2011, following some deaths and allegations of abuse¹³⁶; however, Sari was already there. She described good working conditions in general but following the abuse incidents of the boiling water and knife cut, she requested to be sent right back to Cambodia. Other domestics have experienced severe and long-term abuses and even death, some were not allowed to return home from Malaysia. The entire business of casting young girls as a commodity that is exported to another country for profit, the lying to them and to their families, and the cheating of hard working people by not paying them as promised is consistent with the general backdrop of corruption¹³⁷ in Cambodia. Sari was lucky to return mostly unscathed

¹³⁵ Hun Sen is Cambodia's head of state, see Appendix I, item 8: Politics for more details.

¹³⁶ Boyle & Titthara (2011, p.1) "The move comes following allegations of the gang rape of a domestic worker trying to escape in Malaysia, suspicious deaths in the houses of employers and raids in Cambodia that have uncovered under-age recruits in three training centres in just the past month."

¹³⁷ See Appendix I, item 5. For a detailed literature review of corruption in Cambodia and efforts to change it, see Ear, 2016.

when so many others have not. I wondered why it would be Malaysia that wanted Sari and other young Cambodian domestics. Three main reasons are: the commonality of religion between Islāmic communities, longstanding historical ties between Sari's village and Malaysia which was the origin of some of the settlers (refer to Chapter 4 – Locality section), and the submissiveness and vulnerability of a 15 year-old village girl affording easy control for employers.

Whereas some mothers might plead with their young teenage daughters not to leave home, Sari's mother sent her away. Mothers following the tenets of Islām are typically acting from their deepest caring for their daughters and with love (Schleifer, 1996)¹³⁸. The universal Cambodian girls' story-to-live-by (according to the *Chbap Srey* code¹³⁹) centers on contributing to the family, both functionally and financially: Sari was going away to work in order to support her family. She married a local musician within the year of returning (personal communication from Den). This allowed her to stay close to her village while not remaining 'in' her village.

Rose chose the colour orange
Title: I go to School.

Rose attached herself to me from the start. Manco said that her mother had directed Rose to go 'study'¹⁴⁰ with me. I felt the pressure from her leaning on me, glued to my side, as she stroked my long finger-nails, then my hand, then my

¹³⁸ See: Schleifer (1996), "expression of positive emotions in particular affection and generosity" are expected of her. p. 47.

¹³⁹ *Srey* means woman, *Chbap* means 'normative poem', in effect this is the social and cultural law of how women must behave. See Appendix B- Glossary for more details.

¹⁴⁰ They see me as a 'teacher' and therefore as higher in the hierarchy, I see them as equals, participants with me exploring the stories of their daily life in the village. See Moustakas, (1995).

arm¹⁴¹, when Den and I were focused on the other girls in the study – asking them questions and recording their answers. It was courageous curiosity on her part, she had never had a *barang* to touch and be with and there was no hint of shyness in the way she embraced that opportunity. I was “touched” much more profoundly than the stroking of my skin, and I did not pull away from what I construed as the intimacy of acceptance¹⁴².

Rose chose the colour orange. Title: I Go To School. She is 12 years old and entering grade 5 at school. One of the subjects in grade 5 is sewing with sewing machines; there is a classroom full of them. Every day she gets up from her sleeping mat on the floor of her house while it is still dark. Her mother has gone to the market at 4 a.m. but leaves her phone so Rose will know what time it is. She gets dressed in her uniform of blue skirt and white shirt then walks in flip-flops for an hour with her friends to get to the Elementary school. Once she gets to school, she can eat some rice with thin strips of scrambled egg which costs 500 Riel (12.5 cents) as long as her mother has given her the money. Rose’s favourite subject is math exercises, she is fifth in her class of 30 students. A monthly test determines each student’s rank in the class, posted on the classroom wall. One day, she calls it the best day of her life, Rose gets a perfect score on her math test. She puts

¹⁴¹ See Appendix M, Reflection on Relationships, p. 234 “Those hands started with such tentative gestures, a stroking of my finger nail or toe nail as we sat on a floor mat making someone else’s story. They progressed to touching and stroking my freckled arms. I know they grew bolder over time, I did not pull away from their touch nor did it ever occur to me to do so. This very small act of acceptance of their intrusion into my space, my person, my world gave our story exchanges some measure of reciprocity. They were sharing stories of their daily life with me, I was sharing the feel of a white person’s skin with them.”

¹⁴² See also what followed the photo-shoot with Tenflower, and my response (p.177). Rose was not the only child who explored our relationship through touch.

the page into her bookbag and places it beside where she sleeps at her house. Her little sister goes into her bookbag and takes out the paper and throws it away. Rose likes going to school very much and wants to be a teacher in the primary school someday. She reads aloud the story book about SoPhia, a little girl who was bored at school so became a teacher to her friends.

The interim text of Rose's story is a long sentence: *"I could not have known that morning as I got up in the darkness, got dressed in my uniform, and walked for an hour as usual to get to school that it was the best day of my life – the one day when I would get a perfect score on my math test, nor that my little sister would take the page from my book bag and the evidence would be lost forever."* I distilled it further to the six-word form: **FIRST FOR ONE DAY: LOST PAGE.**

Some of the messages from this story are about the transitory nature of objects like a lost page, and how precarious village daily life can be. And other messages involve the hierarchy, life with little sisters, and the relative importance of evidence. Here is an example of what happens when rendering stories small enough to *fit* out of field texts that are big and more complex: something is inevitably lost. The picture of a classroom full of sewing machines is not part of the interim and research texts although it offers important insight into the Cambodian context and therefore also deserves exploring. It is part of Cambodia's past and present, potentially a part of Rose's future. The picture did not come directly from Rose, it was taken when I made a visit to her empty

school and met with the Head of School¹⁴³ there for a tour and to gather background information as well as make photographs of the setting¹⁴⁴. Even though it was lost in the distillation process, I am convinced the picture of a classroom is important enough to be added back in. These core ideas then, transitory objects/precarious life/hierarchy/little sisters/sewing machines, will guide the inquiry into Rose's story. The three-dimensional narrative inquiry space offers three intersecting axes of time, person, and place that are the implicit backdrop for our journey; always present yet difficult to separate as they blend into the fabric of the experiences.

I want to take the opportunity to practice thinking with stories so I put myself, briefly, into Rose's flip-flops. I am trying to feel what it is like to be her, and to live her story to-live-by if only for a moment. If my mother has no money to give me, I do not eat breakfast that day. If the phone breaks or battery dies, I do not know what time it is. If my flip-flop breaks, I have nothing to wear on my feet. If my one school uniform is dirty or torn, I have nothing proper to wear. There is no back-up system except for the relationships of mutual concern and caring within the community. I go about my day secure in the repetition, routine, knowing my place and confident in my family. Someone will help me if I need help, they always do.

It is incomprehensible to me (my Canadian-self me), on so many levels, that it means so much in twelve years of life to achieve a single perfect score,

¹⁴³ Den was related to the Head of School of the local primary school, this made it possible to visit the school buildings and speak with her even though school was not in session. He arranged our visit for Aug. 27, 2013. Field notebook notes of Aug. 27, 2013 are in Appendix L.

¹⁴⁴ See Chapter 4 , Locality for details of Cambodian school settings and a description of local schools..

and then that all the evidence of it is so quickly gone. How can I-as-Rose find meaning or happiness when the evidence of the 'best day of my life' disappears so easily? I can't, and Rose can. The point is not the evidence but the lived experience itself. Important events are still important even if there is no paper evidence to prove they happened.

It hits me at an emotional level that Rose's perfect paper is thrown out and lost. It would be better if it was displayed and admired. In her culture, though, standing out from the group one belongs to is not a good thing at all. Being first in rank is a good thing, being outstanding by being different is not. So it is fitting that there is just no place in village homes to post and display daily school accomplishments (like the refrigerators of my world). It is also shocking and awful to me that there is no 'me-space' anywhere in the houses either, to protect an important paper or cherished object. Even Rose's book bag is not protected sacred space for her.

There are no boundaries here, everything is everybody's and nothing is mine alone. This is a major revelation for me and at the root of many uncomfortable experiences and misunderstandings. I am challenged to quickly learn this lesson of communal property and sharing when Manco's daughter disappears from the village wearing my flip-flops, the distinctive orange ones with the bumpy soles to massage my feet, because they are there on the ground with the sea of other flip-flops when she climbs down the ladder from Manco's house. I am distraught and anxious to get what is mine returned to me, everyone else is laughing. These people share everything; I like to hoard and protect everything I have. After the laughter, the incident is soon forgotten, at least by them.

Living the present moment, not dwelling on the past or dreaming of the future, this is how Rose lives. She tells the story and moves on; however important it seems from my perspective that she selects this specific story to tell me. In this world, paper is not important, it is disposable and quickly deteriorates into mush in the rainy season. This is where I decided that the hard copy of their story-books that I would give to them—would have to be not just card stock but laminated and coil-bound. I did not see it as intrusive into the otherwise transitory nature of the artifacts of Rose's life. I effortlessly justify to myself that I am taking the practical approach where preservation of evidence of accomplishments is a good and necessary thing. I want the evidence of our encounter to be lasting. I want her story to endure at least as long as the surrounding plastic garbage.

Hierarchy is the foundation of her story-to-live-by. Her story is powerful enough to make living it predictable and secure because everything has a place in the order and because repetition is the way things are learned and understood. Hierarchy, having everything in its order of importance, is visible everywhere. The correct height of the placement of hands held palms together in *sampeah*¹⁴⁵ for the Khmer polite greeting, is one example. Making sure every student knows their place is another: which includes public postings of the monthly rank of every student in every grade, in every public school across the country. It signals security for Cambodian children. It brings an emotional reaction from me, as it means something completely different than security and speaks of hopelessness and rigidity, and of the shame of public exposure if I am at the bottom. It is of far

¹⁴⁵ *Sampeah*— formal Cambodian greeting, palms together with hand placement determining the level of respect. See Appendix B- Glossary for more details.

greater importance what it means to her though, it is the essence of the best day of Rose's life.

The photo of sewing machines in the classroom is another story for the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. I took this picture on a visit with Den to the school, that we made August 27, 2013. School is not in session during the rice planting rainy season between July and October. At Den's request, since the Head of School is related to him, we are able to meet with her and view the Public Primary School closest to the village. She confirms the information told to me by the girls about school¹⁴⁶, which increases the trustworthiness of their answers. I have notes from the discussion Den and I had with the Head of School in my field notebook, it was not audio recorded as it was a peripheral context seeking visit, and she was a cultural informant rather than a participant.

Is teaching children how to sew with machines a scaffold to new skills, or pandering to yet another Cambodia-style exploitation looking for a place to happen? It may be part of a larger story line that has the title: *Ambitious Head of School meets wealthy foreign donors, and the garment industry is prime beneficiary*. The garment industry is one of the major contributors to the Cambodian economy, notorious for its low wages and toxic workplaces¹⁴⁷. Garment factory workers are only recently demanding fair wages and working conditions, and have become the latest convenient target for political attention (Arnold, 2013). The reason there are sewing machines at the school Rose

¹⁴⁶ See Appendix L – Field Note Book excerpt, August 27th.

¹⁴⁷ Beresford, Cucco, & Prota, 2017, p. 144: "In 2012 garment and footwear exports (valued at almost US\$5 billion) accounted for about 35 percent of the country's GDP and for about 80 percent of its total exports."

attends is the Head of School's success at securing funds from Belgian donors. Many, if not most, public schools do not have such resources, nor do they have libraries nor playground equipment, all of which are part of Rose's school and the result of funding from foreign donors. Once the grade 5 class has learned how to sew, there will be no opportunity to practice or use what they have learned in the village as no sewing machines are available to them there. Perhaps they will have an easier time securing employment once they have completed school because in grade 5 they learned how to sew.

Sunflower chose the colour light green

Title: I Go to School .

When Sunflower volunteered right away to be in the study, I was both surprised and pleased. I knew she was the younger sister of the girl who could not walk who was at the center of why I was in the village. I wondered if it was a random coincidence, or had maybe resulted from some invisible 'push' or influence, then decided to accept it and go on. What happened next demonstrates how one wonder in a narrative inquiry, 'what stories do they tell?', can lead to other wonders like why no village children have crayons and why duplication trumps imagination.

Sunflower chose the colour light green. Title: I Go To School. She is 12 years old with a younger sister, two older sisters and an older brother. Her older sister just got a job in a factory. She wants to finish grade 12 and get a job in a factory too, but the high school is very far away. Her brother and father go out fishing at night, they come home every few days. She sleeps with her mom and little sister in a bed under their house. The rest of the family sleep on mats in the house up above. She goes to school from

October¹⁴⁸ to July every day except Sunday. This year she will be in grade 5. Her mom buys school supplies for her every year at the market. She needs: a white shirt and blue skirt school uniform, 10 notebooks, two blue pens, one red pen, two pencils, a pencil sharpener, an eraser, and a ruler. She carries everything in her bookbag. This year she wants some crayons so she can colour pictures. She used to have a pretty pink hairbow to wear in her hair. It got broken and one night a mouse ate her hairbow. She asks her mom for money to buy a new one, mom always says yes. She buys a new pink hairbow for 400 Riel (10 cents), takes it out of the package and puts it on.

I wonder why it is that even though there are inexpensive crayons in virtually every market and office supply store in Cambodia, Sunflower has never had her own crayons in 12 years of life. Crayons are an expected part of Canadian childhood but are not part of daily life for her or any other children in the village. I also wonder why once she has a box of her own crayons and a blank notebook to use how she wishes, she copies the words and drawings from a commercially produced book with precision, rather than drawing or writing from her own imagination.

Sunflower's story about the crayons begins at the intersection of two events. First, my response to twenty-four expectant village children waiting for me to interact with them the day before my first consent from my first study participant. This occurred on the afternoon of the recruitment meeting. Second, one of my four themes from *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1987) story:

¹⁴⁸ The time of rice planting and the end of the rainy season mark the beginning of the school year. Cambodia has three seasons: Carrison & Chheap (1987, p. 109) "and a rainy season from the middle of July through October".

Choices, Wanting, Daily Life, and Transformations. Sunflower had joined the impromptu afternoon exploration into the world of crayons and paper. This was my spontaneously delivered colour-the-outline-of-your-hands-into-a-butterfly session in response to 24 children expecting something from me under Manco's house. Based on this recent experience, when we asked her if there was something she wanted the way the caterpillar wanted all the kinds of food when he was 'still hungry', she said she wanted crayons. Her interim text comes from this convergence: *"How could my mother know, when I don't even know yet myself, how much I would love to have crayons to colour with when she goes and buys my school supplies for me every year; there are always pencils, pens, ruler, eraser - but never any crayons."* The other aspect of her story, that particular sort of relationship with a mother who provides everything a child needs and 'always says yes' to requests, is equally important. I distilled two six-word stories for Sunflower: **MY SCHOOL SUPPLIES DON'T INCLUDE CRAYONS** and **OVERNIGHT A MOUSE ATE MY HAIRBOW**.

Inquiring into the crayon story requires an understanding of how the public education system in Cambodia has evolved over time into the form it has today (Brehm, 2016)¹⁴⁹. Many scholars have investigated all aspects of education in Cambodia, and much has been written on this topic (Bredenberg, 2008; Brehm, 2016; In, 2012; Islām et al., 2017; Mak & Nordtveit, 2011; Nonoyama-Tarumi & Bredenberg, 2009; Pan, 2010; Purnell, 2014). Here is a very simple version. The ancient education model was comprised of monks in pagodas supervising and promoting memorization and recitation of texts in Pali

¹⁴⁹ Brehm (2016) provides a very clear picture of what teaching is like in a typical Cambodian school, and the dilemmas facing teachers who are under paid.

and Sanskrit by novices. The French colonials created a school system in the nineteenth century based on their Lycée that would ensure a work-force of trained civil servants with an emphasis on minimal skills and total obedience.

In the 1950s and 60s Prince Norodom Sihanouk built up the educational infrastructure to have: “5,275 primary schools, 146 secondary schools, and 9 institutes of higher education” (Clayton, 1998, p. 5). The Khmer Rouge in turn decimated everything and everyone related to education between 1975 and 1979. When an education system was reinstated¹⁵⁰, it sought to duplicate the model implemented and imposed by the French (Clayton, 1998). Muslims have historically provided an additional education to ensure their children learn Arabic and read the Qur’ān, with a system of village teachers in village spaces mostly connected to the mosques. The typical pedagogy used throughout Cambodia in public schools is rote learning: it emphasizes repetition and duplication. There is no art or music in the usual curriculum, and furthermore, no imaginative play or learning is typically used in teaching. One result of this pedagogy and the legacy of a system based on French colonial expediency is that children in Cambodia have little exposure and few opportunities for exploring colour, form, or imagination of any kind. When given the chance, they typically enjoy it very much and want to have more¹⁵¹.

Sunflower’s story-to-live-by includes crayons now. There is no going back. I wonder if it is somehow wrong and does it create bad ripples for her and

¹⁵⁰ See: <http://bookbridge.org/en/the-education-system-in-cambodia/> for a listing of classes by grade.

¹⁵¹ Based on personal experience of co-teaching in Den’s classroom at his invitation, and from teaching 125 children per day ranging from pre-school to high school age through creative art activities at another village school during an 8 month visit to Cambodia in 2016-2017.

the other children that I introduced and provided boxes of crayons? In a community where many are at a subsistence level, is it an unaffordable luxury to have paper and crayons for the children? Or is it an easily remedied temporarily missing element that can be provided on a continuing basis once families see the benefits and the enjoyment simple paper and crayons can bring. How can anyone order things from a menu if they do not know what is available?

I put myself into Sunflower's place and experience for a moment what it is like living her story-to-live-by. I don't want to feel what it could be like. I get bumped hard by the part about the school supplies. My story-to-live-by elicits my emotional reaction to the thought of not being able to pick out my own school supplies at the beginning of each school year. This small performance of my agency, my taken for granted participation in an annual ritual that gets me back to school after vacation, is suddenly revealed as being of great importance to me. Her mother buys her school supplies *for* her in the market every year. It is surprising how intense my reaction to that unfolding of events turns out to be. It brings out my righteous indignation and a desire to defend her non-existent (legend in my own mind alone) right to go shopping for her own supplies or at least to be taken along on the expedition. In her shoes, it feels like life is incomplete, being cheated out of the pleasure of choosing for myself, when in fact it is not of importance to her. I wonder if this is the impetus for the need I have to see that her hair-bow is replaced, to record her agency with my photographs. The 'mouse-ate-my-hair-bow' is one of my favourite stories to tell above all of the others. It lets me reveal quickly and effectively to fellow-Westerners what the reality of having no designated or protected 'me-space' means for girls in the village.

Mothers who always say yes and daughters who have only to ask for everything they need or want, this is another place our stories-to-live-by bump. I wonder how much the Qur'ān's verses about motherhood and the Qur'ān's wisdom about how the relationships between children and their parents should be enacted can be operating in a place where very few of the mothers can read and write (Schleifer, & Majma' al-Buḥūth al-Islāmīyah, 1996; So, 2005). I wonder how they hear the advice and messages about how to live together that are so clearly outlined in the Qur'ān (So, 2005). I wonder how much the Khmer *Chbap Srey*¹⁵² code of behaviour for women still influences women and girls from the other ethnic backgrounds, even though it is no longer specifically taught in the schools (Brickell & Chant, 2010). I wonder how having lived through the deprivation and desperation of the Pol Pot years influences mothers in their interactions with their children (So, 2010).

Apple chose the colour light pink
Title: Apple's Mother's Boat.

It does not show on the outside. You may not notice it, or see it when you look at her sitting and twisting balloons, but when the other children tease her and she lashes out with slashing arms of lightening speed it becomes clear that Apple lives with some invisible problems. She is behind in school for her age, being 10 starting grade 2. Her drawing¹⁵³ of herself as a teacher resembles that of a much younger child (refer to Appendix O). When we try to record her voice describing the pictures of her daily activities on my iPad, looking at a photo and

¹⁵² *Chbap Srey* is translated as Law for Women, or Woman Code. See Appendix B-Glossary for more details.

¹⁵³ I frequently utilized the Goodenough-Harris Draw a Person Test in my clinical practice as: "it manages to quantify something important about the developing mind in less than ten minutes", (Lehrer, J.: <http://www.jonahlehrer.com/blog/2014/8/27/the-draw-a-person-test>) see also Harris,(1963).

saying what is in it proves an impossible task for her (refer to Appendix K). Another participant, Tenflower, is called on to help.¹⁵⁴ I wonder what all this means in her education, in her life, and I spend many sleepless nights imagining possibilities including all the interventions I might contribute. None of it is realistic or feasible, none of it is good, and I do nothing. Apple has a persistent cough, neither of us intends to share it—but I leave the village with this cough.

Apple chose the colour light pink. Title: Apple’s Mother’s Boat. She is 10 years old. Her school uniform has three pieces instead of two: black skirt, white tunic-shirt, black head scarf. She lives with her divorced mom and two older brothers age 17 and 25. Her brothers go out on a fishing boat every night to fish. Apple’s mom has a small row boat. The boat has a lot of holes, so Apple helps by dumping out the water. She helps to tie up the boat too. They fix the holes in the boat by stuffing them with plastic bags. Her mom is really good at this. Apple’s mom takes students across the river to the Islāmic private school, they pay 500 Riel (12.5 cents) for each ride.

Apple went to this school last year for grade one, this year she will be in grade 2. She studies Khmer subjects from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m., and Islāmic subjects from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Both her teachers this year were women. In her school, the girls sit on one side and the boys sit on the other side of the class. She learns Arabic so she can read the Qur’ān in its original form. It is the Muslim holy book. She does her homework on the porch in front of her

¹⁵⁴ See Tenflower’s story below for fuller description of what transpired. Den became visibly frustrated during Apple’s story making session, see Appendix K – Apple’s Story Verification pp. 220-223

house. The school fee is 40,000 Riel (\$10) per year, and she also needs some money for food and drinks every day. A charity from Kuwait built and runs the school. There is a computer lab upstairs. On Saturday and Sunday, there is no school so Apple takes a basket of fruit from house to house in her village. When someone buys her fruit, she puts the money in a little plastic bag and gives it to her mom. She likes to make things out of long balloons, one turned out to be a gourd. When the cart comes around, she likes to buy a freezie. Cold and sweet things are good on a hot day. Some day she wants to be a teacher of little children.

The interim text I wrote for Apple includes drama, danger, and delight. The drama and danger is of being out in a leaky boat in a storm and almost sinking; it is paired with the delight of having the first day of school be the best day of your life. That is a lot of contrast. There is balance in the interplay between school and home, work and play, which is similar for all the girls but in Apple's story-to-live-by: life revolves around her mother's boat. *"Baling water from my mother's leaky boat on those endless rides back and forth across the river to ferry children to the Muslim school could not have prepared me for the terror I felt when the boat almost sank, nor my joy and excitement on the best day of my life: my own first day of school there."* The distillation process boils her story down to six words: **BOAT WITH HOLES, MOM'S SCHOOL FERRY.**

There are two sides to my reaction to trying on Apple's story-to-live-by as I begin to inquire into what it means. On one side, I am intrigued and impressed by the stuffing holes with plastic bags method of keeping the boat afloat. I have

admiration for the ingenuity and tenacity. But more importantly, the boat story forces me to confront my courage limitations. I am a coward. I am too afraid to ride in that boat and cross the river to experience Apple's life first-hand. I have the luxury of a choice to prefer safety over risk, while their survival dictates riding in that boat on endless trips across the wide river. The boat is not just transportation the way a bicycle or a moto would be: it is Apple's mother's source of income generation. It takes 80 rides to equal the \$10 school fee alone. I wonder what will happen when the boat cannot be fixed anymore. I wonder who will give them a new one?

The three-dimensional narrative inquiry space for Apple's story of attending a private Islāmic school funded by Kuwaitis brings in another dimension of educational possibilities in some Khmer Islām children's lives. It is a great opportunity, a remarkable chance to experience education above and beyond the normal for village children. It is not by design or special choice. The reason Apple attends this school is that her mother's boat ferries students there, and it is a natural consequence that she becomes one of those students since she rides back and forth in the boat anyway.

The reason there is a fancy foreign-funded private school across the river is due to the generosity of donors who believe in the importance of education for Muslims that includes both the national Khmer curriculum and Islāmic studies. A non-government organization (NGO), called Good Sources Cambodia Association is based in Kuwait. They built and operate this school, along with several others across the country, although they recently appealed to the Cambodian government to hire more Cham Muslim teachers for the public schools (Sokry, 2017). Contrary to popular beliefs apparently held by other

Muslims and non-Muslims, that girls should not be educated, it is clearly stated in the Qur'ān that education is mandated for all (Mattson & Ebooks, 2013; So, 2005). The epicenter of worldview, lifestyle, and how to live one's life following Islām is the Qur'ān, but there is great diversity in how each group of followers around the world chooses to exemplify what is written.

Cambodian Muslims have their own ways and have resisted influences from wealthy powerful external groups (Pérez Periero, 2012). In 2008¹⁵⁵, Hun Sen, as Cambodia's head of state, made it permissible for girls to wear headscarves (hijab) while attending public schools. This removed what So (2005) describes as one of the main barriers preventing Muslim girls from proceeding to secondary and post-secondary education rather than dropping out of school. Apple wants to be a teacher someday. There has never been a woman teacher from her village yet there are at least two female teachers at her school. I have so many wonders about those two women. Are they Cambodian or from another country? Where did they study to become a teacher of both the Khmer curriculum and the Islāmic one? Where do they live? How do they get to the school every day? Are they married or single? How much do they earn, and where is the money allocated? How do they find teaching materials and professional development? And also, is there a possibility that they might venture across the river to provide some outreach Islāmic education for the women in Apple's village?

The first day of school is the best day of her life according to what Apple tells us. The delight she experiences in her first day of school experience marks

¹⁵⁵ See Titthara (2008) article from the Phnom Penh Post.

her right of passage; it is a fitting response to obediently following her story-to-live-by. Unlike her peers attending public school, her uniform includes a hijab. All the village girls will typically wear one for the one-hour Islām studies class Manco's husband teaches daily in the village mosque school. Then it is quickly removed for work and play, unless they are over 14 and wearing one all the time like their mothers. Going to this school means entering a place that is very different from the surroundings in her village. The buildings are concrete and tiles, with fresh paint and new furniture. There are no holes in the floors at school, and there is no visible garbage. I wonder if the teachers have training to assist children with learning differences, and I wonder what will happen to Apple if they do not.

Butterfly chose the colour yellow
Title: Butterfly Babysits

My first encounter with Butterfly includes a lesson about lies and misunderstandings, about the limits of languages and different time senses and jumping to conclusions. I ask her what grade she is in, she tells me and Manco immediately tells Den that what Butterfly said was not true. I spend that night, after Den and I go over the recording of our session, trying to come to terms with the tug of war between my feeling of betrayal at being told a lie and my certainty that it is not a case of telling lies, only a misunderstanding to do with the way time is described. My reflection provides the details¹⁵⁶:

Is it a lie or a misunderstanding? the emotion (of *betrayal-anger-confusion-disappointment*) from being lied to eventually dissipates as it

¹⁵⁶ See also: Appendix M, Reflections About Questions.

becomes clear that a difference in language/conceptualizations/time-sense has caused a question to be misunderstood: what grade are you in? sounds obvious to me but since no 'past/present/future' exists in the Khmer language it is not self-evident....when do you start school could mean: what time of day, what month of year, what age, and so on. In English, we have subtle meaning markers with the difference between verb tenses: when 'did' you start school, vs when 'do' you start school. Not in Khmer. The word 'start' is another hurdle, as it refers to an aspect of time: does it mean the very first beginning, or the beginning of the continuation for the current year? Does it mean for the morning session, or for the afternoon session? How I have to ask any question in order to give a clear message for the translator is not readily available to me at first. I quickly learn what does not work. I can not ask an opinion question (what is your favourite...? what do you like about...) because the answer will be: 'I don't know' which saves face for the responder but leaves me in the dark. I can not ask a description question (tell me about...what is it like for you to....how do you....) because the question itself will not be understood. In school, all learning is repetitious rote learning and that sets up a pattern of possibilities for interaction between me (the curious stranger sitting across from them) and the girls (doing it the way they always do and have done). What does that leave? I can ask a factual question with an obvious answer such as 'what time do you get up in the morning?' or 'what is 2 plus 2?'. This defines the boundaries of my information gathering regarding the context of daily life in the village, and not knowing how things work at first means that I do not even know what to ask about. That is difficult enough; however, when even a concrete

question (for example: when do you start school?) is problematic, in my story-to-live-by life where learning by asking questions is not just a habit but like the air I breathe, how can I ever find out anything about these little girls let alone co-create stories with them?

The following morning, we have made an arrangement to visit Butterfly at her home. Den and I and all the technology, accompanied by a group of children, follow the paths around and between the houses. When we get close, one of the other girls advises us that we are to wait here at this house that has round concrete tables with matching benches. We sit. An hour later, Butterfly comes to collect us and we go around the corner to the ladder up into her house. My best guess to solve the mystery of the waiting is that her mother was making sure that the house was completely tidy before welcoming outsiders within.

Butterfly chose the colour yellow. Title: Butterfly Babysits. She is ten years old. If you turn right at the end of this path you will find her house. She has a bicycle but it is broken and hanging on the wall. The shop that repairs bikes is on the main road and you can see it from her house. She goes to the mosque school every day after school for an hour. She learns the alphabet in Arabic. Her teacher is patient and kind, he lives in her village too. Near the mosque there is a big concrete area where the children like to play before class. They draw lines for a hop-scotch game with a piece of charcoal. After class, she helps to look after her niece so her aunt can go to work. The baby sleeps in a hammock under the house if Butterfly keeps swinging her. When she wakes up, Butterfly feeds her...and if she cries Butterfly takes her for a walk to show her things around the village. Sometimes Butterfly gives her a

bath, using a dipper to pour water over her (see drawing in Appendix O).

Her mother has a copy of her monthly school report showing her standing, this year she will be in grade 3. She likes to teach her sister things when they play school. Someday she wants to be a teacher at the primary school.

The title of her book is: Butterfly Babysits because so much of her time is spent caring for her niece and her little sister. When I enter into her story-to-live-by, the part about being a child who can spend study-of-Islām time wearing a hijab, then effortlessly switch to play or child-care time without one comes into sharper focus. I notice that it is a quick and smooth transition. The head-scarf is important, not something to talk about though, when I try to explore thoughts and reasons for it. It definitely marks Cham girls as different, visible right away to others, including all the Khmer people they share the country with who often look at them with fear and dislike. In Sunflower's drawing of the three kinds of people: Khmer, Khmer Chinese, Khmer Islām (see Appendix O) the head scarf is the identifying feature of her group. It is how Rose portrays herself in her drawing of her rank in the class (see Appendix O) even though I never see her wearing one. It also marks certain spaces, like the mosque school, and certain tasks like learning Arabic, as special, maybe even sacred.

The interim text I wrote is: *"I am only 10 so I wear my head scarf just for our 7 a.m. class at the mosque school in the village, and not when I am feeding or bathing or rocking my aunt's baby in a hammock so she can work, or when I am playing school with my little sister; maybe I am practicing to be a mother and a teacher when I grow up.* I distill the story even further to: **TEN YEARS OLD, TEACHER IN TRAINING.**

Den tells me how to become a teacher in Cambodia when I ask him. A part of his story, history that he told to me during our time in the village, fits well here. He was the first child from his village ever to become a teacher. After his father was killed during the Pol Pot¹⁵⁷ times, his mother was left on her own to raise her family. She made and sold noodles at the market, and encouraged him to study hard and stay in school. He was 12 starting into grade one when all the other children were only 7. That made it really hard for him. He also had to resist the temptations to play truant with the others every single day when the children who were skipping school invited him to join them, and made fun of him when he didn't. I crafted a six-word story for him: **MOM'S NOODLES: NOW I'M A TEACHER.**

Completing an education in Cambodia is a very challenging thing, he is adamant that one requires a lot of parental support to accomplish it. The Head of School tells me the parents don't listen to her when she tells them to keep their girls in school¹⁵⁸. Butterfly's mother beams with pride in her daughter's skills at teaching the little ones, so happy to see them playing school. On the serious side though, in order to be able to apply to the teacher training school she will first have to complete grade 12 and also pass the National Examination. Butterfly has no realistic idea about what is required, nor about the demands and costs of the official training part, and she has not likely ever visited the Upper Secondary School that is at least an hour away on a bicycle. I wonder how she will ever manage to accomplish her goal to become a teacher.

¹⁵⁷ Pol Pot times are the usual way Khmer people refer to the years of devastation and destruction between 1975 and 1979 when Pol Pot was the head of the Khmer Rouge. See Appendix I, item 7. See Appendix B- Glossary for more detail.

¹⁵⁸ See Appendix L, Field Notebook entry, primary school visit of August 27, 2013.

Tenflower chose the colour turquoise
Title: Me and My Bicycle

There is something very lovely about this girl, how she is in the world, and how she emulates her mother's calm, kind presence. I felt a certain kind of opening, a hard to describe child-like awe, the first time I watched tenflowers open their petals. She chose a pseudonym with a quiet power that is a particularly good match for her. Tenflower is quiet, she seems to almost disappear and then in the moment when she is needed there she is. It feels different to have her around than it does with the others, I do not have a name for it, but it is tangible. When I try on being her, I experience a wave of kindness and caring regard for others. When she uses the words 'my house is not so big, not so small' it sounds like a poem to me. My favourite moment of all from the days and weeks of fieldwork happens on the walk back to the village after our 'photo shoot'. It is a turning point in my relationship with the village, Tenflower is the catalyst. We go some distance along the road towards the school to illustrate her story of getting bumped off her bicycle. Den holds the traffic while we stage the scene. Once we have the shot, the group of children who have been our audience along the sides of the road quickly cluster around me, every single one wants to hold my hand as we walk. My arms end up completely covered with their hands, and we move-as-one down the narrow path back to Manco's house¹⁵⁹. I feel a joy uplift, an enormous sense of belonging and acceptance. It has no concrete substance despite its importance to me: the only picture of this high point is the one in my mind. There is resonance for me with what Lugones (1987) finds out through her "world" travelling, about not just '*what it is to be them*

¹⁵⁹ See Appendix M: Reflections on Relationships.

[but] what it is to be ourselves in their eyes?' This experience was a glimpse of myself in their eyes, it is a special kind of reciprocity.

Tenflower chose the colour turquoise. Title: Me And My Bicycle. She is ten years old. Tenflowers get their name because they open every day at 10 a.m., you can see them blooming with full pink blossoms at her school. Every day she rides her bike to school with her friend, it takes about 20 minutes to get there. One day her friend was riding very close and...her wheel bumped into Tenflower's bike ahead of her. Tenflower was lucky, she jumped off her bike and was not injured at all. She was very surprised and a little bit scared though. She just got back on her bike and rode the rest of the way to school. This is her school with long buildings and an open space in the middle. They start in October after the rice is planted and the rainy season is over. She goes to classes from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. every day except Sunday. Her mom makes fishing nets by hand. Her house is 'not so big and not so small'. She keeps her bike under the house. Sometimes she does an errand for her mom. She rides through the village to the store that has what they need. Her flat tire needs air but the bicycle repair shop is far away. She parks her bike by the gate and shows the lady what she wants to buy. Then she pays her and takes it back to her mom. Someday she wants to be a teacher.

I wrote the interim text wanting to capture the elusive essence of her way of being. Everyone I meet in the village is kind, everyone has to get right back up and keep on going when things invariably go wrong. It is something about her presence though, that is remarkable and yet not easy to capture and convey.

“The same kind and steadfast spirit passed down to me from my mother as she makes fishing nets under our ‘not so big, not so small’ house gets me back up on my bicycle when I am knocked off it by a friend’s crash into me, and guides me to help another girl who can’t tell her own story by becoming her temporary voice on the tape recording.” The six-word version encapsulates the two sides of it as I perceive it, an inner quality and its expression in the outer world: **FALLING, UP AGAIN, HELPING SOMEONE ELSE.**

Outer accoutrements, like a big house or a bicycle or a fancy phone or moto, definitely mark the hierarchy of relative poverty and relative wealth in the village. More money means more opportunities and more possibilities. This hard reality is the core of the mothers’ collective response to my question, “Do you know your daughter wants to be a teacher?— Yes but we have no money.” The other kind of wealth, inner resources of humanity and compassion that is a tangible factor in the villagers, may not have these visible material markers. It is still obvious to one who sojourns there. I wonder if it is something related to having strong faith? Or is it because that faith is monotheistic?

A Muslim worldview begins with unity, oneness, in Arabic *tawhid*: the oneness of God. Islām where everything comes from Allah, does not distinguish or delineate the sacred from the secular, this world (*duniya*) from the hereafter (*aakhirah*), nor the head from the heart. Every member of the *ummah* (the unified global community of followers) has the responsibility and obligation to care for others in need.

The core values at the heart of their story-to-live-by, following Sunni Islām, begins and ends with the concept of *tawhid*, Arabic for unity or oneness, as in the first half of the *Shahāda*¹⁶⁰ declaration: There is no God but God. Serene confidence comes from certainty while anxiety and distress are born of not being sure, not knowing the depths of truth as absolute. I am but a curious inquirer, not a muslim scholar, I wonder how having this worldview influences how the girls understand and make sense of their story-to-live-by.

There is no hesitation on Tenflower's part when Apple is struggling to record her story, she gracefully and graciously steps in and helps another in need. I wonder if it is a coincidence that it is her, not some other child, who is there when Apple needs help. I wonder if part of living out the values of caring for others in need is anticipating where and when help could be required so one can quietly offer it. I wonder how Tenflower's mother, and so many of the other mothers, came to be divorced. In this community where relationships between people and family members are so important, how is it that so many marriages have broken apart?

Rabbit chose the colour dark green
Title: Rabbit and Children's Rights

Rabbit surprises me one morning. She is heading out of the village with another girl on the back of her family moto, just as Den and I are turning the last corner on our way to Manco's¹⁶¹. I saw it, I looked right at it, I watched her clean

¹⁶⁰ *Shahāda* is Arabic for declaration or bearing witness, it is one of the five pillars of Islam. See <http://islamiclearningmaterials.com/shahada/> for more information. See also Appendix B- Glossary entry.

¹⁶¹ Appendix L, Field Notebook excerpts, "Thursday September 5th, note added later that day: as we enter the village Rabbit on a moto with a passenger is heading out"

the floor around it, and yet I had no understanding that she would ride the moto. Ten years of age is the common threshold for riding one, Den tells me. He adds, "if your family is wealthy enough to own one".

Rights Rabbit chose the colour dark green. Title: Rabbit And Children's Rabbit is 14, she has a brother age 7 and a sister age 1. She just finished grade 7 at the Lower Secondary School. She was in first place in her class at the end of the year. She likes to read about history. Rabbit really likes the story about the Male Mountain and the Female Mountain. When she is not in school, she helps with the dishes, and the cleaning and cooking. Some people in the village wash things in the river. Her house has a tap so it is a bit easier for her. Every day she sweeps the floors and washes the floors if they are dirty. She makes the rice for her family. They have an electric rice cooker. First she has to measure the rice, then she rinses it twice. She has to add just the right amount of water, so she checks it with her finger. Then she puts on the lid, plugs it in, and turns it on. Her home is made of cement and wood. It has lots of stairs and lots of space. Her mom and her little sister sleep in the bed, but Rabbit sleeps on the floor at the foot of the bed. Her mom has a store where she sells things like soap and MSG. After school Rabbit helps her. Her dad goes out in a boat to fish at night.

This year a woman from Phnom Penh came once a month to teach about Children's Rights. Only 12 students were selected and she was one of them. At the end of the year they went on a trip. Rabbit got to ride in the teacher's car. They took picnic food from the village and went to a nearby

beach. Some students went swimming, but Rabbit always gets sick if she goes swimming, so she did not go in the water. She bought a hanging decoration made of shells as a souvenir of the day. Someday she wants to be a primary school teacher but does not know what training she will have to complete for that. She wants to be like the clever girls in the story "*The Mountain of the Men and the Mountain of the Women*" who outsmart the king and change things for the better, so she worked very hard all year to get the ranking of first in her grade 7 class.

The interim text I composed for her is: "*I want to be like the clever girls in the story "The Mountain of the Men and the Mountain of the Women" who outsmart the king and change things for the better, so I worked very hard all year to get the ranking of first in my grade 7 class*". Her six-word story is: **CLEVER GIRLS FOLKTALE, RANK NUMBER ONE.**

Rabbit opens up other possibilities for me, especially the fascinating world of Cambodian folk-tales. Once she identified it as her favourite story, I had to find and read about the ancient contest between men and women to see who could build the highest mountain (Neak & Lucas, 1990¹⁶²). There is a lot riding on the outcome, the way marriage is negotiated changes forever when the clever women band together and win the contest. Rabbit's name (pseudonym she selected) is significant too, the character of the rabbit is the trickster in Cambodian tales (Chanthyda, 2004). When I ask her what she learned about

¹⁶² See: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED345573.pdf> for an accessible version.

Children's Rights, she describes a game they played where three groups competed to see who could name the most fruits in a set amount of time.

The novel pedagogy had a greater impact on her than the content of the lesson, it was more memorable. She did tell us some facts about children's rights the next day when we asked again. As I inquire into Rabbits story, I feel relief that my family is well off, and I am so grateful for all the advantages in my life. I want a good future and I work hard every minute of every day to be the best at everything I do. It is a lot of pressure, I take refuge in my reading. I help people when I can, in the time left after cooking, cleaning, helping my mother in the shop under our house, and doing my schoolwork. Other than reading, there is really no time at all to rest.

Access to a moto, a big house signifying space and resources, being the eldest child, and coming from a relatively wealthy family all contribute to my belief that Rabbit has the greatest probability of successfully completing high school among her village peers. Her success at achieving the rank of first in her class shows she has the ability to succeed and the determination to keep her focus on the goal she has set.

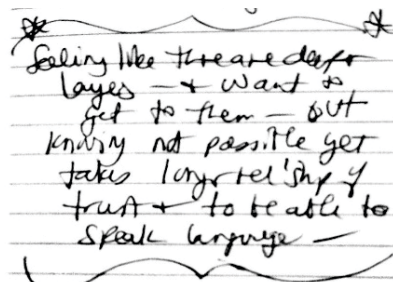
I have so many wonders about her and this stage of life where girls become women. How do people manage menstruation here, and do they have names for it like "George" and "the curse" like Western girls do? I shy away from asking about such personal topics because I would have to relay my questions

through a male interpreter, and because I sense (see Figure 4¹⁶³) there is not yet the foundation of trust we would have to share before going so deep. If I am truly honest, I fear a negative reaction –the kind the eight-point consent script describes (see Appendix N). I lack the courage to take that risk. Instead, I find references from someone else’s research that begin to answer some of my wonders (Sommer, Ackatia-Armah, Connolly, and Smiles, 2015; Daniels, 2016). It is a hard lesson to accept that there will always be things left unasked, mysteries unsolved, knots never unraveled.

In the locality dimension of three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of rural Cambodia, present facilities available at schools do not include water for washing in the latrine stalls. The toilets I saw at the primary and secondary schools are this kind. The high school has more modern toilet facilities.

Therefore, the descriptions offered by Daniels (2016) that:

Based on [their] findings, although girls expressed feeling capable of managing their menses each month, fear, shyness, and discomfort (FSD) associated with their menstrual experience was a major theme. As such, emergent categories from girls’ responses and other participant groups revealed three primary determinants of FSD: (1) relational impacts on FSD, regarding girls’ social experiences during menstruation; (2) knowledge-related impacts on FSD, indicating areas of knowledge that



Fearing like there are days
lapses - + want to
get to them - but
knowing not possible yet
takes longer rel' ship of
trust + to be able to
speak language -

¹⁶³ Figure 4:

influenced MHM [*menstrual hygiene management*] and FSD; and (3) managerial impacts on FSD, dealing with the material and WASH resources that were most pragmatic for MHM and influential on FSD. A fourth theme considered the impact of FSD on girls' behavior.

Quantitative and qualitative analysis showed that FSD had a significant impact on girls' confidence, relationships, and decision-making regarding MHM. (p.1)

These insights and descriptions appear to strongly apply, subject to verification through further study in this specific village.

Children's Rights are a longstanding topic of interest and importance globally, related to the original UN document from 1959 and the updated 1989 CRC (Convention on the rights of the child¹⁶⁴). Cambodia signed the document; however, a summary (on paper) of their work towards honouring it ¹⁶⁵ shows more progress than can be validated through direct observation. While enrichment programs such as the one Rabbit participated in are beneficial for the select few, by utilizing resources such as the Khmer language 'A Child's Hope¹⁶⁶' video— whole schools and whole communities might be informed and inspired. LICADHO (Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights), a non-governmental organization (NGO) active in Cambodia since 1992 has an office in each of Cambodia's 13 provinces, unlike many organizations or programs that limit their coverage to a small portion of the country. Kampot province is often left out, and it is common for agencies,

¹⁶⁴ See: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>.

¹⁶⁵ See: https://www.unicef.org/cambodia/12681_13461.html.

¹⁶⁶ See: <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/video.php?perm=51> for the A Child's Hope video, see: <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/aboutus.php> for background information about LICADHO.

organizations and programs to be unaware of what others are doing. The missing elements of coordination and collaboration mean that there is often a sporadic and splintered variant of program delivery that contributes to perennially ineffectual results¹⁶⁷.

Morningstar chose the colour dark pink
Title: Morningstar Helps at Home

Morningstar came to our first session accompanied by her mother. Mom calmly proceeded to breast feed the baby brother while we reviewed the eight point script with her daughter. It was normal and natural, and necessary, yet remarkably ironic in that *my* culture is still not comfortable with being in the presence of breast feeding, and covering one's head in *hers* has a higher significance. Morningstar started crying when we finished the consent/assent script and started to ask her questions. We stopped right away. Den later spoke to her parents, her dad came with her the next day and we had only smiles with no more tears. For such a little girl, this child had the biggest dream of any of them. I wonder how she kept and used her imagination when so many others have not.

Morningstar chose the colour dark pink. Title: Morningstar Helps At Home. She is 9 years old, she lives with her mom and dad and baby brother. Her dad is a fisherman. She will be going into grade 2 at school. When she is not at school she helps look after her 12-month-old brother, and with washing the clothes¹⁶⁸. She gets the big basins from under the house, her

¹⁶⁷ Based on personal experience and observation.

¹⁶⁸ See Appendix M, Reflections about the Research, p. 236, where I compare my assumptions about two folktales as identical (seduction of the seemingly familiar) and my

house does not have water so they buy it one jug at a time from a neighbour. Her mom gives her the 300 Riel to pay for the water, and more money to buy the soap. The jug is heavy so her mom pours the water for her. She adds some soap and the dirty clothes and scrubs them with a brush. She wrings them out, rinses them, and wrings them out again. Then she hangs them up on the fence. Once they are dry she puts them on hangers under the house. She wants to learn English so she can be a translator in a car factory, or a tour guide, or a teacher. She wants to do it all.

Interim text: *“When I am carrying my baby brother on my hip, when I am washing the clothes or hanging them up to dry on the bamboo fence beside the house, when I scratch the squares in the ground with a stick to play hopscotch with my friends, inside I am dreaming of a future when I can learn English and work as a translator in a car factory.”* Morningstar has a strong future orientation. She means it when she says she wants to learn English so she can be a translator in a car factory. It is obvious how much her dad cares for her and believes in her¹⁶⁹. I still wonder how she will do it, but I believe her. Her six-word story is: **FUTURE: TRANSLATOR IN A CAR**

FACTORY.

approach to village reality: “How is this any different than if a village girl tells me... “I help with the laundry” or “I do the cleaning”, or “the cooking”? I hear a word or words with a common familiar meaning, it is understandable that I might fall into the trap of assuming their story of doing these things is the duplicate of what I already know.”

¹⁶⁹ He was the one who brought her to the second attempt at making a story with me after the first session, with her mother accompanying her, was cut short when she began to cry. Also, he is the only dad who asked to have a picture taken with his daughter.

I put myself briefly into Morningstar's shoes. I love having a bike. Riding my bicycle to school feels like I am flying. When I am not at school, I carry my baby brother on my hip a lot of the time. Somehow, I always find time to play skipping or jumpsies with the other girls. I am safe and looked after, my dad really loves me a lot. I can have big dreams for the future and I know I will have to learn English to get them.

As an eight year old, Morningstar does not have to worry about the big things in life. She goes to school and looks after her baby brother. She helps with the household chores. These tasks are made more difficult because her house has no tap, they buy jugs of water from a neighbour. Her mother helps her to carry and pour. Water is central to life and livelihood everywhere and Cambodia is no exception. It forms a critical element in the locality dimension of the Cambodian three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. Plastic from bottled water is some of the most durable of the garbage that is constantly accumulating. Dams being built in China, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam, the other four countries on the Mekong river's route from mountains to ocean, threaten life and livelihood for Cambodians depending on the Mekong's levels for fish and irrigation of rice crops¹⁷⁰. The floodgates on the dam upriver from Kampot were opened without warning after heavy rains which led to flooding and loss of homes along the riverside (Odom, 2015). The temperature of the water is perilously close to being too hot for rice plants to survive in, rice being the mainstay of the diet¹⁷¹ (GRISP,

¹⁷⁰ For comprehensive coverage of all biophysical aspects of the Mekong basin, see Campbell & ScienceDirect (2009). "The greatest area of concern is the potential for impact on the fishery, especially the fishery in Cambodia. This provides the major animal protein source for people of the basin, and has a dollar value estimated at more than USD \$6 billion (Hortle, Chapter 9)." p. 399.

¹⁷¹ See: <http://ricepedia.org/rice-around-the-world/asia> (para. 3 under Climate Change heading): "In addition, rising temperatures will also negatively affect yield and grain

2013, p. 149). The rain that used to be predictable and maintained its rhythm with the growing seasons of fruit and crops is now unreliable, fruit doesn't develop or dries out before it can, yields are low. Water in the river, still a source for drinking as well as washing, has raw sewage entering it faster than the flow rate can clear due to population increases. I wonder if solar power and rain catchment systems, along with sanitation solutions for communities near rivers will be a part of this community's future? And I wonder who will pay for it?

Morningstar's mother asked me a question, Den translated. It sounded like: "you ha pee in our village?". I restored what I thought was the missing final consonant and understood: "you have pee in our village?" in other words wondering if I needed to use the toilet. What she was really asking me was whether I was happy in the village, to which I replied: "the people are so kind to me, but it makes me very sad to see all the garbage." Den translated her response that it was very difficult in the rainy season, they usually burn the garbage. The next day, she swept under her house and burned the garbage. It is one of so many instances of people wanting to appear in a good light, to have me

quality in the future, when the temperature will become higher during the reproductive phase, particularly at flowering. In the past three decades, nighttime minimum temperature has been rising rapidly and this trend is expected to continue. It is estimated that yield will decrease by 7–10% for each 1 °C temperature rise above the present mean temperatures at current carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere." See also: <http://ricepedia.org/rice-around-the-world/asia>, final paragraph: "The future growth of rice supplies, however, seems to be on shaky ground, with several emerging uncertainties, including a possible rice area decline, a further slowdown in productivity growth, and climate change. Most experts predict that the area under rice in Asia is likely to fall because of population pressure, water shortage, and competition from other crops. In addition, the ongoing structural transformation of Asian agriculture with aging farmers and out-migration of rural youth may also influence rice farming. Ultimately, the onus falls on policymakers to adequately fund agricultural research and on scientists to develop technologies that are climate-proof and that enable farmers to grow more with less inputs and a smaller environmental footprint."

think well of them. But the 'having pee' misunderstanding part always makes me laugh.

Moon chose the colour dark red
Title: The Story of Moon

Moon is the youngest, she is sweet, cute and has a twinkle of mischief about her. Her teeth are in terrible condition, it makes me wish there were unlimited toothbrushes and dentists available to them instead of none at all. I am completely won over though, on the day both she and the cat are wearing identical strings of pearls. I can hardly imagine her walking for an hour every morning to get to school at six years of age. I can't stop thinking about her house, with no door that closes, perched over the water; with light through the holes in the floor boards making photos so hard to take there. And the image of her tiny sandals on the ladder makes me think of the Cham Cinderella story¹⁷². The story is a version with golden sandals that I am mostly certain she doesn't even know about.

Moon chose the colour dark red. Title: The Story of Moon. Moon is 6 years old. She draws a picture of the village with flowers between the houses. She stands at the top of the stairs in the doorway. She takes off her shoes before she goes into the house. She has plastic toy dishes. There is a pot, and a pot and plate, and a cooker. She likes to play with her toys. Her cooker looks just like her mother's real cooker, but the real one has charcoal so mom can cook their food. She buys a bag of charcoal from a lady in the

¹⁷² *Angkat: The Cambodian Cinderella* was translated by Coburn (1998) from a folktale "Cendrillon chez les Chams" French for: Cinderella of the Chams. See discussion in Chapter 4, Locality.

village for 1,000 Riel (25 cents) a kilo. Moon buys a little plastic bag of vitamins in her village too. Sometimes she gets a bit dirty when she sits down on the ground to play with her friends outside. Her mom takes good care of her, she can wash the dirty clothes again. Her school is right beside a temple. She has a uniform for school. She goes to school every day except Sunday. Her class is from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. Her school has a playground with swings, slides, and teeter-totters. She likes playing on the slide. Some day she wants to be a teacher in primary school.

This is the interim text I wrote: *“Now I am six years old, and I really love to play with the plastic toy dishes my mother got me, and the long walk to school doesn’t matter when I can get to slide down the slide in the playground, and what I really want when I grow up is to be a teacher of little children.”* Seven out of the ten participants want to be a teacher. I wonder about what is behind that choice. The two six-word stories I distilled about Moon: **PLAYING NOW, FUTURE TEACHING LITTLE CHILDREN** and **HOUSES ON STILTS: FLOWERS AMONG GARBAGE**

Moon drew a picture of houses with flowers between them when I asked the group of children gathered under Manco’s house to show me what they ‘wanted’ their village to be like in the future (see Appendix H). The finer points of imagining the future were lost on them, they drew the village how it is. Moon circled her own house in her drawing. I looked at it and said “flowers? there are no flowers here, only garbage” and the moment the words were out of my mouth I felt so mortified that I said them. It was my worst moment, my ethnocentric canyon. The only saving grace is that people there do not understand English so

the hurtful potential of my careless remark went unnoticed by them. It reverberated for me. It had to be my dreamtime self that understood what my waking-self had missed. There was a time delay in my real revelation; as it was only the next morning on the back of Den's moto on my way into the village that the Leonard Cohen song "Suzanne" played on the juke-box-in-my-mind with echoes of "she showed you where to look among the garbage and the flowers" (Cohen, 1967). It hit me like a wall. As soon as I opened my eyes to the flowers, I could see them wherever they were. I made sure the photo I took of Manco for her certificate (see Appendix G¹⁷³) had flowers in it.

The lesson I learned from having that momentary flash of insight— when I saw the village world through Moon's eyes –has more intense impact than my 'thinking with story' for other girls. It is emotional, I know that people want to be perceived in a positive light, yet I could see only the garbage.

Star chose the colour purple
Title: Star's Story

At last we arrive at the final participant in the list of ten names. Ten people's lives to try to live, in the midst alongside them: it is so hard for me at the time¹⁷⁴. I confess to mixing up some of the details between stories at times when I am there, and forgetting which name goes with which girl and colour. I have no difficulty now, with immersion in the field texts the distinctive name/colour/story combination for each girl is obvious and unmistakable. As we start the session with Star, I think and hope I have made some progress over the weeks there in seeking out stories and finding indirect ways to get my wonders answered. I

¹⁷³ The same photo is in the collage with 6 word stories, Appendix H.

¹⁷⁴ Field notebook quote from September 4th (evening): "weight of what is yet to be done was pressed upon me."

understand the context of village life a lot more than I did at first, I look forward to their welcoming smiles and enthusiastic greetings on arrival. I will miss them and take them with me in both heart and mind. This is my mindset as we begin the story process with Star.

Star prefers time alone to being part of a group, she is quiet and shy and introspective. This makes it even more of a contrast with her dazzling ear-rings that flash every time I look at her. She tells us that the best day of her life is the day her mother bought her a new school uniform, not the day she received the earrings. I wonder about all the layers of meaning that underlie this, the fact that school related things have an even higher value to her than personal adornment. Her father taught himself how to be a mechanic, his income is assured as his services are indispensable given the age and obvious state of disrepair in the fishing fleet. Her mother uses the space under their house for her vegetable stall, it is the largest one, with the most produce and the best quality.

Star chose the colour purple. Title: Star's Story. Star is 11 years old. Her house is beside the river. She stands in front of the door, at the top of the ladder to her house. She is going into grade 4 this year. Her older sister is 21, she works in a factory in another province. Her brother is 18, he takes care of the family moto and parks it under their house. Every day he gives her a ride to school, it only takes 5 minutes to get there. Star has beautiful earrings that her mother gave her just before Ramadan. She always wears them, even when she goes to the bathroom, or sleeps or goes for a walk. Her mother bought her a brand-new school uniform for her first day of school. She was so happy, and she got to be with a lot of new friends. For Ramadan, her

mother makes special food. They get up in the night to eat it because they do not eat in the daytime. She says: “All this food we eat during 30 days of Ramadan. My parents always eat after sunset and before sunrise but for me I just eat half a day.” She likes to eat eggs. Her dad works as a mechanic fixing fishing boats, he had to teach himself. She helps her mom with her store under the house when Star is not at school. She puts the vegetables in bags for the customers, and gives the money to her mom. She likes to read a book in a silent place by herself, so sometimes she goes into her house. She also likes to play by herself with the toys her mother bought for her. Some day she wants to be a teacher of little children.

Those earrings make her stand out, they are a magnet for my attention. I wrote her interim text to reflect that: *“I never want to find out what might happen if I take off the sparkling earrings my mother gave me just before Ramadan.”* The imminent thought of losing something valuable, it adds to the idea of having no ‘me-space’ from Rose’s and Sunflower’s stories. The added part about security makes me wonder how people manage their savings here, in this place I have learned has no boundaries. People lost everything before during the Pol Pot years¹⁷⁵, so there is low trust for banks in rural Cambodia. Most people typically use a pillow case or rolled up cloth tucked into their waist. Those with stores have an additional challenge since they need a convenient float to make change for people. Star’s mother, and others in the village I have noticed, are very careful and secretive about their money boxes; even from their own

¹⁷⁵ The Pol Pot years lasted from 1975 to 1979, see Appendix B- Glossary for more details. See also Appendix I, item 7.

family members. Rabbit claimed to know nothing about it in her family. Even the public box Manco hangs on the support post under her house for people to deposit their use-of-village-toilet fees into is taken inside at night. Star's house has a closing door, but what of the others with houses always open? I distill her story down to six words: **EARRINGS: BRILLIANT SPARKLE WITH NO SAFEKEEPING**

When I step into Star's shoes, I feel my hunger and my empty stomach from fasting for Ramadan. I love how good the special food my mother prepares tastes when we get up in the dark to eat together as a family before sunrise begins the fast again. The feeling of my earrings in my ears reminds me that they are safe, it is the best place to store them. I get to ride behind my big brother on the moto to get to school, no muddy feet. Maybe I can drive it when I am older. When I sit by myself in my house to read or play with my toys, it is my own world and I feel so happy then. I want to become a teacher so I think about how it will be to stand at the front of the class and write on the board.

Entering the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space as Star gives me the insight that while fear of losing precious earrings might be *my* motivation for always wearing them, for her it is a purely practical storage option. I can begin to understand in a more visceral way, by walking briefly in her shoes, the wisdom in the annual practice of fasting for Ramadan. It is an effective method of teaching Muslim values such as caring for the disadvantaged, because feeling my own hunger is a signal that connects me with others in need.

Part 2 - The research assistant's stories.

Den.

In a meta-cognitive way, I was thinking about the research questions as I was collecting data. The question “What story does Den tell about his involvement in the study?” was constantly in the back of my mind as we worked. That is an explanation for why the process imposed on finding the story of Den felt lacking somehow. It seemed woefully inadequate to simply append the telling of his ‘story’ onto the end, as a single interview. It felt too much like it was just dangling there, and not enough like it was the integral constant warp-thread that it actually was, woven through every bit of the study. I felt the artificiality of it and the tight constraints this imposed. The Ethics Review Board (my *‘Must do Must do People’*¹⁷⁶), approved a sequence which demanded that he must first cease to be an assistant, in order to become a participant and tell his ‘involvement-in-the-research’ story. It felt forced, something that was so fluid and kinetic was reduced to being a function of working within the box of a preconceived Western notion and structure, when in reality it had been so much more.

In actuality, our relationship unfolded¹⁷⁷. It evolved over time as we spent hours, days, and weeks engaged actively together working on the research

¹⁷⁶ This was my way of explaining what was a completely novel and possibly incomprehensible entity to Den, and my method of describing the important role my Ethics Review Board played in carrying out research.

¹⁷⁷ See Appendix M, Reflections on Relationships, (entering the village), Sept. 28, 2013: “Although we are of different ages and genders, we are open to each other and can learn, touch, taste, and experience things that are novel and even risky. He invites me to share Chinese Ancestor celebration, great aunt’s Buddhist funeral and cremation, nephew’s second birthday party, visiting niece in hospital with a concussion, and we share family outings to the beach and to the temple. He comes to my 38th anniversary party, my home where we work together is offered as his second home. Despite that

tasks. The story of his involvement in the study is to be found there within the spaces in between all our actions and encounters. I ask him for that story, yet he cannot tell it to me as an integrated whole. He factually recounts some of our shared episodes, there is no gestalt or big picture view available for him, from within him, or in his worldview. The reasons for this may be many, however, I believe a major contributor is the fact that there is no foundation for meta cognitive analysis within his education or experience. So asking this of him, to use the tool of thinking about thinking when he has no foundation for it whatsoever, was doomed to fail.

On the other hand, as the following quotes from the transcript of our interview demonstrate, there is the realization that participating in a research study has resulted in personal changes for him. In the earlier part of the interview he talks about learning how to understand and work with children in new ways, also that his English language skills improved:

D: uh first thing that I want I like working with you because I I want to know what you will do for research wha what and how...how... how you do research and that and uh maybe I get experience and maybe I an yeah I want exactly I I got experience from you many many experience about children, especially, I have children I have daughters and I have student so this is the main point that I I want to know from you that ah

J: so can you think of a couple of examples?

invitation, he continues to request permission to use the bathroom or to have a drink of something. It takes a lot to begin to feel at ease in another's life and world. "

D: uh

J: like what things

D: ok uh (pause) example like like you always say all the children if they play game, their way, make their brain bigger bigger but these thing before I little bit game for the for the children not so so big the game or game learning but now you say about important of game and so I know this and I will do with my student and I will do with my daughter and to make their brain get better, bigger yeah

J: yeah

D: ok maybe uh I think that uh *Khmai* people, *Khmai* children not so many game play uh like a kicker can just play at school but at house no just work just little bit

J: television

D: yeah television, this is a good point that I get experience from you ok and another one My English is not so good I want to improve my English also. When I meet a foreigner I always say always speak to them. Uh So it a chance a good chance that I meet you that I talk with you and I think I have many many uh I have many many mistake when I speak or I write but you always tell me do this do that to get thank you very much. Yeah. And now maybe my English is better than before.

Near the end of our interview, he uses new and different thinking skills than the concrete ones I have typically seen. He thinks with *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* story, and describes his new understanding:

J: and also transformation. I think these themes are very good themes. They very common, but yet very, people here don't think about them. Cuz here very concrete, they say what in the picture. This is my school.

D: mmhm

J: This is my whatever. They say what's in the picture, that very concrete.

D: mmhm

J: But for knowledge, for problem solving, for for for make new things and creative and innovation, you need more than that. You need to be able to see things and understand them from different perspective, like the close and the far¹⁷⁸ like we say. So I pick this story and some people in Canada say me "NO, why you pick this story? This little kid story no, not good for your research." And I say, but I think this good story. So what do you think?

D: I think so. Like I told you uh ah this story ah mean ah focus on focus on ah people also.

¹⁷⁸ This refers to the wide angle (e.g., cat sleeping) and close-up (e.g., whiskers only) pictures that I put with the iPad version of the Consent/Assent script - as a strategy to hold participants listening attention for the complete 8-point script. See Appendix N for an English translation of the script content. Den and I used that to talk about the two different perspectives in thinking about big picture vs. details.

J: mm

D: Because uh yeah I think uh same same the processing of caterpillar like the processing of children yeah

J: hmm

D: yeah and we butterfly mean the future yeah uh mean the future of children you know

J: mmhm

D: see everything have to change, have to change, everything

J: and you too

D: mmhm

J: You changed too, cause you'd be

D: you too, yeah, I will

J: I think, you already did,

D: mm

The limitations of expressing things in a second language are evident when I ask him how he might use what he has learned about the conducting of research. I sense there is a lot he wants to convey to me and the fact I am unable to understand Khmer is a definite wall between us. I ask him to tell me in Khmer. After he says it in Khmer, I ask him to translate some of the points:

D: ok mm

J: (coughs) so I also want to ask you about, now in the future will you do will you write articles for something? will you talk to to someone about this experience?, will you make, how will you use what you learned?. Not just the better English, not just the thing about

children, but this, the research part. Can you use it somehow? ‘Cause you know something about research now, you know about the “Must do Must do” people, about the ethics about how we have to be so careful, you know about confidentiality we protect the people’s name and their their story, you know about so many thing you didn’t know about before. So how will you use that now? How can you? Do you have idea? For how to use?

D: (pause) how to use mean if I get I I I know already about research now, so what I will do ok?

J: yeah, what will you do?

D: mmhm

J: What you think?

D: hmm think that um everything that I do next time I will uh I will think more, I will uh, about uh plan, about one thing I want to say now, I want to say about the English – I I will say about my experience to friend and uh this is something that I know and uh that’s it. I will do everything carefully about work or like teaching also. Pause (sigh) Oh

J: it’s hard to say

D: it’s very if its Khmai I will describe I don’t know

J: just say in Khmai, we can always get translated after (phone rings)

J: ok just say Khmai, just say it, we worry about translation after , you say what is in your heart and your mind, just say it, go ahead

D: ok um speaks Khmer\ ok is finish.

J: so can you just give me little bit of what it meant English?

D: yeah um, before I, I don't care about work or about permission mm because Khmai different uh different as Europe and uh now I know what you did this is curriculum for uh saw everything before we do we have to to think about problem next time this is the good good point that I learn from you

J: so to plan ahead and think about. So those 8 points that we say every time with the girl, and we, every time we do it, and you always go to toilet when we do it but it ok because you know they listen to same story every time. But those 8 point, they very important.

D:mmhm

J: that they know that, they can leave the study if they want nothing bad will happen, they can have any part not put in if they want to take it out, they in control, it's very respectful for them. And protection for them. And not everything work that way, but just research. Because in the past so much damage, so many people were taken advantage of so many people were hurt. Because someone decided I will go do research, and there was no control and no one was watching the way they did it and sometimes at the end the results really hurt people. So- I think our results didn't hurt people, I think they helped people. And we see next year when we go back, or you see along the way because you still will have contact. What will the village do with that? They

have a chance. This opportunity for them. They show me that they want to work together by show have some effort and then we will, I will go back and work very hard with them.

Manco.

What story does she tell about her involvement in a research study? The words of her story may seem simple at first. They are printed in Appendix E that has been referred to throughout this document— and I will not repeat them here. I know some of them by heart. Her story may sound simple, but under that simplicity, Manco is a strong and exceptional woman. She is a gracious hostess, a person willing to take a risk on a stranger and invite them into her home.

She shared her soul with me, not just her story:

The only chair in her home, [was] at the table by the small window with wooden sliders that came off in my hand when I tried to open them. I declined even though it would have been easier for my hips and knees, it would have put me at a different eye-level. She sat in the chair in the afternoon, showing me the lone photo of her with her parents in the time before the 'bad times'. She never attended school, her gestures and facial expressions revealed the work and hardships of life for her under the Khmer Rouge. Ghosts of so many accounts I had read of atrocities and tortures played graphically in my mind as I kneeled in front of her; rapt attention I offered to her, soul to soul, though I understood nothing of the Khmer words she spoke.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ See Appendix M, Reflections on Shyness Dec. 4, 2015.

She is generous of spirit, as well as of material things like food or with the loan of a spare head scarf. She wants something good, no she wants something *better* for her village. She wants to know how to help a girl with serious physical disabilities. She wants to help those other girls to become a teacher. She wants to learn English herself, so we can share so much more than is possible now. She wants me to come back and work with her again. That is a very strong call. She had her life torn apart by the Pol Pot years, as did so many other women her age (So, 2010). As her story tells us, she knows, as a village elder, who is rich and who is poor in her village. More importantly, she knows who is mean and who is kind. Kindness is a Muslim value, as it is for many followers of other religions.

She epitomizes this value in her strong and quiet way. Her certificate from assisting with this research, with a photo, in two languages, will take its place on the upper beam of her home beside the certificate her husband has for being a teacher at the mosque school. She chose the option of getting all the money at the end rather than as a per diem. This is unusual in a larger Cambodian culture that predominantly considers the 'rice of today' more immediately important than the promise of the 'rice' of tomorrow. I have a wonder about her. I wonder what she used the money for. Maybe it went towards her son's education, or to help a villager in need, or perhaps to buy something beautiful for her daughter. The answer will have to wait until I see her again, which is more of a 'must do' for me than a 'might do'.

I feel the strength of our connection, and I know that in spite of the amount of geographical space between us, the 'relational space' as Caine (2007,

p. 104¹⁸⁰) describes it, is but a breath away. The story of Manco works on me. I think of her when I shake someone's hand, wondering what ripples might follow. When I read books or verses about motherhood in Islām¹⁸¹, I have a clear picture of her in my mind's eye. I have the greatest gratitude towards her, for the opportunity to make stories with girls in her village under her watchful eye.

Part 3 - My Autoethnography.

What I Learned as practical wisdom (phronesis).

My learnings from designing and performing the sequence of tasks required for this research have continued to reveal themselves as I write about them, tell about them, and utilize them while volunteering to teach English in a Cambodian village. This is the practical wisdom, or phronesis (Kemmis, 2012), I set out to acquire. I have arrived at this learning through the praxis, or action, of inquiring into the daily lives of Cham village girls. While it may be an artificial grouping, to gather together learnings that actually inhabit the spaces around and between everything described in this study, the core of practical wisdom, the

¹⁸⁰ Caine (2007, p. 104) footnotes her reference to space in-between with references to Hannah Arendt and others: "By the relational aspects of narrative inquiry, I mean the space-in-between the researcher and research participant."44 [her footnote follows] Footnote 44: "I am reminded that 'in-between' spaces, are spaces where we ask one another "who" and not "what" we are (Arendt, 1958). I also draw upon the diaspora literature, where Bhabha (1994) draws to our attention that borders, both imaginary and real, are in-between spaces; it is amidst these spaces that personal and cultural identities are formed, and our values and interests are negotiated. These in between spaces are filled with uncertainty and indeterminacy; these are places of liminality. As Lorde (1981) points out, it is in these in-between spaces or borderlands that we recognize that our necessity for interdependencies are not threatening, but rather are the spark for our creativity. And it is in the borderlands that Anzaldua (1987) locates the possibility for resistance."

¹⁸¹ See: Schleifer (1996), the main characteristics described "involve her active participation in the affairs of the family"(p. 47). "Responsibility, the physical exertion of childbirth, and expression of positive emotions in particular affection and generosity" are expected of her. The mother is responsible for her husband's house and his offspring, ensuring "a state of equilibrium which is the desired atmosphere in the Muslim household,"(p. 47).

phronesis, I gained, is here. The heart or the core of my story about the finding out of their stories is in these learnings. There is a content part of this, and a process part. It is both the changes in my understanding themselves, what Mezirow (2000) calls meaning perspectives, i.e., “the structure of assumptions that constitutes a frame of reference for interpreting the meaning of an experience” (Mezirow, 2000, p. xvi) and the transparency of demonstrating my learning process over time. I present this through offering some of my ‘field learnings’, ‘interim learnings’ and ‘research learnings’ in a parallel format to the way I presented findings from the Cambodian participants.

Field learning.

Different learnings parallel the stages; on the same continuum of field text, to interim text, to research text I used for data analysis. Living through the detailed preparations to begin research in a rural village in Cambodia left me with much practical wisdom specific only to the Cambodian context. Other learning is more general, it is applicable everywhere. The first and obvious lesson that took place in the field, field-learning, affected me deeply. I realized it was not ‘all about me’ when negotiating spending the night with Manco. My story, her story, and Den’s story taken together show that even a seemingly simple task can have complexity and nuance in the context of intercultural communication (see Appendix M, Reflections on Relationships).

I am transformed by living, telling, re-living, and re-telling our diverse stories-to-live-by. I now approach negotiations in Cambodia with a broader and more inclusive view, by asking myself, “how might it be for them, from their perspective?” One of the five Asiaticity elements Miike (2015, p. 32)

identified is 'other-directedness', and this new awareness I experienced seems to fit in that category.

Interim learning.

The next layer of learnings were interim learnings as I immersed myself in the data and attempted to make sense of it. Within a month of returning from the data collection, I was presenting my 'findings' to others at a conference (see Appendix F for poster¹⁸²). That early stage revealed certain lessons and insights I had gained from my experience that took form through the act of sharing. At this stage, I presented mostly images and told stories about them in an effort to help listeners, and me, to understand what it all meant. Four months later, I delivered a summary of my research to colleagues in two categories: things I learned about myself, and things I learned from them (participants). See Appendix Q, slide 36 from my PowerPoint presentation. I feel both grateful, and validated, in that without knowing about Miike's distinction between *centrism* and *centricity*¹⁸³ at the time, I framed my learning as being *from* them rather than *about* them.

The personal growth documented on slide 36 of my presentation includes four points. First, recognition for having to make decisions in the field in order to answer my research questions about how much I rely on asking direct questions, how hard it is to figure out indirect ways to get at things. Second, it acknowledges my abiding culture blindness: in spite of all the tolerant upbringing and all the travel and exposure to difference, I am still ethnocentric and culture blind at times. Third, it acknowledges there is a price paid for becoming connected with people: that the cost of connectedness is a burden of relational responsibility.

¹⁸² Qualitative Health Research Conference, October 2013, Halifax, NS.

¹⁸³ See further discussion of *centrism* and *centricity* in Chapter 8.

And fourth, it validates my new life choices: that I want to live in Cambodia and that I can be a researcher.

Four equally important insights that I gained from participants significantly expanded my ability to understand them. I acquired a deeper experience and appreciation for kindness from being welcomed and included by Manco and the children, learning that: kindness is powerful, humbling and challenging. I perceived that defining poverty as poverty-of-finance is an oversimplification; however, thinking as villagers do that money is the only way to get things, is a barrier. It is a paradox, this reality of no collaborative problem-solving or working together in a collectivist and relational setting; and one that remains puzzling. I experienced the stranglehold that not asking questions has on Cambodian thinking and on their imaginations; and saw how rote learning in school has a ripple effect across the entire culture. I was able to expand my prior individualist assumptions of knowing how to get what I want being equally true for all others, to entertaining the concept that it is possible to want something and have absolutely no idea how to get it.

These eight learning points are still active in my life and studies, I am often reminded of them through a photograph or a news story. They remain current, and I just presented them again in a lecture to student occupational therapists in Australia¹⁸⁴. Recently, however, I have understood deeper layers of what I learned in Cambodia. The three lessons I value most were not visible to

¹⁸⁴ August 25, 2017, "*Inter-cultural competency: Discovering how to work authentically in Cambodia*", Jocelyn Campbell, guest Lecturer in the Unit 9070 (Occupation in Context), in the Master of Occupational Therapy course, at the University of Canberra, Australia, on-distance modality, 75 minutes.

me initially; they have only been revealed as I have continued to visit and volunteer in Cambodia, and as I reflect on what methods of working with colleagues and children there are effective.

Research learning.

These are the three strategies I used in the field that have effectively served me as I continue to volunteer in Cambodia: 1. Listen with your eyes, 2. Pay attention to what is not there, 3. Listen to the spaces in-between. Explaining them proves as challenging as recognizing them; I offer a brief overview.

1. Listen with your eyes.

We have ears for listening, but when the audio track is impossible to understand there are still many visual clues to indicate what is going on and what it means. During the data collection phase of my study, I was wide-eyed and attentive whenever we were in the village. I became an avid collector of these 'listen with your eyes' fragments (Derringer, (2012). It was intense, and I was too wrapped up in all the research requirements to notice the process itself. Now, after I have spent many hours and days immersed in Khmer language situations in a rice-farming village, where I remained silent and as attentive as possible to the milieu surrounding me, I can understand. In the absence of all the research encumbrances, both physical and mental, I have had the chance to reflect more deeply on this practice.

When I searched for references to describe my experience, I found very few. I did realize, on reflection, that the same skills that helped me successfully interact with clients on the autism spectrum during my clinical career, were engaged as I tuned into the non-verbal aspects of communication in Cambodian

villages. Perhaps hypersensitive listeners, or people who handle only one sensory channel at a time (i.e., those with autism spectrum disorders), appreciate silent communication partners who use gestures and visual cues rather than sounds. It was an application of a skill I was not consciously aware of as an asset, having unexpected value in intercultural communication settings.

2. Pay attention to what is not there.

The ability to see things that are not immediately obvious, finding the missing pieces, identifying the gaps, this is what I have labeled “pay attention to what is not there.” If I can notice what is missing, and understand the reason behind its non-presence, I am better able to either supplement the missing element, or facilitate others as they explore how having it might change things. If all my attention is devoted to the concrete reality in front of me, I will miss the nuances that belong to the subtle. A Muslim worldview with its acknowledgement of both the ‘seen’ and the ‘unseen’ would be a benefit worthy of cultivation. The missing Cinderella story, the one that was discovered by a French colonial administrator, overseer of Kampot in the 1800s, is a second example (Coburn, 1998; Leclère, 1898).

3. Listen to the spaces-in-between.

The spaces between things, between words, between musical notes, between times and seasons hold meaning and importance. This is not a place my western worldview is familiar with. Caine (2007, p. 104) describes a “relational space” between researchers and participants, drawing on Arendt (1985), Bhabha (1994), and Lorde (1981) these spaces are portrayed as “places of liminality.” I had a piano teacher as a child who was fond of saying, “let the

music breathe.” She meant I should leave spaces between the notes, so that the true meaning and colour of the sounds would come through. When I described how I experience time and memories as both *fluid flow* and *freeze frame*, and that I can best perform meaning-making in the spaces between the two, this is the phenomenon I tried to convey.

I think that while it is harder to explore and explain the emptiness of spaces in between things, it is the point of action and understanding. If I can be attentive to these spaces, meanings beyond the obvious concrete reality are able to come through. The First Nations wisdom regarding this is that people need to listen with ‘three ears’, meaning the two on the sides of their head and the one in their heart as described by Lewis (2015) based on Archibald (2008, p. 76).

I am convinced the perception of success I have from building the library at Den’s school, or teaching English to 125 students a day in Sok’s village¹⁸⁵, or cultivating a meaningful collaborative relationship with Sok, a Khmer person who has a disability, arises from my ability to perform these three things (Buddhist Library Cambodia Project, 2016). Effectiveness in using my skills in Cambodia is based on phronesis, practical wisdom, as opposed to theoretical knowledge, or technical expertise. I am privileged in that my background, resources, and connections with people around the world support living my dreams into reality. It is due to this privilege that I have the ability to come and go from Cambodia. This contrasts sharply with the ten girls who shared stories with me, they have considerably less freedom and fewer options for engagement and participation in the world, as will be explored further in the Discussion Chapter.

¹⁸⁵ See Dharma Vision newsletters, Dec. 2015 and May 2016, available at: <http://youraid.org.au/dharmavision/>

4. What I learned about the stages of doing research

I learned about the stages of doing research through enacting the autoethnographic process. I am not able to state with confidence what came first, the methodology of narrative inquiry or my wonders (research questions), because it resembles the chicken versus the egg dilemma. It would be more accurate to say they developed concomitantly. As I lived with the feelings of inadequacy in the face of a clinical challenge after seeing the girl with severe disabilities in the house on stilts, I kept asking myself “what would be a compassionate response?” In order to understand life in the village for *her*, I was convinced I had to start with life in the village for girls in general. The fact I would be reliant on assistants for translation and cultural interpretation meant I was determined to include their stories as well. My learning of the process of autoethnography through deep reflection and self-examination blanketed all my practical learning.

In terms of designing the project, reading and meeting eminent researchers, and participating in their workshops early in the research process was both helpful and inspirational. I completed a university course in which I explored education of girls in Cambodia. My proposal had to have my research questions, and I had only a very rudimentary knowledge about the context. What I learned about forming questions is that keeping them simple is a very good strategy, and that having questions given to me rather than conceived of by me will lead to challenges.

I was entering a place, culture, language, and religion I knew very little about. I had seen the power of photographic images and had experienced their communication value in my clinical work which led to including them in my study.

I learned that it was possible to draw on some of my existing experience. I still had to find a way to ascertain with a degree of confidence that we all had a similar idea of what a story was. A story prompt provided a common experience in the moment, and the story of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, which relies on images more than text and has the theme of eating, which is relevant to Cambodia, seemed like a good fit. I learned that not everyone, including members of the Ethics Review Board, would agree with me on the goodness of fit. And I had to rely on my own belief in the story, its themes, its appeal, and its understandability to keep it as my story prompt. This choice was validated in its effectiveness in the field. What I learned from this was that even in the face of opposition, if I truly believe in my choices then I need to stand behind them. It was not an easy or comfortable thing to do, but I am stronger for having been through the experience.

I learned to rely on myself and to figure things out by trial and error, I had to keep on trying until I succeeded. Collecting the data was fraught with technology challenges, like transferring photographs using Apple technology to my computer with a different operating system. I also spent many hours in the copy centre with one Khmer staff there compiling the books, when my research assistant was not available. Organizing the data was greatly assisted by having participants select a colour as an identifier along with a pseudonym. In spite of colour coding, I mixed up names and colours and personas at times in the field, due to the complexity and amount of information I had to assimilate in a short time. I was scrupulous about protecting my technology from the humidity and the rain as my data collection took place during the rainy season when school was not in session. This allowed me to contract the services of a research assistant

who was also a teacher, which would have been impossible at another time of year. Having a personal copy of the books was a major factor in organizing and analyzing the raw data collected in the field once I was back in Canada.

Sharing the preliminary findings began almost immediately to all the offices we had gone for permissions and at a couple of conferences. At this early stage, my understandings were basic. Deeper analysis and more nuanced understandings emerged and evolved over the years between the fieldwork and the final writing of the thesis. I learned that it is important to persevere, to stay with something, and within it, for a long enough period to truly become one with it. I learned about how to achieve deep understanding in one way, through the process I followed. Understanding that emerges from a process of spiraling inward through the stories then spiraling back outward through the stories is qualitatively different and exponentially more meaningful than understanding arrived at from small forays from the superficial to a layer below. Distillation of large stories down to six word stories is another kind of learning I acquired through experience; it is very challenging and requires concerted effort. Finally, through presenting my work to others I learned about the power of images paired with six word stories to evoke emotion, inspire curiosity, inform people, and provide counter-stories.

Part 4 - Limitations.

I will discuss four main limitations to this study: those related to 1. sample selection; those related to 2. my knowledge, skill, and experience level; those related to 3. the scope and depth of the study; and those related to 4. the study's 'Western' or 'Euro-centricity'. Each will be discussed in turn below:

1. Sample selection

The practical side of recruiting participants in an intercultural study mandates reliance on local assistants. In this case, I had assistance from Manco, a female village elder. She was the gateway or intermediary between me and the participants because she has the prerequisite familiarity with the people in her community. Her role was essential; however, questions arise about whether her influence as a respected elder in the community caused selection of certain girls over others. There is a pervasive effort by all in Cambodia to be seen in a favourable light, making it a possibility that only girls with what she considered good attributes were included by the assistant (Mai, 2008; Sochua, 2000; Thon, 2017).

Manco does not read or write. Her adult daughter assisted by writing the list of volunteers in the order of their coming forward, thereby giving yet another person the potential for influencing the selection of girls in the study. However, the social position of this family as respected pillars of the community and the high value for honesty and integrity at play in such sincere followers of Islām make this a remote possibility (Mowlana, 2013; observation during fieldwork).

Since bringing research with all its academic baggage to a village setting for the first time is a novel event, those girls best able to grasp the situation quickly and those able to see potential for benefit to them or their family are more likely to volunteer. Families who highly value education would encourage girls to participate over those who need their daughters to remain in the home supporting family life, business, and/or survival. Those running a business out of their home had less opportunity to attend the recruitment meeting, giving their daughters less chance of being selected due to delays in hearing about it.

Shyness is highly valued in Cambodia (Grace & Eng, 2015; Hutt, 2015; Moore, 2011, 2013) and promoted for girls in particular. Volunteering for a research study demands an ability to come forward and be identified. The sample may be biased for more assertive individuals over those who are the most shy. One participant, Star, presented as preferring solitude to social groups, which is an indication that a range of girls were included.

In a hierarchical culture, children obey parental directives and make decisions based on pleasing their parents (Czmoniewicz-Klippel, 2017). Despite the 'assent' process utilized with all participants under age 15, the influence of parents to have their daughter participate is another source of possible bias for the sample. One day after the recruitment meeting, the village elder assistant declared that 'every family in the village wants their daughter to "study" with me; while there were only 10 places available.

Taking the first to volunteer was the time efficient option; however, it may have made the sample more representative of the 'quick to understand' girls over those with slower cognitive processing. One girl in the study was observed to have learning difficulties which may mitigate this bias to some extent.

The attraction of the \$3 may have influenced the sample selection by placing added pressure on those with higher financial need to be selected. The range of economic status represented in the 10 study participants: as evidenced by size, building materials, and location of home; possession of motorbike over bicycle; number of income generating family members; type of phone (small basic inexpensive versus iPhone); may mitigate this bias to some extent. When I asked the girls attending the final meeting, "what will you do with the money?"

they responded, “I will give it to my mother.” When I asked the mothers, “what will you do with the money?” they replied, “I will use it to buy rice.”

2. My knowledge, skill, and experience level.

The first place my inexperience influences the quality of this study is the fact that I am new to the methodologies of narrative inquiry and autoethnography. A skilled and highly experienced researcher would have more resources to apply to the investigation, and would bring a different level of insight to the analysis of all the data collected. I did my best to compensate for being a novice. I diligently pursued an adequate understanding of the methodologies employed by contacting people directly and by establishing relationships beyond reading what other scholars had written. I read widely on all the core topics and on many peripheral ones, without limiting myself to one area or one profession’s literature. I can measure my commitment to excellence through the extent of my transformative learning and lasting personal changes.

It is a limitation in this investigation, as with all intercultural research, that researchers often require translators, cultural advisors and assistants, due to their lack of proficiency in the local language, and lack of familiarity with local culture. At the time of data collection, I was very new to the Khmer language (vocabulary of approximately 10 words), a novice researcher with a Western and mostly Christian background, with approximately eight weeks of exposure to living in Cambodia and no experience of local village life. I include the stories of the two research assistants both out of respect for their contribution; and as a measure of their participation being pivotal to the study itself. It would not have been possible without them.

The researcher-me performing the data analysis, has more exposure to the culture than I had when data collection took place. I have now lived in Cambodia for many additional months. I have experienced setting up a school library, living in a rice farming village, teaching in a village school, traveling to other regions including Siem Reap where Angkor Wat resides; and I now possess a broader and deeper appreciation for the Khmer language and culture. I have also spent time exploring Islām, the Muslim worldview, and what it means to live that life.

On one hand, a Cambodian Cham insider would probably never engage in the study of daily life of little girls, on the other hand, an outsider is ill-equipped to study those in an unknown culture in an unknown language, in the context of an unknown religion. The advantage is that surprise and wonder are possible when seeing something with 'new eyes'. One major disadvantage is that culture blindness may be present, yet go unnoticed by the researcher. Reflexivity and open disclosure of experiences in the field can begin to mitigate this which made keeping notes, a journal, and reviewing the experience with the trusted confidante and research assistant on a daily basis essential. I engaged fully in all these actions in a sincere effort to be open and transparent.

Further to the limitation of language and culture, a novice researcher may have limited development on the cultural competence continuum (Bennett, 1986). Bennett, widely quoted in studies of intercultural competence, proposes a 'Developmental Model of Cultural Sensitivity' as a linear continuum from 'ethnocentrism' to 'ethno-relativism' with three discrete stages in each:

The developmental continuum moves from *ethnocentrism* to *ethnorelativism*. Earlier stages of the continuum define the

parochial *denial* of difference, the evaluative *defense* against difference, and the universalist position of *minimization* of difference. Later stages define the acceptance of difference, *adaptation* to difference, and the *integration* of difference into one's world view. (p. 179)

However, Bennett's (1986) 'experience of difference' linear path is not only unidirectional, it is based on an entirely individualistic worldview as if intercultural experience, or competence, can be understood, or given its core meaning, as a purely one-sided phenomenon. Bennett's model assumes a Eurocentric interactant and he defines everything from that point of view. Another option, as adumbrated by Miike (2009,) suggests that the key focus should instead be the shared interaction between people engaged in an intercultural encounter; reciprocity and mutual respect would be the defining features. The interaction itself becomes the primary focus, not the interactants. This more 'Asiacentric' worldview (Miike & Chen, 2006; Miike, 2007, 2009) will be discussed further in section 4 on the study's Western or Euro-centricity .

3. Scope and depth of the study.

This study, as a first inquiry to research the daily life of Cham village girls, is preliminary and exploratory. In this case, more questions or *wonders* according to narrative inquiry terminology (Phillion, 1999), are generated than meanings arrived at, and this is to be expected. The placement of the study in this beginning frame of research into the topic acknowledges another limitation. The level of exploration is superficial; it only scratches the surface of a complex and highly nuanced lifestyle or culture. More sensitive topics such as menstrual hygiene management (Daniels, 2016) specifically for girls in this village, and

deeper explorations into the meanings of occupations based on a Muslim worldview remain unresearched.

The superficial exploration depends on my interpretation of what they told me meshed with what I observed. It is an example of Mishler's (1995, p. 2) 'making a telling of the told' type of narrative analysis, as I layer my imposition of meanings onto *their* stories. It was not possible to engage in the desired amount of collaboration due to the limitations of trust, time and translation. The field work period of several weeks did not come close to the months, or even years, that engineering and ensuring high quality collaboration would have required. This study is best described as the first stage of a multiple stage undertaking. In subsequent stages, it would be feasible to acquire local language skills prior to returning to the village. A returning researcher, able to speak Khmer, would begin with an established level of trust and acceptance which would allow deeper and more reciprocal interactions about additional and potentially sensitive topics.

The scope provided by ten participants, ranging in age from 6 to 18 years, is relatively small. The question is: was this number sufficient? The intention was limited to exploring the daily life of girls in a specific village, not to making generalizations or drawing conclusions about village life for Muslim girls in Cambodia. Each participant is equally included in the analysis, along with two research assistants and the researcher. The overall purpose of the study was to sufficiently understand the context in order to support future authentic interaction; and allow application of knowledge and skills in rehabilitation gained outside the culture, outside the country, outside the village. To the extent that subsequent

successful authentic interaction occurred¹⁸⁶, and was facilitated by the learning achieved through this study, its efficacy is demonstrated.

4. *The study's Western or Euro-centrism.*

Designing and conducting this study has made it clear to me that there is a significant difference in worldview between a person who comes from the West, and someone whose formative years have been spent in Asia. The reason it is a limitation rests in the assumptions that are implicit in study design, and the fact that the beliefs, values, attitudes and pre-suppositions I hold are influencing every aspect of the study from data collection to analysis. This means that it is not neutral, there is an implicit bias, as Miike (2003) describes. He addresses non-Asians, asking them to:

reflect on what kind of inherent bias may exist in Eurocentric theoretical origins, how inappropriate Eurocentric data collection and analysis procedures may be to the conditions of doing research in Asia, and even how differently Eurocentric research findings can be interpreted from Asiatic perspectives. (p. 41)

Speaking of Eurocentrism from an Indigenous perspective, Graveline (1998) explains:

Many who are acculturated to the dominant worldview assume that theirs is the most accurate and presumably adaptive worldview in the history of humanity. But Eurocentrism is at best an approximation of reality rather than an accurate image of it. (p. 31)

¹⁸⁶ Based on personal experience collaborating with a teacher who had bilateral below elbow amputations subsequent to an explosion at age seven, see <https://www.facebook.com/pg/anlungkukicomunityschool/about/> for details.

Perhaps this bias is true of all research designed and conducted by scholars educated and enculturated in Canada. It is my choice to be as transparent and reflective as possible as my primary way to mitigate this bias now that I am aware of it. The most significant point, from my perspective, is not that this bias exists; rather it is the fact that it came as a revelation to me. I was initially unaware of it, despite my enriched and enlightened childhood, background, and upbringing. I had formerly experienced nothing but the validation of a Eurocentric worldview as the default starting point for research design, to the extent that I never thought to question it. I never thought to question how it fit with or clashed with the way Cambodian's see the world. All the curiosity, tolerance and inclusivity in the world cannot compensate for being steeped in a culture, both social and academic, that behaves as though it is the *only* one, or at times even the *only right one*. My ethnocentrism is beginning to be transformed and enlightened, yet it is still present, in the moment of writing this. The ideas and implications of differing worldviews and further discussion of how this relates to my study of Cham village girls follows.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section presents a brief synopsis of my findings. The second provides an exploration of an alternative approach to inquiring into an unfamiliar culture offering research options more congruent with cultures that are founded on a relational and interdependence base, not a Western material and independence base. It presents a way to begin an intercultural study from the values and worldview of the destination, as opposed to those of the researcher, as is more typical. The third section explores insights and strategies, gained through completing this inquiry into the daily life of Cham village girls in Cambodia, in answer to question five. Question five is

restated here for clarity:

What meanings related to daily life, and barriers and facilitators of occupation, can be found in these stories and how they inter-relate, to comprise a larger story line that can inform the occupational science/occupational therapy perspective on community development?

Section 1 – brief synopsis of findings.

The stories shared by participants as presented in Chapter 7, answer the first four 'what stories do they tell' questions. Question five requires determining a 'bigger' story line, it seeks to understand both the meanings to participants of their daily life occupations and how potential development practitioners might use this knowledge to intervene effectively.

Question 1 -what stories do Cham village girls tell about their daily life?

Through dialogues and pictures, I collected and co-created stories with the 10 Cham village girls, finding considerable diversity superimposed on the common patterns. When I provided them with crayons, the girls enjoyed using crayons to draw and colour images about their lives, although when given a blank book, most copied pictures from a commercial book or from an older girl's example rather than drawing from their imagination. Stories of similarity were about playing with plastic toys, helping with childcare and housework, contributing to the family income, learning about Islam, and enjoying going to school. While there has never been a female teacher from their village and they have no concept of what becoming a teacher might entail in terms of training and costs, seven of the ten girls aspire to teach young children. The girls try to be seen in a positive light, adorning themselves with hair ornaments and even a pet with jewellery to look good; and through living the values and having the worldview described in the Qur'ān. Stories of diversity included going by airplane to work as a nanny in another country at age 15, riding in a leaky boat back and forth across a river to school, being first for a day, the first day of school being the best day in a 12 year old girl's life, and about wanting crayons. Rose told a powerful story with her actions when she showed courageous curiosity by stroking the skin of my white person hands and arms. Available modes of transportation determine their options and opportunities; for example, if your family has no bicycle or moto, you will walk everywhere and it will take an hour to get to school, and if your mother has a boat that ferries students across the river to the Islamic school, you will attend that school.

Question 2 - What stories does Den tell about his involvement in the research?

Den explained that he was the first person from his village to become a teacher. His first job was in the study village, his school director had him do a door-to-door survey to meet the people. He carried that understanding to the present situation having pity on the girls who had to stop attending school to help with the family business and wanted to find ways to help them realize their goals. Den's involvement with the study helped him to improve his oral English in terms of both pronunciation and vocabulary. He gained new understandings about children and insight into the role that play has in learning, which he could utilize as a teacher, but also as a father. The idea of planning ahead, and the value of having a structure for each step of a project, as well as for the overall project, was new to him. He found this concept very valuable and further, he demonstrated 'thinking with story' when he explained his understanding of the meaning of the *Very Hungry Caterpillar* story we used as a story prompt. He said, "story about people also, same the processing of caterpillar like the processing of children, butterfly mean the future of children, have to change everything."

Question 3 - what stories does Manco tell about her involvement in the research?

Manco's first encounter with me set the stage for everything that followed. It was the first time she had shaken hands with a *barang* (foreigner). Her story about involvement with the research is simply stated, yet her contribution was so indispensable that the study would not have been possible without her. She told me her story of enduring the Pol

Pot years in Khmer; my understanding came from our emotional bond, from her gestures, and from the images created by my readings of Farina So's oral history of Cham women survivors. Manco took a risk by having me stay overnight in her home, as she later explained that if I had died in the night then undue hardship would have come to her. I lived, and the bond we both felt on our first encounter strengthened and led to her wanting to learn English so we could talk. Her story of involvement with the research ends with her asking me to return to work together with her.

Question 4 - what stories do I tell about the research experience?

Nothing prepared me for the experience of conducting the fieldwork data-collection in Cambodia and I had to search long and hard for the information to support my study; this has given me scholarly skills. It was an intense and lengthy process to formulate a credible understanding or meaning-making of all I encountered. The transformative learning I have experienced as a result is a story in itself, with a 'happily ever after' ending that I now prioritize relationality differently than in my earlier life. I have made both life-long friends and long-term relational responsibility commitments through doing this study. My favourite moments include the worst and the best, the 'flowers among the garbage' incident and the 'all hands on my arms' return to the village moment. I have a deep level of satisfaction with the depth and scope of the study, and the person I have become through conducting it. I am more proficient at thinking with stories, and I have a new understanding of story as pedagogy. These are important nuances about my deep and intense encounter with story and what it means in a life, the life of village girls, research assistants, and in my own.

Question 5 - what is a larger storyline that informs practice?

I think an important question is how these meanings might best inform community development initiatives. Meanings of daily life include following the 'stories to live by' scripts as they conform to expectations for Muslim girls developing from toddlers to young women. Playing, going to school, helping at home, contributing to family income, and caring for younger siblings pertain to 'what' must be done, while respect for elders, politeness, submissive comportment, neat and clean appearance, and caring for the disadvantaged pertain to 'how' these things are to be done. Although there are levels of affluence in the village, the poorest face increased occupational barriers from low monetary resources. Most villagers experience low standard living conditions, limited English access, no local study spaces outside of Islam class times, no access to technology, illiterate mothers, fathers absent overnight for fishing, no land for growing food, little or no opportunity to explore and increase creativity, low structure and a lack of leadership to develop spaces for multi-age play based learning. Facilitators of occupation include at least one village elder who desires to make things better, the girls' goals to become teachers, the primary school head who supports academic achievement and girls staying in school, and the Governor of Kampot province's office who wants a positive view of Cham village girls included in school instruction. While most occupational therapy/occupational science projects would employ an occupational justice framework, my proposed way forward would be to start from a culture-centric view of the meanings of these facts and incorporate the stories as pedagogy working collaboratively with villagers to develop a project. Their perceptions about barriers and facilitators may differ from mine, and because it is their village, it is essential to start with

their understandings and to proceed with a model that fits a relational, collectivist, hierarchical and interdependent culture.

Focus on the assistants.

Stories shared by the research assistants tell of welcoming an outsider and collaborating in the task of studying the daily lives of Cham village girls. There is kindness and hospitality, consideration and commitment in a 'liminal' relational space between us (Caine, 2007, p. 104). Their stories also portray them as wanting to learn, and of taking risks, as well as taking advantage of opportunities offered that will help them to improve. Manco explains she wants to learn English to be able to converse freely with me. She, along with the mothers of many of the girls, wants to learn to read and write. Education was not possible for her in the past, and sadly there is no organized adult education accessible to her in the present. I wonder if there could be structure and support found for enabling this to happen by having the older girls, e.g., Rabbit, provide basic adult literacy on a scheduled basis to the village women? Or if the proverb advising people to do as their ancestors have always done would prevent this from happening as there is universal respect for age, and having a younger person in the role of teacher would require a deviation. Fisher-Nguyen (1994) explains that Cambodian people are governed by the wisdom of doing what has always been done before, as in the proverb:

*Phlaur viech kǝm baoh bǝng phlaur trǝng kǝm daoe haong daoe daoy
konlong tǝmray nǝak chǝs bauran.*

Don't reject the crooked road and don't take the straight one; instead, take the road traveled by the ancestors. (p. 97)

Den wants to continue improving his English skills. He tells me and shows me how he utilizes new insights into the power of play in learning, and the usefulness of careful planning, in his roles as a father and as a teacher. His story and my story are bonded together firmly, and we do not have a suitable English word to capture the scope and depth of it. We are concurrently like family, like colleagues, like mentor and mentee in both directions, with mutual high regard and affection. My ongoing story-to-live-by in Cambodia depends on my relationship with Den.

The two assistants were instrumental in allowing me to complete the study, I gained substantially through our opportunity to work together. Now the study is over, I feel a relational responsibility to stay involved with both assistants. I hope for an opportunity to do so in the future while understanding that many factors including the political climate, financial resources, and my health could preclude my return to Cambodia.

Focus on Cham village girls.

The typical childhood occupations of playing with toys and going to school are important for this group of girls. So are looking after their siblings and performing household chores, as well as looking attractive and adorning themselves (e.g., Moon's pearl necklace, Sunflower's hairbow, Rose substituting a more flattering photograph). They share a common dedication to learning, both learning at school and learning the household tasks they will perform throughout their lives. Yet they have untapped individual and collective assets and talents with the potential to serve them in fulfilling their goals and dreams. From my occupational lens view, two ingredients are missing, leadership to bring out the

best in each girl, and a structure within which collaboration could result in benefits and dividends that they do not have at present.

They live the stories-to-live-by that their mothers and sisters have lived before them. As babies they are carried on their older sibling's hips. As toddlers they are taken along to all the daily activities performed by their siblings and parents, no little ones are left un-engaged—everyone participates. As children starting school they are given all the necessary supplies, uniforms, transportation and money for food. They all have a rank in their class, they are told the right answer to every question, they are certain of the expectations for behaviour at home and at school. When they are old enough, usually around age eight, they are responsible for housework and childcare in their home and if needed they eventually stop school in order to contribute to the sustenance and survival of their family. Some will finish high school and go to work in a factory. Most will get married and renew the cycle by having babies of their own. As Muslims, they will be tolerated at best or treated with negative looks and comments from their non-Muslim neighbours and school mates. Some will receive aid or assistance from international donors, some will attend private schools built and funded by international money. What does it take to interrupt this cycle?

What is a larger story-line that is written with a different ending than their present version of 'happily ever after'? What if one girl could be supported by the rest of the group to become a teacher, and she returned to be a village teacher for the rest? What has stopped that from happening so far?

Minimal practice with creative imagining, is as much a barrier to them realizing their dreams of a future different than the lives their mothers and sisters are living now, as poverty of material goods and money. The potential and the

capacity for imagination are there. However, these powerful tools for change, i.e., creativity and imagination, remain dormant without the encouragement, leadership, and structure necessary to develop them. Just like the crayons, that were always just within reach and available for a reasonable cost (1800 Riel is less than 50 cents) in the market, their attributes are ready and waiting to be discovered and used. What is missing is a mirror, someone who sees their potential and can reflect it back to them. They showed me their curiosity when they touched my fingernails, and stroked my hands and arms. They showed me how they care for one another when they helped a friend in need. They have an ethic of sharing that is greater than most I have observed in any of the countries I have travelled to. Their parents want success for them. The elders in their village want a future with opportunities for learning and growth for them. Yet, in spite of all the things working in their favour, still there has not been a girl from this village who became a teacher. I wonder if outsiders were to come to work together with them by starting from a worldview closer to a Cambodian Muslim worldview, what kinds of differences might be created?

Section 2 – Compare and contrast worldviews.

I began with a Western-centric worldview, and it has been transformed through the process of conducting this study. In the ocean of definitions of ‘worldview’, Oxford online dictionary describes it as: “a particular philosophy of life or conception of the world”¹⁸⁷. Many explorers of the concept rely upon religion as their starting point (Naugle, 2002; Sire & Ebooks, 2015). This makes sense given the depth and intransigence of people’s religious views and values.

¹⁸⁷ Oxford online dictionary definition may be found at: https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/world_view.

Ishii, Cook, and Klopff (2003) offer a variation in their religio-cosmological approach that separates Eastern from Western worldviews primarily on the basis of pantheism (Eastern) versus monotheism (Western) (pp. 33-34). This simplifies an otherwise complex task, but remains inadequate and unsuitable in the case of Islām in Cambodia, which is a monotheistic religion in an otherwise Eastern paradigm culture. Naquib al-Attas (2001, p. 2) explains that a Muslim worldview is inclusive of both this world and the next (*al-dunyā* and *al-ākhirah*), a “*vision of reality and truth* that appears before our mind’s eye revealing what existence is all about; for it is the world of existence in its totality that Islām is projecting.” There is no separation between the sacred and the profane, nor between the intellectual and the emotional in Islām; making their worldview unique.

I grew up within a Western Christian worldview; however, this has been stretched and transformed over years of travel and study. I struggle to find a proper label for my worldview, but I am certain of my core values. I hold a fundamental belief that people have a right to determine how they will be portrayed, and to participate in the process of how others from the outside will understand and project meanings about them. The two main targets of projection are the people themselves, and the world at large. This represents the core of the narrative ethical dilemma regarding who has the ownership of the story and who can determine it and disseminate it (Nelson, 2001). Nelson (2001) contends that the damage done by stories imposed from outside, can be repaired by creating counter-stories from within, then disseminating them. I did not fully understand the implications of this at the inception of my research journey; it has only gradually become more obvious through time and given my personal,

intellectual, scholarly, and emotional growth. The collage page of six-word stories and photographs makes a powerful counter story.

Saldaña saw the power in this¹⁸⁸, he suggested something similar to what Michelle Lavoie (see Appendix P) created with large images combined with text, and he favours having an interactive component (2017). Ideas I received from Liebenberg¹⁸⁹ and from Townsend¹⁹⁰ include using the emotional impact from the photos with an informative and interactive element from text. These ideas are more suitable for classrooms and auditoriums or galleries in the minority world, for Cambodia I imagine making culture congruent meaningful learning materials. Children typically get enthusiastic about seeing images of their friends and of themselves, this could be a motivation for learning and practicing expressive English skills.

The imposition of identity from outside in a way that bombards a minority group with negative, often unpleasant, attention is the reality for Muslim girls growing up in Cambodia. The majority Buddhist Khmer population does not see them in a positive light, such that a sojourner is hard pressed to fail to notice the treatment they receive. On a global scale, Muslims are being portrayed negatively in the press, and are stereotyped as terrorists whether they actually live out extremist values or not. It is equally present in the profiling and stereotyping that has become a predominant factor in intercultural encounters around the world. My stories about Cham village girls refute this; despite my

¹⁸⁸ Personal communication via email: Johnny Saldaña, 10/26/17. used with permission.

¹⁸⁹ Personal communication via email: Dr. L. Liebenberg, 10/27/17, used with permission.

¹⁹⁰ Personal communication via email: Dr. E. Townsend, 10/28/17, used with permission.

limitations in presenting them from a perspective outside of their worldview. I would hope for a better way forward, one that promotes peace over war.

Others before me have either imposed their ways on the world, as in colonialism; or grappled with the dilemma of difference. Those who choose to ignore difference, denigrate or refuse to even acknowledge it, risk remaining locked in their ethnocentrism. Miike (2015) differentiates *centricity* from *centrism*, using a three-layer model of culture with inner (mental), middle (behavioural) and outer (material) layers from Ishii's (1997) work. The model is convenient in its simplicity and is similar to other layered models of how to understand culture, such as those proposed by Hofstede, Pedersen & Hofstede (2002), or Schein (2010). Hofstede, Pedersen, & Hofstede, (2002), and Hofstede & Hofstede, (2005) study the differences between world cultures, while Schein (2010) explores variability within corporate cultures. A layered model serves both because it quickly and graphically shows how to organize complexity while supporting diversity between, and variability within, cultures. These references are more accessible than the work of Ishii¹⁹¹ (1997); they are included here to support the use of an onion metaphor, and a layered model of culture. There is general agreement in users of layered models that the innermost layer of the culture onion, the core, is comprised of values or assumptions that are deeply held and not easily changed.

¹⁹¹ I was not able to obtain this reference, three attempts (through the Document Delivery service of Dalhousie University) to access the journal *Dokkyo International Review*, where Ishii's (1997) work was published, were unsuccessful.

Centrism and *centricity* are two different starting points according to Miike, (2015). *Centrism*, Miike (2015) contends, results from using the mental inner layer of one culture to impose meanings onto another culture:

What is problematic in many intercultural studies is that the mental layer of European cultures is frequently used to analyze the behavioural and material layers of non-European cultures, which decontextualizes them and obscures their nexus with the mental layer of non-European cultures. (p. 230)

Centricity, according to Miike, requires understanding the mental layer of another culture by learning *from* it rather than learning *about* it, then using that understanding of the core to make inferences about that culture's behavioural and material layers. Miike (2007, 2009), from a communication studies perspective, argues for an alternative to the classic ubiquitous western way of approaching research, one that he explains and describes as Asiaticity. He names five ways it manifests in the Asian worldview: circularity, relationality, reciprocity, other-centeredness, and harmony (Miike, 2015, p.32). It is his response to the advent of Afrocentricity, a model that grew from realizations that the 'ubuntu' philosophy of 'I am because you are', is profoundly important for many Africans and is how they perceive the world (Lundin & Nelson, 2010).

Western scholars and researchers, and others who employ rigid dichotomous bipolar linear models to differentiate between and explain cultures, have been criticized by those advocating a more inclusive approach. Kim (2002) explains this in detail from a non-western perspective. The alternative to a rigid unidirectional dichotomy for exploring values within cultures is to make room for differences to co-exist. The Hofstede's, father Geert and son Gert Jan, (2005)

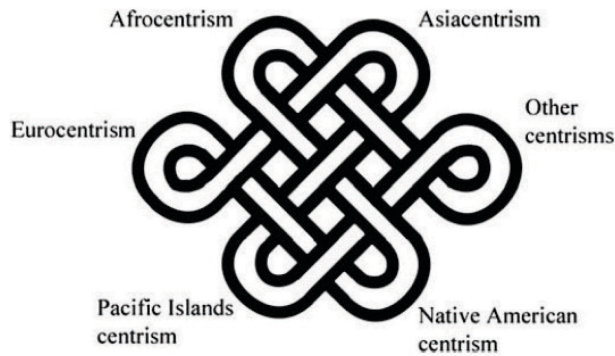
have conceived of, and investigated, values differences between Western and Asian cultures. They conceive bipolar axes of values differences between cultures as an either-or phenomenon; pitting individualism (Western) against interdependence (Asian). The Hofstedes (Hofstede, Pedersen, & Hofstede, 2002; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) base their ideas on mono-cultural identity and mutually exclusive values.

Kim (2002) conceives of ideas about independence versus interdependence differently than the Hofstedes (Hofstede, et al. 2002; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), not as a dichotomy, but as a fusion of co-existing factors that are both necessary for full understanding and sharing of communication and culture between people. Every person has both independence and interdependence attributes, abilities, and needs. Successful navigation of life in the world requires both, although at times, and in certain circumstances, one may predominate. Kim's (2002) ideas are based on research that investigates the ability of modern travelers, sojourners, business people, and academics to become bi-cultural or multi-cultural.

My experiences of living in multiple cultures are resonant with Kim's conceptions and explanations. I see that being a global citizen requires understanding the inner mental layer of other cultures *before* making meanings about them. Use of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space to begin to understand those inner mental layers for Cham village girls has transformed my perceptions. This is a definite progression from my former habit of using my Canadian self as a yardstick for comparison when attempting to make sense of other cultures. The ideas presented by Kuo and Chew (2009) offer an appealing alternative. They use the Chinese knot, a combination of loops with the flow of a

continuous thread, to present their model of 'culture centric' communication and study. (See Figure 5)

Figure 5—Graphic representation of Culture-centric paradigm as a Chinese knot, Kuo and Chew (2009, p. 430).



A Chinese knot as a graphic representation of the culture-centric paradigm.

Their conception takes the rigid linear bipolar dichotomous “either-or” representation of much of Western thinking, and simply bends it and twists it into a knot. This flexible and inclusive model offers an appealing image that is distinctive and different from both the single lines of the Hofstede (2002, 2005), and the circularity feature identified by Miike (2015, p. 32) as one of the five distinguishing elements of his Asiacentricity model. Miike (2015) advocates for “harmony without uniformity” which is aptly demonstrated in the image shown in Figure 5. A Chinese knot is a unity of continuous interconnected and simultaneously present loops, as culture-centricity calls for allowing diverse values and cultural identities to co-exist. A worldview based on this image harmoniously accommodates and includes individuals and groups that simultaneously hold or identify with two or more cultural origins (e.g., bi-cultural or tri-cultural or multi-cultural people). I find this model truly resonant with my transformed '*internalness*'.

How might the concept of occupational justice look from each of the *culture-centric* loops of this knot? That is a research question ready for further inquiries. As my awareness shifts from linear model to circular model to continuous knot model, the realm of the possible—ideas and understandings about human agency, meanings of occupations and rights to access them—also shifts.

Section 3 – Insights and strategies.

The final section will explore possible meaning-making in answer to question five, that seeks a larger story-line as applied to occupational therapy and occupational science development work. The larger story-line includes the way well meaning outsiders arrive with ideas and understandings based on their culture of origin, and with intentions to improve the place they arrive in. The ‘teach a man to fish’ approach does not acknowledge or include all the existing wisdom of people who are already ‘fishing’. The insight I gained is that a better approach was needed, and I actively sought it at the same time I was undergoing transformation from my Western-centric worldview. An alternative starting point for future researchers who are considering study in Cambodia, a culture-centric paradigm, is presented and contrasted with the more typical Eurocentric and the newer Asiatic models. Occupational justice is a predominant way of thinking for development workers educated in occupational therapy and occupational science (Block, 2015; Pollard & Sakellariou, 2017). Gupta (2016) explored the development of this concept by mapping its evolution in the occupational therapy literature. It would be interesting to revisit his critical analysis of what has been published in journals, incorporating other writings published in books, and taking a fresh perspective with a view towards integrating wisdom from different (e.g.,

Asiacentric, Muslim, and culture-centric) worldviews. Just as occupational therapy's grounding in values of independence has been found dissonant in Muslim Arab settings (Al Busaidy & Borthwick, 2012), the foundation of occupational justice in personal agency and individual rights is not the best fit for development work in rural Cambodian Muslim villages.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Summary of contributions.

The first tangible contribution this study makes is that it begins to address an existing gap, in the English language literature, about the daily life of Cham village girls in Cambodia. This extensive holistic collection of information in one place, and my detailed descriptions of the Cambodian context, including many nuances and referenced multi-media resources, will both orient scholars and others who are new to Cambodia, and enrich the scope and depth of knowledge for those who are already familiar with the setting. Students and others who are seeking practical wisdom, phronesis, to inform their actions and decisions in rural intercultural settings may benefit from my experiences, descriptions, reflections, and transformative learning processes.

This study will build on the work of occupational therapist researchers who have investigated Cambodia, such as VanLeit & Crowe, and Czmoniewica-Klippel by adding an Islam-informed perspective, and by proposing utilization of an alternative culture-centric model (Kuo & Chew, 2009). This model addresses the needs of individuals and groups who hold multiple cultural identities simultaneously. It may be a helpful new starting point for re-evaluating and re-thinking the evolving concepts of occupational justice, further to Gupta's (2016) review. Narrative inquirers and others who are looking for practical ways to utilize technology (e.g., iPads) in the field will find descriptions of how it was used to build rapport, administer consent and assent in a foreign language, and to facilitate story-making with young people, in addition to providing a portal for a

distant colleague to participate in a poster presentation half way around the globe.

Implications informing occupational therapy/science practice

Therapists entering Cambodia need to start by establishing relationships, and proceed by deepening their trust and expanding their network of connections. Everything in Cambodia is based on relationships, and for those with an individual/independence focus and for those from a materialistic culture of origin, it will require a quantum leap in order to see and do things the Cambodian way. As I found in my study, making relationships primary in every aspect of one's work as an occupational therapist and/or occupational scientist there leads to higher success and mutual satisfaction. As a researcher, it is the key to learning *from* them rather than just learning about them. An example from the study village illustrates this. The girl with physical disabilities mentioned as the beginning point of my study was given a wheelchair by a well-intentioned person in the past, it is nowhere to be found in the village now. The donor had learned enough about the girl with disabilities to intervene in this way. If they had taken more time, engaged in relationships, and been able to learn *from* both her and her caregivers, the intervention might have looked very different and proven more sustainable. Another donor gave bicycles to 10 girls to keep them in school, they had learned enough about the girls to know that the long distance to the upper secondary school was a barrier to girls completing grade 12. After a year, only two of the ten girls were still in school. If they had taken time, built relationships, been taught by stories the girls told, they could have found a more sustainable intervention with a longer lasting impact.

Learning from stories, as I did from 'the flowers among the garbage', 'the mouse ate my hairbow', 'plastic bags for boat repairs', is a further example of learning *from* village girls instead of learning about them. All therapists entering village settings would achieve greater and deeper understandings by experiencing the stories they are told, by living 'in the shoes' of participants and 'in the midst' of their daily life occupations. Analyzing stories within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space and letting the stories 'work' on one, are two additional and powerful means to multi-perspectival intercultural understandings. When I experienced their first day of school stories, getting school supplies stories, leaving home stories, school rank and achievement stories concurrently with my own, it gave me an alternate life view along with a comparative window into the gap between our worldviews. These beginnings of understanding them from a perspective closer to their worldview than my Western-centric one, was fundamental to gaining a realistic picture of their daily lives. Therapists in intercultural settings, along with those encountering clinical populations that are new and unfamiliar to them, can benefit from using these same techniques.

Initial next steps for sharing the study findings

Initial next steps for sharing the study findings include resuming my in-person relationship with my research assistant Den as a friend and colleague. I will have the six word stories translated, make a poster with photographs and the six word stories in Khmer and English, and offer a copy to the participants and the two research assistants. Depending on advice obtained from Den, I might also present the poster to the permission granting offices.

Advice for researchers going into Cambodia

First, find the best research assistant(s) available and build a trusting relationship. Learn the basics of the language before going into the field. Clarify your own worldview and core values. Recognize there may be multiple layers or variants to the worldview and values of your destination; seek to learn them all. Go slowly, allow spaces of time and repetitions of a pattern of actions to frame your encounters. This builds a sense of security and trust by both sides being able to consistently count on their expectations being met. Do what you are directed to do and what you say you are going to do; people are observing you closely and your actions will determine how you are perceived. There are protocols and expectations for everything in Cambodia especially greetings and asking questions. The more conversant you are with these, the greater will be your acceptance. Key relationships will facilitate your work and there is a strong patronage and hierarchy. Go under the wing of respected individuals so the same attitude will be operant from others towards you. Keep your eyes and ears open, smile a lot, nod a lot, say very little, keep everything simple and concrete and exude caring and positive regard. When you encounter cultural difference in relational situations, try to react in a neutral way with emotions kept internal; this will support their courageous curiosity. Khmer is a poetic language, learn their proverbs and folktales. Keep a personal journal for reflections. Confirm your emerging understandings with your assistants prior to acting on them. Introduce things from outside carefully, seek to learn *from* them rather than to learn about them. Trust your intuition and your gut feelings, and do whatever it takes to maintain personal health and safety.

Future initiatives.

Two aspects that I did not explore sufficiently are how Cambodians in general interact with people with disabilities, and the ways a Cambodian Muslim worldview differs from a Cambodian Buddhist worldview in terms of how they typically understand and approach people with disabilities. A future study of daily lives of Cambodian Muslims with disabilities would shed light on this, and provide a basis for future intervention from an Islām informed point of view. From a personal perspective, my next steps involve gaining Khmer oral and written language skills as I work towards translation of some of the key parts of this study. Learning English is seen by Khmer people of all ages as a gateway to better employment in Cambodia. Young people seek opportunities to learn and practice, even though some of what they learn in school is not relevant contextually. By using a unique version of six-word story based flash cards when I resume teaching English in rural Cambodia, I can combine the power of context relevant learning materials with thinking and memory games. Efforts to support and encourage the creativity, imaginations, and thinking skills of young people in Cambodia are appreciated by both students and teachers, and found enjoyable by participants. This is evident from my volunteer teaching experiences there.

From a researcher perspective, I sincerely hope to return my versions of their stories to the participants and close the loop on what remains unfinished validation and checking with the story contributors for *their* story of them. From a community development perspective, when I am back in Cambodia, I would hope to link with others (e.g., Farina So) who are interested in collaborating to support Muslim village girls to become teachers. From a relational responsibility perspective, I plan to return to Manco and her village and invest some time

exploring what kinds of learning opportunities might be made available for women there who do not read and write. And from the perspective of the heart, there is a young woman with significant physical limitations still living in the house on stilts where I first encountered her. I do not feel hesitation or uncertainty anymore as I consider what might be done to help Manco, and others, who 'want to help her but don't know how'.

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APPENDIX A

Notes

A note on transliteration and spelling

I have used spellings for foreign words and terms as found in the references from which they are quoted. Khmer words and Arabic words appear in italics (e.g. *barang*, *tawhīd*). Some spellings are my own phonetic rendition based on the sounds I heard (e.g., *awcoon* for thank you) since the alternatives (e.g. or-gOOon, Smyth, 1995, p. 215) did not match what I experienced. Some words, e.g. *autoethnography* appear in references spelled with a hyphen. For consistency and uniformity I have chosen to adopt the spelling without a hyphen throughout. Square brackets “[]” have been used where a change has been made in a direct quote to aid the flow of the text for readers, otherwise quotes appear exactly including possible errors in spelling. Because I am straddling two locations during this study, I use [t]here to accentuate my fluid reality in that when I speak of Cambodia it is both from outside it ‘*there*’ and inside it ‘*here*’.

A map of Cambodia

A map of Cambodia from Chandler (2008) is in Appendix I to assist readers with locating places named in the text and their relative positions within the country. I have underlined Kampot, Phnom Penh, and Siem Reap in red.

A note on definitions

Footnotes contain basic information to aid in the flow of the reading; further details are provided in the Glossary. The Glossary contained in: *Folktales from the Gatiloke* (Carrison & Chhean, 1987) has been an excellent source for definitions written from a Cambodian perspective, therefore I have provided entries from it in their entirety. The book has been referenced at the beginning of each of the following entries for clarity, as applicable. Additional factual information pertaining to Cambodia is summarized in Appendix I: Ten Topics on Cambodia.

A note on neologisms

When the English language does not contain a term that adequately describes a concept or ‘knowing’ I experience, I take the opportunity to create a word. This practice is not uncommon in literary traditions, as exemplified by Lewis Carroll (Carroll, Tenniel, Gardner, & Carroll, 1974) in *Alice in Wonderland And Through the Looking Glass*. Two examples of neologisms defined in this glossary are “internalness” and “circulinuum”. In autoethnography, who the researcher is and how they think and experience the world are crucial core concepts. These two, and other, neologisms are offered in the spirit of making my invisible ways of thinking and being more transparent to readers.

A Note on use of First Nations/Indigenous ideas, methods, concepts

I am grateful to the wisdom of the Elders shared with me in personal encounters and in books and scholarly writings (Archibald, 2008; Graveline, 1998; King,

2003; Lewis, 2015; Wilson, 2008). In resonating with their ways of conceptualizing and explaining things, I seek to honour them by using these ways myself, albeit as a white non-indigenous woman. There is respect and honour intended, and on no account do I seek to appropriate anything. I experienced dissonance and felt completely out of sync and out of place during my schooling, and had to work hard at 'fitting in' during my work life. Finding people, scholars and thinkers who were similar to me in their ways of understanding the world has been a significant thing for me. Throughout my encounters with Indigenous research, my explorations into a Muslim worldview, and my reconnections with the holistic 'occupational lens' of occupational therapy and science, indeed throughout this research experience, I have been struck with how fundamentally similar the three (Indigenous, Islām, occupational therapy/science) ways are.

APPENDIX B

Glossary

Autoethnography— A qualitative methodology which combines cultural analysis and interpretation with narrative details (Chang, 2008, p.46).

Awcoon— Khmer word for thank you, អរគុណ ('âu kŭn). See also:

<http://www.omniglot.com/language/phrases/khmer.php> for additional useful phrases shown in Khmer and in English transliteration.

Axiology— The philosophical study of “value(s)”, i.e. of what is important. Axiology studies two kinds of values: ethics and aesthetics. Ethics investigates the concepts of “right” and “good” in individual and social conduct. Aesthetics studies the concepts of “beauty” and “harmony.” (Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axiology>)

This underpins the construction of a worldview or meaning perspective, it is a starting point for actions, beliefs. Wilson (2008) adds: “If knowledge itself is the ultimate end, then any means of obtaining that end may be justified. If reality is fluid and the objective of research is to change and improve this reality, then other ethical principals must be applied. Axiology is thus asking, “What part of this reality is worth finding out about?” and “What is it ethical to do in order to gain this knowledge, and what will this knowledge be used for?” (Wilson, 2008, p. 34)

Barang— Khmer word for ‘foreigner’, see:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barang_\(Khmer_word\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barang_(Khmer_word)) for interesting details about word origin and usage.

Buddhism— *Folktales from the Gatiloke* glossary definition of Buddhism: “The name given to the teachings of Gautama Siddhartha, the Buddha. Buddhism is not a religion in the Western sense but is a moral and ethical way of life. It emphasizes honesty and compassion and rejects the concept of gods and saints. All men and women are considered equal, and there is no caste system or aristocracy.”

“There are two main branches of Buddhism: Theravada (literally, the ancients’ wisdom), the older branch, practiced by the people of Cambodia, Burma, Laos, Sri Lanka, and Thailand; and Mahayana (literally, great vehicle), practiced by people in Japan, China, and other countries. Mahayana Buddhists call the Theravada branch Hinayana, or “small vehicle”, Carrison & Chhean (1987, p.132).

Chbap Srey— Chandler (1984) explains how a set of didactic or normative poems, of which the *Chbap Srey* is but the “women’s” part, strictly controlled Cambodians’ behaviour. “For several centuries they [the codes] celebrated the sociability, politeness, and repetitions of family life.(ibid, p.

271).” The *Chbap* form one genre of Cambodian literature; they were typically orally presented.

Moore (2013) worked with a group of young Khmer women to make a new more ‘woman-friendly’ and empowering version that is presented in her book *New Girl Law*. Not behaving according to the strict code had severe consequences (e.g., ostracism) for women in the past. Despite the ceasing of teaching the full code explicitly in schools in 2007, the influences are still obvious. See Grace & Eng (2015), and Ledgerwood, J. (n.d.)

<http://www.seasite.niu.edu/crossroads/ledgerwood/CambodianLiterature.htm> for more information.

‘Circulinuum’—My neologism for a variant of continuum that is not a line with two distinct end points, but a continuous circle joined to itself. This is closer to one of the ‘*hard to capture and convey*’ ways I typically think of and conceptualize the world as I try to understand and make sense of it. Where a line between two map locations, or a typical dichotomy, shows the parameters of simple thinking in two dimensions (e.g., either black or white, either on or off, the classic “either/or” type of thinking) a circulinuum corresponds to the equator that circumnavigates the earth encompassing all the possible locations along its length and joined in a continuous thread without a distinct end or beginning (e.g., analogous to the Ouroboros¹⁹² snake with tail in mouth, a symbol of “both/and” type of thinking). When I am experiencing a circulinuum, I am aware of all the options, in harmony, both concurrently and consecutively. As I travel along the circulinuum, eventually I end up back at the location of my starting, rather than at some distant different place as with a linear dichotomy.

‘Colonializer’—My neologism that amalgamates the concept of colonizer: being a person who imposes their culture and ways onto a foreign land by taking it over and exploiting it and/or controlling it; with the concept of a ‘womanizer’: being a man who chases after, controls and exploits women with enjoyment and gusto.

Cosmology— Beliefs about the origin of the universe, God or higher power, humankind (Wilson, 2008, p. 34).

Critical reflection— Assessment of the validity of the *presuppositions* of one’s meaning perspectives and examination of their sources and consequences (Mezirow, 2000, p. xvi).

¹⁹² Ancient symbol of the dragon or snake eating its own tail, present in Egyptian, Norse, Chinese mythologies. See: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ouroboros> for a succinct description.

Critical self-reflection— Assessment of the way one has posed problems and of one's own meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 2000, p. xvi).

Den— Pseudonym of Research Assistant 1. He chose this name because it was his childhood nickname, it is typical for young Khmer to be known by a nickname. As Keat (in Keat & Kendall, 2009, p. 17) explains: "But we hardly ever used our formal names. Instead of calling me by my real name, *Bunpah*, everybody used my nickname "Mop" which meant "healthy baby."

Dr. Mav— My contact who studied public health in Japan, owner of a pharmacy in Kampot, and who was also a Medical Officer (government job), and ran a medical practice out of his pharmacy. He used donated funds (from Japan) to build a toilet and a retaining wall in Daun Thok village, and took me to see his project in February, 2013. He was in Germany continuing his studies when I returned to Kampot in December 2013; therefore, he was unavailable to help me locate the village again.

Epistemology— Aristotle names *episteme* as one of five intellectual virtues in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI (Aristotle, Ross, Ross, W., Brown, L., Ebrary, Inc, & MyiLibrary, 2009). The Oxford Online Dictionary offers this definition: "The theory of knowledge, especially with regard to its methods, validity, and scope, and the distinction between justified belief and opinion¹⁹³." According to Wilson (2008), an Indigenous researcher, it is "the study of the nature of thinking or knowing. It involves the theory of how we come to have knowledge, or how we know that we know something. It includes entire systems of thinking or styles of cognitive functioning that are built upon specific ontologies. Epistemology is tied in to ontology, in that what I believe to be "real" is going to impact on the way that I think about that "reality." Choices made about what is "real" will depend upon how your thinking works and how you know the world around you. Epistemology is thus asking, "How do I know what is real?" (Wilson, 2008, p. 33)

Eurocentrism—The Oxford online dictionary¹⁹⁴ defines Eurocentric as: Focusing on European culture or history to the exclusion of a wider view of the world; implicitly regarding European culture as pre-eminent. Blaut (1993) explains: "Eurocentrism is not just a matter of attitudes in the sense of values and prejudices, but rather a matter science, scholarship, informed

¹⁹³ The Oxford online dictionary definition may be found at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/epistemology>

¹⁹⁴The Oxford online dictionary definition may be found at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/Eurocentric>

and expert opinion. Eurocentrism guides what is accepted as “empirical reality,” “true,” or “propositions supported by the ‘facts.’”(p. 9)

Gatiloke—“The Gatiloke (GAH-tee-Low-kah) is a collection of folk stories that is part of the very ancient literary tradition of Cambodia. For hundreds, even thousands of years, these stories were told from generation to generation by word of mouth. It was only in the late nineteenth century that they were written down and published. The stories in [this] book have been translated from this written collection.” Carrison & Chhean (1987, p.11)

“The folktales of the Gatiloke were used by Cambodian Buddhist monks as “speech-teach” sermons - examples of right and wrong, good and bad. The word “Gatiloke” reflects this: *Gati* means “the way,” and *loke* means “the world.” Freely translated, “Gatiloke” means “the right way for the people of the world to live.” (Carrison & Chhean (1987, p. 12)

“The Gatiloke stories are a rich body of oral literature which tells about the daily life, problems, and humor of the Cambodian people—the unique spirit of the nation.” Carrison & Chhean (1987, p.17).

“The stories in [this] book have been selected from the 112 Gatiloke stories written down in the late nineteenth century by Oknha Sotann Preychea Ind, a Buddhist monk who was commissioned by the Cambodian government to collect popular folktales for preservation and publication. The monk’s work is the first and only known written collection of the Gatiloke stories in the Cambodian language, and as far as we know, [this] book contains the first English translation of stories from this collection.” Carrison & Chhean (1987, p.18).

Harpowell Foundation— <http://www.harpowellfoundation.org/dormitory-program/>
“The Harpowell Foundation has two dormitories in Phnom Penh that provide room, board and leadership training for up to 80 young women while they attend university. [Their] in-house curriculum includes critical thinking, analytical writing, debate, civic engagement, current events, computer skills, and English and French lessons. As of Spring 2017, 120 young women have graduated from Harpowell, and are making their mark in Cambodia or in their studies abroad.”¹⁹⁵

Heroine’s Quest—“The heroine’s journey is a continuous cycle of development, growth, and learning” (Murdock, 2013, p. 5). Murdock (ibid, 2013) provides an alternative perspective based on healing and integrating all parts of the self; whereas Joseph Campbell (2000) is known for his work on unravelling the “Hero’s Quest” in mythology and art across the ages from a distinctly ‘male’ (androcentric, Murdock, 2013, p. 13) perspective.

¹⁹⁵ Based on personal visit of March, 2015.

A female perspective would begin with learning to 'value caring and affiliation rather than conquest and domination' (ibid, p. 182).

My 'Heroine's Quest'

'Heroine's Quest' is a working title for my researcher's story, a convenient phrase that can be a short-hand for the big picture overview of my experience. The heroine leaves the familiar, on a quest to learn how to authentically interact with people in a foreign land by finding out the stories their village girls tell her about their daily lives. She, the heroine, stays with them, listens, asks, and records their stories in words and pictures through an interpreter, and guided by one of their elders. She uses technology that is new to her, and never before seen by them. They listen and look together at their stories. She leaves each of them a copy of their personal story in pictures, their own language, and in her language too. She returns to the place she departed from as a transformed traveler, struggling to pin down and understand all she has learned about herself and about those she visited, how she came to learn these things, and determined to figure out what it all means so she can use it in the future to work together with them and to help them. In order to do so she must journey within and learn how to think with 'story'.

Hindsight— Freeman (2010) explains: "The process of looking back over the terrain of the past from the standpoint of the present and either seeing things anew or drawing "connections," as Birkerts had put it, that could not possibly be drawn during the course of ongoing moments but only in retrospect" (Freeman, 2010, p. 3). "Sven Birkerts, in his recent (2008) book *The Art of Time in Memoir*, refers to [it] as the "then" of past experience and the "again" in which experience is revisited at some subsequent point in time. "Memoir," Birkerts writes, "begins not with the event but with the intuition of meaning— with the mysterious fact that life can sometimes step free from the chaos and contingency and become story" (pp. 3– 4).

'Internalness'— My neologism for all the 'knowing' that is inside of me: all my intuition, gut feelings, bones knowing, blood knowing, thoughts, feelings, skills, memories, history, lineage, vulnerabilities, wounds, dreams, aspirations, inspirations – a gestalt of the totality of 'me-ness' or how I am me in the world.

Kampuchea— The Folktales from the Gatiloke glossary definition of *Kampuchea* is: "The Cambodian word for Cambodia. The word "Kampuchea" is derived from "Kambuja", the name of a legendary hero who arrived from the west, married a princess of the land, and founded the Cambodian nation. "Kampuchea" implies "children of Kambuja." (Carrison & Chhean, 1987, p. 133).

Kep— Is a resort town and ocean beach near Kampot, it is pronounced to rhyme with “pipe.” Kep is most famous for its Crab Market. It is a popular destination for Khmer students during school holidays when they go swimming in their complete school uniforms. It is a resort favoured by people living in Phnom Penh as a weekend get-away. Kep is 30 minutes by car from Kampot, yet it takes over an hour to travel to Kep in a tuk-tuk. One of the participants, Rabbit, goes there with her “Children’s Rights’ class on an ‘end of school-year’ excursion.

Khmer Language (*Khmerai*)— Folktales from the Gatiloke glossary definition of Khmer: The name that the people of Cambodia sometimes call themselves and their language. “Khmer” means “the children of Mera.” Mera was the legendary mother of the Cambodians. (Carrison & Chhean, 1987, p. 133)

Locality— This is the ‘place’ dimension of Clandinin’s three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. Simply stated, “Place is where the action occurs, where characters are formed and live out their stories and where cultural and social context play constraining and enabling roles” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 8).

Manco— Pseudonym of Research Assistant 2 (female village elder). She chose the name because throughout our recordings of the stories roosters would be making their calls (this is the Khmer word for rooster).

Meaning in Motion— Bochner & Ellis (2016, p. 218) state: “We depicted evocative autoethnography as a genre of writing designed to put meanings in motion so that readers of social science texts could not only receive but also *feel* the truths of first-person accounts of lived-through experiences.”

Meaning Perspective— The structure of assumptions that constitutes a frame of reference for interpreting the meaning of an experience (Mezirow, 2000, p. xvi).

‘Me-Search’— Nash (2011) describes ‘SPN’: scholarly personal narrative, which when done well according to him “combines scholarship, personal stories, and [*universalizable*] themes and insights in a seamless manner” (ibid, p. 24). In a fuller description, Nash adds: “...SPN writing can take many different forms, even while it retains its own scholarly uniqueness. While it is personal, it is also social. While it is practical, it is also theoretical. While it is reflective, it is also public. While it is local, it is also political. While it narrates, it also proposes. While it is self-revealing, it also evokes self-examination from readers. Whatever its unique shape and style of communicating to readers, an SPN’s central purpose is to make an impact on both writer and reader, on both the individual and the community. Its overall goal, repeated in many different ways in a

wonderful book on personal narrative writing in the academy (Holdstein & Bleich, 2001) is to find ways to incorporate the full body of human experience into more traditional forms of research and scholarship” (Nash, 2011, pp.19-20).

Moslem¹⁹⁶— Glossary entry from The Gatiloke: “A member of a religious group comprising the majority of the people living in the western parts of Asia, the Malay Peninsula, and Indonesia. Their religion is called Islām. Moslems are a minority group in Cambodia and are often the victims of prejudice”, (Carrison & Chhean, 1987, p. 134).

Moto— Generic term for motorized two wheel transport (scooters and motorcycles), the mainstay of getting around in Cambodia. It is typical for whole families (ie., 6 people ride at once including baby in arms of mother sitting side-saddle). The Royal Government of Cambodia implemented a helmet law in 2015, but there is very low compliance.
<http://www.khmertimeskh.com/news/19110/wear-a-helmet--it---s-the-law-and-your-life/>

Narrative Imagination— “Narrative imagination plays a central role in probing and extending real and fictive scenarios of agency” (Brockmeier, 2009, p. 226). He continues, “[w]hat makes narrative such a flexible form and vehicle of imagination is its capacity to tap into multiple frameworks of meaning that draw on both real and fictive scenarios of agency. Narrative imagination seamlessly mingles the factual with the fictitious, the real with the possible; in fact, it fuses the real and possible with the impossible (ibid, p. 227).

Brockmeier further explains: “Narrative imagination, on this account, explores the reach of the symbolic space of a culture by actualizing its meanings as reasons for a particular kind of action, namely, imaginative actions. Imaginative actions can be down-to-earth and realistic, deeply embedded into the business of everyday life; keep in mind that most of our practical actions are enmeshed with acts of imagination. But imaginative actions can also be tentative and playful, fantastic and fanciful. They can be try-outs, thought experiments, airy scenarios of dreamt-about life projects and blueprints of possible lives, ways to fly a kite and to give life to the dead. For narrative construal not only makes sense of new experience but creates itself a new experience, a pathway to the construction of new meanings (Brockmeier, 2005). In other words, we can—informed by Holzkamp¹⁹⁷—understand narrative imagination as

¹⁹⁶ This is the spelling that is used in The Gatiloke, the usual spelling is: Muslim.

¹⁹⁷ Klaus Holzkamp is a German philosopher, his work centres on critical psychology, in this explanation Brockmeier does not specify which of Holzkamp’s works he is drawing on, rather it is Holzkamp’s entire body of work, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klaus_Holzkamp for further details..

a form and practice, both in literary and everyday discourse and thought, that enables the subject to probe his or her “action possibilities” (ibid, p. 227).

Occupational Justice— An idea articulated by Townsend & Wilcock (2004) merging the values of occupational therapy/science with those of social justice. Grounded in Western individualism, and based on the connection between health (well-being) and meaningful engagement in occupations; it proposes that all people have a right to access opportunities that will allow them to achieve self-actualization. Gupta (2016) provides an overview and synopsis of how the concept has evolved in the intervening years.

Occupational Lens— ‘A way of looking at or thinking about human doing’ based on a ‘scoping review of the definitional literature’ conducted by Njelesani, Tang, Jonsson, & Polatajko in 2012 (p. 1).

Occupationography— My neologism for where cultural anthropology and occupational therapy intersect and overlap; the three elements of ‘occupation’, ‘ethnography’, and the meaning-making of storying people’s daily lives through writing come together in synthesis.

Occupationologists— My neologism for: Those who study occupations (occupational scientists, occupational therapy researchers, and those from other disciplines who focus on aspects of occupations as seen through their paradigms and practices).

Occupations— activities people engage in, things people want to do or have to do including but not restricted to self-care, productivity, and leisure; or alternatively the ‘doing, being, becoming, and belonging’ of daily life (Hasselkus, 2006; Wilcock, 2006)

Ontology— The Oxford Online Dictionary defines it as: “The branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of being” and as a “set of concepts and categories in a subject area or domain that shows their properties and the relations between them”.¹⁹⁸ In basic terms it is the study of ‘what things are.

Wilson (2008, p. 33) defines it from his inclusive Indigenous worldview as: “the theory of the nature of existence, or the nature of reality. Is there one “real” world that each of us observes differently through our own senses, or do various worlds exist, depending on the point of view of the observer? There is no way to come to a definite answer to this question, so people develop an ontological set of beliefs and take it on faith from there. Once a set of beliefs is established regarding just what is “real,”

¹⁹⁸ The Oxford online dictionary definition may be found at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/ontology>

research then follows these beliefs in an attempt to discover more about this agreed upon reality. Ontology is thus asking, “What is real?” (see Glossary entry for Epistemology) (Wilson, 2008, p. 33).

Phronesis—is an Aristotelian (350 BCE) concept, introduced in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle et al., 2009) as a ‘truth-attaining rational quality concerned with action in relation to things that are good or bad for human beings’ (p. 105). The Oxford Online Dictionary defines it as: “wisdom personified, practical understanding; wisdom, prudence; sound judgement.”¹⁹⁹

Its usage has been developed in relation to health professions including occupational therapy and nursing. Willows and Swinton (2000, p.14) have described it as wisdom derived from engagement in practice: ‘a way of knowing in which skill and understanding co-operate; a knowing in which experience and critical reflection work in concert; a knowing in which disciplined improvisation, against a backdrop of reflective wisdom, marks the virtuosity of the competent practitioner’ (Willows & Swinton 2000, p. 14, quoting Fowler²⁰⁰ cited by Wesson 1986, p. 60).

Patton (1990) believes that “Phronesis can be considered as ‘soft’ or transformational knowledge that involves spiritual engagement and ‘intuition, wisdom and mystery in contrast to technical control’” (p. 70).

Kemmis (2012) explains that there is a relationship between *praxis* and *phronesis* whereby practical wisdom (*phronesis*) can only be acquired through the active exercise of *praxis*. In his words:

We can only encourage people to submit themselves to the disciplines of individual and collective *praxis*, on the one hand, and, on the other, to submit themselves to the disciplines of reflection and critical self-reflection about what consequences followed when they enacted *praxis*—when they did their best—to bring about the good for each person and the good for humankind through their individual and collective actions (p.159).

Kemmis (2012) continues: I will concede, however, that *phronesis* can be learned (still *indirectly*) from *others’* experiences as they are represented in conversations, in history and biography, in art, in case studies, and in the study of cases and case histories in problem-based approaches to learning. We can learn from such sources that things are not always what they seem, that things do not always turn out for the best, that we must attend to sometimes deceptively insignificant details, and that we often need to adapt our approach in the course of acting under particular kinds of conditions (p. 159).

¹⁹⁹ The Oxford online dictionary definition may be found at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/phronesis>

²⁰⁰ See Fowler (1983).

Reflection— Examination of the justification for one’s beliefs, primarily to guide action and to reassess the efficacy of the strategies and procedures used in problem solving (Mezirow, 2000, p. xvi).

Relational Ethics— the dimensions of doing what is right within the context of relationships (Given, 2008, p. 794).

Relational spaces— Caine (2007, p. 104) defines this as “the spaces in between the researcher and the participants.”

Relationality— Wilson (2008) describes a family epitomizing this as: “They are able to truly demonstrate through their lives the essence of relationality—honouring and treating with respect those we are in relationship with,” (Wilson, 2008, p. 64).

Respect— “Respect is more than just saying please and thank you, and reciprocity is more than giving a gift. According to Cree Elders, showing respect or *kihceyih towin* is a basic law of life. Respect regulates how we treat Mother Earth, the plants, the animals, and our brothers and sisters of all races...Respect means you listen intently to others’ ideas, that you do not insist that your idea prevails. By listening intently you show honour, consider the well being of others and treat others with kindness and courtesy. (Steinhauer, 2001, p. 186)” quoted in Wilson (2008, p. 58).

Reumork— Khmer word for a motorized rickshaw, Tuk Tuk (a Thai word) is the term commonly used to refer to a motorcycle pulling a passenger trailer. During the rainy season, my journey to the rice village included dismounting and pushing the tuk-tuk through the almost knee-deep mud of the road to get us un-stuck.

Sampeah— formal Cambodian greeting, palms together with hand placement determining the level of respect (see: <https://www.visit-angkor.org/blog/2013/02/24/how-to-greet-in-cambodia-the-five-version-of-performing-sampeah/>)

Sanskrit— The Folktales from the Gatiloke glossary definition of Sanskrit is: “Literally, “perfected”; the most ancient language of the scriptures of Hinduism. Sanskrit became a formal court language and was used in this manner by Cambodian kings who identified themselves with the Hindu gods. Like Latin, Sanskrit is no longer used except by some scholars and religious groups” (Carrison & Chhean, 1987, p.134).

Shahāda— The Arabic word for declaration or bearing witness, it is one of the five pillars of Islām. See <http://Islāmiclearningmaterials.com/shahada/> for more information. See also Glossary entry for *Tawhīd*.

Six-Word Memoir—A Six-Word Memoir® is the story of your life—some part of it or all of it—told in exactly six words. (www.sixwordmemoir.com). It is a literary form also known as six-word story said to have originated with

Ernest Hemmingway (McNeill, 2013, p.144; Smith, 2012, Kindle Location 19).

Sleuk Rith Institute— This is the new name adopted by the Documentation Centre of Cambodia (DC-Cam). Their vision: The Sleuk Rith Institute is a bold and ambitious project to reconcile the destructive legacy of the Khmer Rouge with Cambodia’s enduring cultural heritage through a focus on the timeless values of justice, memory, and healing. See their website for more details: <http://www.cambodiasri.org/about>

Story-to-live-by— Clandinin (2013) describes the way people understand how they live, decide what to do, set priorities and form relationships as having a story that they are living within, the life they live is them performing, or following their “*story to live by*”.

Tawḥīd— The Arabic word for “the doctrine of unity in Islām”, Al-Faruqi, & the International Institute of Islāmic Thought (1992, p. xi). This reference provides a detailed explanation of the concept based on verses quoted from the Qur’an. *Al-Tawḥīd* is at once a religious experience, a worldview, and the fundamental core principal underpinning Islām.

In Chapter 1, Al-Faruqi outlines the five principals that this doctrine of unity is founded upon: Duality (i.e., everything is either “God, or non-god”), Ideationality (man has understanding of God through “memory, imagination, observation, reasoning, intuition, apprehension, etc.”), Teleology (i.e., the nature of the “cosmos is purposive, serving an intentional purpose of the Creator”), Capacity of Man and Malleability of Nature (i.e., creation, including man, has the capacity to be transformed), Responsibility and Judgement (i.e., man is charged with transforming himself and creation to conform with the will of God, and will be judged).

Al-Faruqi further explains that each time the *shahāda* is proclaimed, the entirety of the concept of oneness is enacted. According to this doctrine: “these principles are built by God in the very fabric of human nature, constituting the unerring natural religion or natural conscience upon which human acquired knowledge, rests. Naturally, all Islāmic culture is built upon them, and together they form the core of *al tawḥīd*, knowledge, personal and social ethics, esthetics and Muslim life and action throughout history” (ibid, pp. 14-15).

“Traditionally and simply expressed *al tawḥīd* is the conviction and witnessing that “there is no god but God.” This seemingly negative statement, brief to the utmost limits of brevity, carries the greatest and richest meanings in the whole of Islām. Sometimes a whole culture, a whole civilization, or a whole history lies compressed in one sentence. This certainly is the case of the *al kalimah* (pronouncement) or *al shahāda* of Islām. All the diversity, wealth and history, culture and

learning, wisdom and civilization of Islām is compressed in this shortest of sentences – *lā ilāha illā Allah* (There is no god but God.) *Al Tawhīd* is a general view of reality, of truth, of the world, of space and time, of human history and destiny. At its core, stand the five principles” (ibid, pp. 9-10).

Think/thinking with stories (or thinking in ‘story’)— Thinking *with* stories is a way of using *story* as a language in its own right. Archibald (2008) goes a step further and frames it as a pedagogy, i.e., the *story* is a teacher in [I]ndigenous terms. Frank (1995, p. 22), the *wounded healer*, begins his explorations of illness narratives with First Nations wisdom when he quotes Cruickshank: “*You have to learn to think with stories*”³⁷. [this note number 37 is important to Frank’s point so it is also quoted here, see below] He continues: “Not think about stories which would be the usual phrase. But think [*with*] them. To think about a story is to reduce it to content and then analyze that content. Thinking with stories takes the story as already complete, there is no going beyond it. To think with a story is to experience it affecting one’s own life and to find in that effect a certain truth of one’s life. Thus in this book [The Wounded Healer] people’s illness stories are not “data” to support various propositions that I advance. Instead, the stories are the materials that I use to model theorizing—and living—with stories. Frank, (1995, p. 22); Note [Frank’s footnote from above is also quoted as part of the point he is making]³⁷- Julia Cruickshank, participating in the panel “*Learning from Our Elders Stories: Indigenous Women and the Narrative Tradition.*” University of Calgary, March 17, 1994.

Rogers (2016) speaking of her post-Tsunami experience in Thailand further explains: “In thinking *with* stories, I am awakened to a moral call. This moral call, as Morris (2001) describes, is the working of the story on me; a working of a story under my skin which draws attention to the moral fix that brought me back to Kao Lak, and the outcomes from my hearing of stories as a function of me (Coles, 1989). I wondered if I, as Coles (1989) states, the stories that I was *hearing* were shaped by the moral fix of my intentions, in reconstructing the stories of others, so that they could be reconciled with the story I lived by in community development. Thus, the possibility of attending to the thinking *with* stories has begun to widen my *hearing* of experience by paying the closest attention to what I say as it speaks to what is happening to me as I participate in the development of communities (Coles, 1989)²⁰¹.” (Rogers, 2016, p. 52).

Clandinin, Hubert, Steeves, & Li (2011) teach graduate students how to ‘think with stories’ using a process described in detail in Trahar (2011). She explains: “Thinking with stories runs counter to the dominant way of thinking which focuses on thinking about stories as objects rather than

²⁰¹ Rogers is referring to Cole’s (1989) book: *The Call of Stories*.

thinking about stories as living. When we begin to engage in narrative inquiry, we need to be attentive to thinking with stories in multiple ways: toward our stories, toward others' stories, toward all the social, institutional, cultural, familial and linguistic narratives in which we are embedded as well as toward what begins to emerge in the sharing of our lived and told stories. In order to come to understand what it means to think with stories as a narrative inquirer, we need to begin experientially, (p. 34).”

Three-dimensional Narrative Inquiry space— Clandinin (2007, 2013a, 2013b), Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, & Huber (2016) also Clandinin & Connelly (2000), and Connelly & Clandinin, (1990) describe the intersection point of three axes (temporal/personal-social/spatial) as a specific construct that promotes complex and multi-textural understandings when conducting a narrative inquiry. Past-present-future; intra-personal and inter-personal ideas/attributes/interactions; geographic and cultural location (and context) all have profound effects on an individual’s “story-to-live-by” and facilitate full and fair examination of these for both investigators/inquirers and participants. “Narrative space shaped in the meeting of storied lives,” is another description that captures the essence poetically (Clandinin et al., 2011, p. 34).

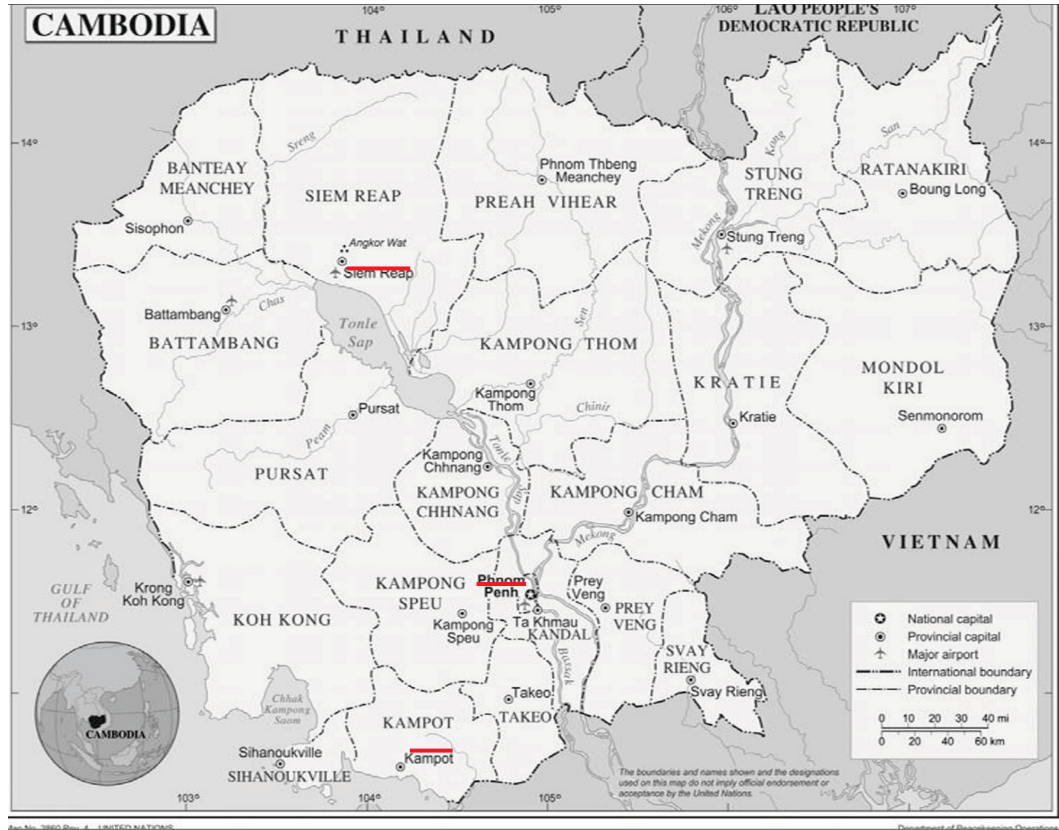
Transformative learning— The process of learning through critical self-reflection, which results in the reformulation of a meaning perspective to allow a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative understanding of one’s experience. Learning includes acting on these insights. (Mezirow, 2000, p. xvi)

Worldview— The way humans look at the world. Sire (2015), speaking from a Christian perspective, purports: “A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being” (p. 141).

Naquib Al-Attas (2001) explains how a Muslim might understand it: “What is meant by 'worldview' according to the perspective of Islām, is then the vision of reality and truth that appears before the mind's eye revealing what existence is all about; for it is the world of experience in its totality that Islām is projecting.” Naquib Al-Attas (2001, p. 2). See also the Glossary entry for *Tawhīd* – for a Muslim there is no separation between this world and the unseen worlds, no divide between cognition and emotion, no distinction between the secular and the sacred- it is all sacred, it is all one.

APPENDIX C

Map of Cambodia



Chandler (2008, p. 11).

APPENDIX D

Stories About Me iPad Application

Help Students Create 'Stories About Me'

BY LIMITED CUE, LLC

➔ **STORIES ABOUT ME** allows users to create their own story using real photos, text and recordings. Created as a source for social stories for use with children with autism, **Stories About Me** can be used by many other children for many different reasons. Want to queue a child's memory of a recent trip? Make a story out of it!

Released in June of 2012, the app can be found in the education category of iTunes. The free version offers the creation and play back of one story. For \$4.99, users can obtain the full version which unlocks all of the stories that may have been created by other **Stories About Me** app owners. The full version also allows unlimited use of the dropbox in which users can share stories with others who have the app and for back up of the stories to the cloud. There is also a parental/teacher lock that can prevent accidental erasing of the stories.

The app was developed by LimitedCue, LLC, an independent application developer founded in 2012 specializing in the design of apps in the special education realm. The company's apps are made for use by students with severe to moderate disabilities as well as their families and educators. The

developer's primary advisor is a special educator with nine years of classroom experience and a master's degree in education, including K-12 special education.

Stories About Me gives users the ability to write about experiences, take/load pictures and easily put it all together. My favorite part about this application is that it is incredibly user friendly. I tried it out and made my own story in less than five minutes.

In schools, therapists, behavioral specialists and special education teachers are always



In a crunch for time and need apps such as this one that make lesson planning quick and effortless while still giving great quality results; **Stories About Me** does all of that. I can hardly wait to try it with a student!

Stories About Me is not currently available for android operating systems. ❌

Reviewer Angella Wood, OTR/L, is a therapist with Davie County Schools in Mocksville, NC.

Rating of Function for Occupational Therapists	Number of Stars out of 5
Ease of Use	*****
Relevance to OT	*****
Frequency of projected use	*****
Potential for upgrade with improvements	***
Usefulness for therapeutic intervention with fine motor skills	****
Usefulness for therapeutic intervention with visual motor skills	*****
Usefulness for therapeutic intervention with handwriting	***
Usefulness as OT evaluation tool	+
Relevance for use with progress monitoring	***

NOTES:

APPENDIX E

Story of Manco



September 10th, 2013

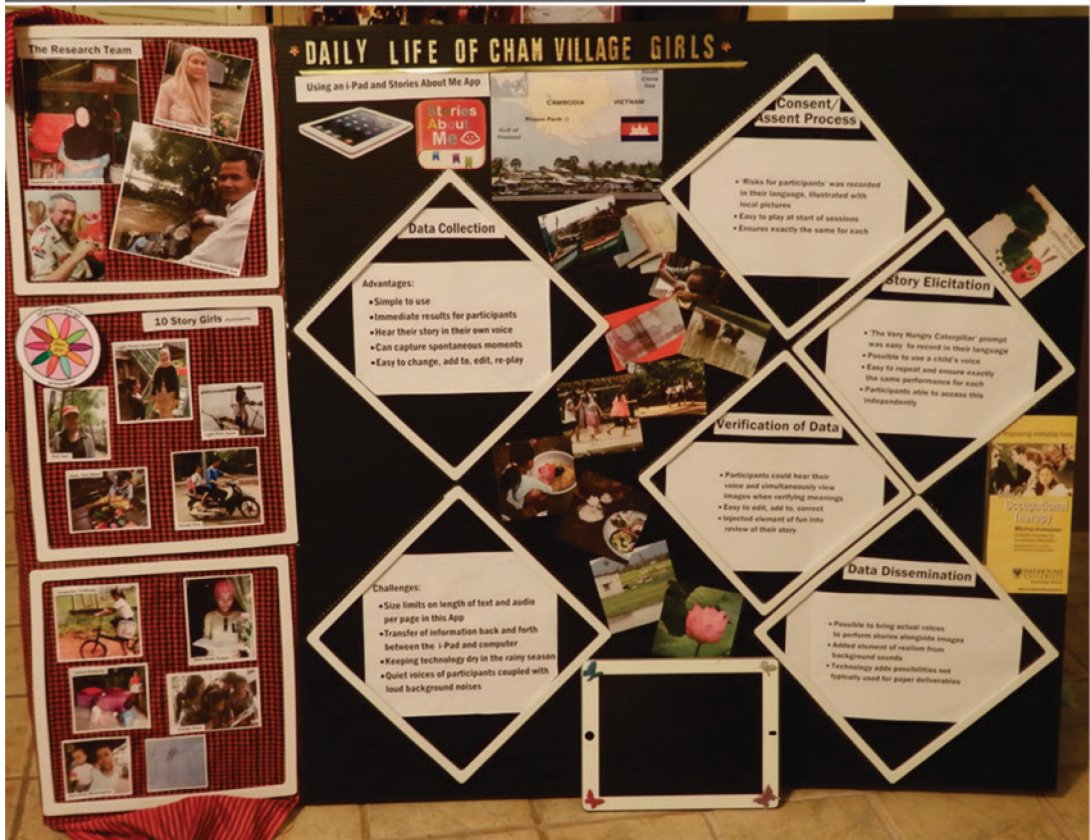
My name is Manco, I am 55 years old. I live in a fishing village at Kampot countryside Cambodia. I live there since 1982. After I married with a Muslim man here. Now I am the elder in my village so I know all the things that people who live in the village do. I know who is rich who is poor who is kind and who is mean. One day I meet a foreign woman. She came to my village with Dr. Mav. And she shake my hand, friendly with smiling to me. And that is the first time that I shake hands with a foreigner. After 7 months she returned to my village and she sleep in my house for 1 night. And that night is very very worry for me. She want to do a research about everyday life of Cham girl. And if she die at my house I will have a big problem. But fortunately in the morning after she get up she smile again and we start work together from now on until Sept. 12, 2013. We have a lot of memory together in that village and I want that she come back again to work with us on other job or subject. I wish that you have very good luck and good health and successful all the job.

APPENDIX F
Final Meeting and Poster Presentation

Final Meeting under Manco's house, fishing village near Kampot, Cambodia,



Poster: Qualitative Health Research Conference, Oct. 2013,



APPENDIX G

Photo Collage of Participants with 6-word stories.

Working in Malaysia, came home cut.



Mom's Noodles: Now I'm a Teacher.



Rich, Poor, Mean, Kind: I know.



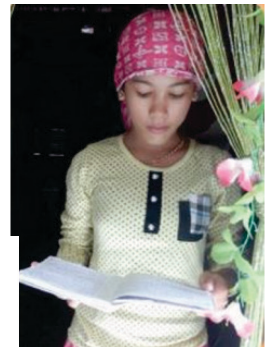
First for one day: lost page.



Boat with holes: mom's school ferry.



Clever girls folktale: rank number one.



Ten years old: teacher in training.

Falling. Up again helping someone else.



Earrings: brilliant sparkle with no safekeeping.



Houses on stilts: flowers among garbage.



Playing now, future teaching little children.

Future translator in a car factory.

My school supplies don't include crayons.



Overnight a mouse ate my hairbow.

APPENDIX H

Mini books

Sari.



Rose.



Sunflower.



Apple.



Butterfly.



Tenflower.



Rabbit.



Morningstar.



Moon.



Star.

រីករាយ
Star's Story

1. 
 ខ្ញុំឈ្មោះ ក្រីន ឆាយ ១១ ឆ្នាំ ។
 My name is Star. I am 11 years old.

2. 
 ខ្ញុំរស់នៅក្នុងភូមិមិត្តភាពនៅជិត ទន្លេ ។
 I live in a fishing village beside a river in Cambodia.

3. 
 នេះជាផ្ទះរបស់ខ្ញុំ ខ្ញុំចូលទៅក្នុងថ្នាក់ រាល់ ថ្ងៃ ។
 This is my house. I am going into grade 4.

4. 
 ប្រុសរបស់ខ្ញុំ កំពុង បើក ម៉ូតូ ចេញ ពី ក្រោម ផ្ទះ របស់ គាត់ ។
 My brother is taking his motor bike out from under our house.

5. 
 ប្រពន្ធក្រីន ប្រើ ម៉ូតូ មក ទៅ ក្នុង មជ្ឈមណ្ឌល រៀន ។
 Every day he gives me a ride to school. It only takes 1 minutes to get there.

6. 
 ម្តាយខ្ញុំ បាន ទិញ គ្រាប់ ម្សៅ មុន ពិធី បុណ្យ រ៉ាម៉ាដាន ។
 My mom bought me these beautiful ear rings just before Ramadan.

7. 
 ម្តាយខ្ញុំ បាន ទិញ ម៉ូដ ថ្មី មក ឲ្យ ខ្ញុំ ។ ខ្ញុំ បាន ប្រើ វា ជាមួយ មិត្ត ភ្ញាក់ ខ្ញុំ ។
 Just like she bought me a brand new school uniform for my first day of school. I was so happy. And I got to be with a lot of new friends.

12. 
 ខ្ញុំ បាន ដាក់ បន្លែ ចូល ក្នុង កញ្ចប់ ហើយ យក ប្រាក់ មក ឲ្យ ម្តាយ ។
 I put the vegetables in bags for the customers, and give the money to my mom.

13. 
 ខ្ញុំ ចូល ទៅ ក្នុង ផ្ទះ ខ្ញុំ ខ្លះ ខ្លះ ។
 I like to be by myself so sometimes I go into my house.

14. 
 ខ្ញុំ ចូល ទៅ លេង ប្លុក លេង របស់ ម្តាយ ខ្ញុំ ។
 I like to play by myself with the toys my mother bought for me.

15. 
 ម្តាយខ្ញុំ បាន ទិញ គ្រឿង គ្រូ បង្រៀន ដល់ កុមារ តូចៗ ។
 Some day I want to be a teacher of little children.

16. 
DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
 Inspiring Minds
 otjocelyncampbell@gmail.com

 Sept. 12, 2013

APPENDIX I

Ten Topics on Cambodia

1. **Size:** The land area of Cambodia is 181,035 km² (69,898 sq mi) just smaller than Syria, just larger than Uruguay; it is bordered by Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, with (disputed) 500 km of coastline on the Gulf of Thailand, the country is bisected by the Mekong River.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Cambodia (see image below: Cambodia superimposed on Canada)
2. **Demographics:** Population (2017) 15,957,223
(http://www.indexmundi.com/cambodia/demographics_profile.html) the median age is 24, with only 20 percent living in urban settings. The capital city is Phnom Penh, with a population of just over 2 million.
<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/cambodia-population/> .
3. **Religion:** The majority (90%) of the population practice Theravada Buddhism²⁰², although according to Carrison & Chheap (1987) it is not a religion but a way of life. Every village or town supports at least one of the country's ubiquitous pagodas (temples). The constitution allows freedom of religion. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Cambodia/Religion>.
4. **Ethnic groups:** The majority (85-90%) ethnic group is Khmer who speak and write in the Khmer language; other ethnic groups include Vietnamese, Thai, Chinese, Hill Tribe, and Cham/Khmer Islam.
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Phnom_Penh/pdf/ethnolinguistic_groups_of_cambodia_poster.pdf
5. **Corruption:** Transparency International ranks Cambodia as 156th out of 178 countries rated, corruption index score: 21, with a trend of slowly getting worse; see the Human Rights Watch 2016 report for details (<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/cambodia>). More than 70% of Cambodians still live on less than \$3 a day
<https://www.adb.org/countries/cambodia/main>.
6. **Bombing:** Between 1965 and 1973 the United States dropped 2,756,943 tons of bombs on Cambodia (more than total bombs dropped in all of WWII).
<http://rabble.ca/toolkit/on-this-day/us-secret-bombing-cambodia>
7. **Pol Pot/Holocaust:** The Democratic Kampuchea regime (The Khmer Rouge) took over the country between 1975 and 1979 resulting in the killing of 2 million people by execution and starvation (see quote below); particularly those with education, wealth, religious or foreign ties; there was a near total destruction of infrastructure, family units, and desecration of religious buildings. <http://www.d.dccam.org/>

²⁰² See pie chart below.

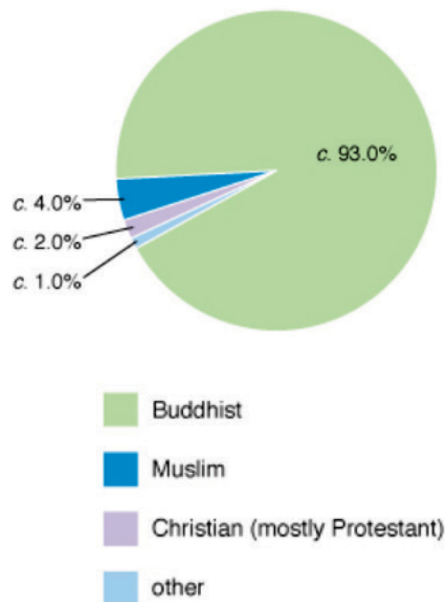
8. **Politics:** The Cambodian People's Party (CPP) forms the present government, the head of state is 'Hun Sen' who has been prime minister since 1985 (age 32) with the monarchy providing largely ceremonial functions. <https://www.cpp.org.kh/> <http://www.tourismcambodia.com/about-cambodia/king.htm>
9. **Tourism:** Angkor Wat (see photo below) is the largest temple complex in the world, hosting millions of visitors every year (the biggest single contributor to Cambodia's US\$ 18 Billion GDP at 28% in 2016). See: <https://knoema.com/atlas/Cambodia/topics/Tourism/Travel-and-Tourism-Total-Contribution-to-GDP/Contribution-of-travel-and-tourism-to-GDP-percent-of-GDP> although very few Cambodians can afford the time or money needed to travel there to see it. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-cambodia-tourism-idUSKBN1930UT>
10. **Food:** Rice accounts for almost two-thirds of the calories consumed, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Cambodia/sub5_2c/entry-2890.html



Cambodia superimposed on Canada (relative size)

<http://overlapmaps.com/index.php>

Religious Affiliation (2009)



<https://www.britannica.com/place/Cambodia/Religion>

Starvation Under the Democratic Kampuchea Regime

By J. Solomon Bashi, Northwestern University School of Law,
DC-Cam Legal Associate Summer 2007

“In reading accounts of survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime, a consistent theme emerges. More than the killings, they discuss the lack of food. “Food was my God” is a common refrain.[1] Survivors talk about how each meal they eat evokes a visceral memory of the hunger they endured 30 years ago. For many, this feeling of hunger encompasses their impression of the Khmer Rouge regime.” [1] See, e.g., Youk Chhang, “How Did I Survive the Khmer Rouge?,” Phnom Penh Post, vol. 14, number 7.

http://www.d.dccam.org/Abouts/Intern/Solomon_Bashi_Starvation.pdf



Cambodia is the only country in the world with a monument on its flag.

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/8>

Angkor Wat, January 2017 (personal photo)



APPENDIX J

Letter of Preliminary Findings²⁰³



របាយការណ៍ដំបូងស្តីពីការស្រាវជ្រាវ
សិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវអំពី ការរស់នៅប្រចាំថ្ងៃរបស់ក្មេងស្រីនៅក្នុងភូមិវិទ្យុស្ត្រីស្នេហា
សកលវិទ្យាល័យ ដាលហាវស៊ី(Dalhousie University)

ជូនចំពោះអ្នកដែលពាក់ព័ន្ធ
លោកស្រី ចលស្ទិន ដីលីន ម៉ាប៊ីល(Mrs. Jocelyn Erlene Campbell)
អាយុ 57ឆ្នាំ ជាធិសិក្សនៃសកលវិទ្យាល័យ ដាលហាវស៊ី(Dalhousie University)
តេឡេផ្នែកចំពោះ:

- លោកលោកស្រី
- 1. លោកមេឃុំក្រើយកោះ
- 2. លោកអភិបាលក្រុងកំពត
- 3. មន្ទីរការងារនិងវិជ្ជាជីវៈ
- 4. មន្ទីរកិច្ចការនារី

ខ្ញុំសូមឆ្លងអំណរគុណយ៉ាងជ្រាលជ្រៅដល់លោក លោកស្រីដែលបានផ្តល់ឱកាសអោយខ្ញុំធ្វើការស្រាវជ្រាវ
នៅក្នុងភូមិជូនគោក សប្តាច់ក្រើយកោះក្រុងកំពតខេត្តកំពត។ ឥឡូវនេះការប្រមូលទិន្នន័យនៃការសិក្សា
ស្រាវជ្រាវរបស់ខ្ញុំចប់រួចរាល់ហើយ។ ការស្រាវជ្រាវរបស់ខ្ញុំនៅក្នុងភូមិមានការជួយ
ព្រមព្រៀងពីស្រីស្ម័គ្រចិត្តម្នាក់ដែលរស់នៅក្នុងភូមិនេះនិងជំនួយការណ៍របស់ខ្ញុំម្នាក់ទៀត។
ក្រុមការងាររបស់ខ្ញុំ និងខ្ញុំបានប្រមូលរឿងរ៉ាវទាំងឡាយដែលទាក់ទងនឹងការរស់នៅប្រចាំថ្ងៃរបស់
ក្មេងស្រីចំនួន 10នាក់។ ក្មេងដែលមានអាយុច្រើនជាងគេនៅក្នុងវគ្គសិក្សានេះមានអាយុ 18ឆ្នាំ
និងក្មេងដែលមានអាយុតិចជាងគេមានអាយុ 6ឆ្នាំ។ ក្មេងចំនួន 7នាក់នៅក្នុងចំណោមក្មេងទាំងនោះ
ចង់ធ្វើជាគ្រូបង្រៀននៅពេលដែលពួកគេធំឡើង។
នៅក្នុងភូមិនេះពុំទាន់មានគ្រូបង្រៀនភេទស្រីនៅឡើយទេ។
ខ្ញុំនឹងត្រលប់ទៅប្រទេសកាណាដាវិញក្នុងពេលឆាប់ៗនេះដើម្បីទៅបញ្ចប់ការសិក្សារបស់ខ្ញុំ។ មួយឆ្នាំទៀត
នៅពេលដែលខ្ញុំត្រលប់មកខេត្តកំពតវិញខ្ញុំនឹងមានសេចក្តីរីករាយយ៉ាងខ្លាំងក្នុងការជួបអ្នកទាំងអស់គ្នាដើម្បី
ពិភាក្សាអំពីសេចក្តីលំអិតនៃការស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ។
ខ្ញុំសូមអរគុណយ៉ាងច្រើនដែលអ្នកបានអនុញ្ញាតិអោយខ្ញុំធ្វើការស្រាវជ្រាវនៅតំបន់នោះ។

ហត្ថលេខា _____ កាលបរិច្ឆេទ _____

²⁰³ English translation appears on the next page below.



DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY

Inspiring Minds

Preliminary report of findings

Study: Daily Life of Cham Village Girls

Dalhousie University

To whom it may concern

Mrs. Jocelyn Erlene Campbell, age 57, occupation of student at Dalhousie University

Respect to:

Dear Sir or Madam

- 1.) Chief of Trey kos Commune
- 2.) Chief of Kampot Town
- 3.) Department of Labour and Vocational Training
- 4.) Department of Women

I am expressing my gratitude for the chance to do my research in Dhontok Village, Trey Kos Commune, Kampot Town, Kampot Province. The data collection portion of my study is now completed. My work in the village was helped by a female village elder and a male research assistant.

My research team and I collected stories of daily life from 10 girls. The oldest was 18, and the youngest was 6. Seven of the girls want to be a teacher when they grow up. There has never been a female teacher from that village.

I will return to Canada now to complete my university degree. In one year, when I return to Kampot, I would be happy to meet with you to discuss the findings in detail. Thank you very much that you let me work in that area.

Signed: _____ date: _____

APPENDIX K

Apple's Transcripts

1. Apple story generation session of August 16th, 2013

Transcription completed: June 8 2015

(J is me, D is Den, A is Apple, T is Tenflower, three dots indicate a pause, sounds and noises are in brackets, *Khmer* indicates a switch to that language, *unintelligible* parts of the recording are noted)

J: we are here again and today's Friday the 16th of August...we have a little girl who's chosen the name of Apple and the colour of light pink...and we will be talking to her and um trying to find some stories with her...and ask her if it's ok if I clip this (microphone)

D: *Khmer* , adult woman voice in background...then...girl voice

J: (:38) there...it's good...we have it...I think it's fine...sooo...Den...here you didn't write the...oh...you did...no...you didn't...you didn't write big letter for *Khmai*(*Khmer language*)...for these 4 thing

D: no I didn't do

J: you can do now? The first...first question I would like her to talk to us about is tell us a little bit about her family and her house so...the people in her house and what the different people do...how old they are...she has brother sister what work mother father do all that...and that ...just to...you know uh begin ok?

D: begins *Khmer* conversation with Apple, (woman voices in background, children voices in background, baby cries,...2:29 rooster) mm (2:47) girl responses, adult woman responses (3:43) {switches to English} she has ah two brother the oldest is older than ah her... so including her...three people in family an ah...*Khmer* (4:12) ok ah her parent was divorced a long time and her mother *Khmer* ah don't married yet ah her brothers don't married yet

J: (4:30) how old are her brothers?

D: *Khmer* (woman answers) ah 25 25 first brother and ah first brother's ah 25 and *Khmer* (woman answers) brother 25 and then a 7 years...*Khmer* (women answer) ah 17

J: 17

D: (5:00) ah..., 25, 17 , and 10

J: and 10

J: great...ok that's good...so ask...(5:15) ask her about bicycles

D: er *Khmer* no bicycles

J: (5:26) no bicycles

D: mm

J: and she's going to school?

D: her her her mother uh her mother work with boat

J: she has a boat

D: a small boat

J: a small boat she takes people from here over to Kampot

D: mm

J: and back

D: mm

J: (5:45) ok

D: ok Khmer conversation with girls and women present, man's voice {switches to English} ah she study at ah...Muslim school

J: mm

D: (6: 25) at *Khmai* Muslim school

J: and where is the school?

D: *Khmer* male/female/ and child voices answer {switches to English} ok um there's a school over there another river side uh

J: on the other side of the river?

D: mm

J: there's a school

D: yes

J: so...I would think her mother takes her in the boat

D: mm

J: (6: 55) to school?

D: *Khmer* girl voice answers {switches to English} uh her mother take her by boat to school

J: (7:05) and do you have to pay for that school? You have to pay money?

D: *Khmer* (girl voice answers) yeah she has *Khmer* yeah she has in ah her house...she has paper

J: no (7:30) you have to pay money to go to that school

D: ahh ahh on shes paper

J: laughs...it's all right

D: *Khmer*...man voice answers, Manco's voice...no pay at school, no payment at school

J: so...how...did...she...get... to go to that school? (8:03) So some girl go other school she go that school. How come?... What... how did she get to be able to go to that school? What?...How?

D: she she always go with with ah her mother boat

J: ok

D: *Khmer* girl voice answer, and woman voice *Khmer*

J: (8:43) ok so (overlapping)

D: she has so many friend from this religion...school and ah some friend they sit eh on ah her mother boat...together

J: (8:58) so um...what grade is she in now ?...she's in grade...what grade?

D: *Khmer* ...one grade

J: she's in uh finish grade 1 go grade 2?

D: (nnya: high pitched squealing sound) mm yeah... finish grade one and start in 2 next year, next month

J: and how many year did she come...go to that school? For how many year already?

D: *Khmer* ... girl's voice answers,...one years

J: (9:31) just one year...so back when they make decision which school

D: sorry

J: ok ...before school

D: mmhm

J: before go school, make decision,...so...choice...which school... this school this school... this school...make choice for...that...school...across river... why?

D: ann

J: (9:56) why choose that...that school?

D: *Khmer*...girl's voice answers (10:14)...oh...uh...ah because that school uh waited her mother also um always uh take uh student from this river in to other side uh

J: ok

D: (10:27) ...so easy

J: it's easy for her to go there...because mother already go...mother work... take student there... (10:38) so before she go school...did she ride boat mother? Every day school...take children...come back with...mother in boat?

D: before

J: before...so before grade one (10:47) so two years ago...was...was there... her day in boat spent with mother...boat...take student school bring student back?

J: just...I'm wo I'm wondering...what was her life before she went to school

D: yeah before her mother do like this or not

J: (11:09) no...mother is doing for I don't know how many year but for the year before she go to school, is it typical for her

D: mm

J: to...stay with mother? ...Go boat?

D: or not,

J: or not...or maybe stay village...but...I don't know

D: yeah yeah I know...(11:27) *Khmer*... girl voice answer ...uh yeah she say she alway ride ah boat with her mother go an' back go an' back...take student during ah she doesn't come to school

J: (12:07) so before school...and now...go school so travel there

D: mm

J: ok so um

D: before school

J: (12:20) so what subjects...what subjects...so what hours of school? What subjects? Teacher man? Teacher woman? All the same background information, but for that different school... and you know what this means....we have to go over and take a picture of that school, right?

D: mm

J: Or maybe not, I don't know yet. If we – I'm not sure what story she wants to tell so ask her...tell her about the 4 themes, and ask her if she has a story or something that she wants to tell...something she wants to tell us

D: *Khmer*...girl voice answers...Uh study with uh lady teacher

J: (13:11) right

D: *Khmer* resumes...Girl voice overlaps ...Manco voice...oh...two two time that she study there um one uh study uh *Khmai* and one...study uh Muslim

J: Arabic?

D: yeah two teacher...in uh one for(J coughs) uh *Khmai* teacher

J: mmhm

D: lady *Khmai* teacher and one for Muslim teacher

J: mmhm

D: study abou ah...culture of Muslim

J: mmhm

D: understand?

J: (14:02) is it man teacher for culture Muslim?

D: *Khmer* Girl voice answers...ok uh lady for also

J: overlaps also lady...ok...in uh in the class of...the...study religion...and culture...what...things...(A coughs)...does she study?...like So what topic? (14:31) You know? ...Like I'm not sure

D: uh

J: but just Koran...or just Arabic...or just ah...I'm not sure... history or...I don't know...Cham people or...in...International Islam or I don't know... so more detail a little bit more detail

D: *Khmer* (coughing) ...girl replies

D: *Khmer*... (16:16)...ohhhh...*Khmer*... Apple and D and Manco talk... hm ok ah half of day she study *Khmer* class and uh half of the afternoon she study Muslim ah from 7to 11 study *Khmai* ... and 1 to 5 uh study ah Muslim... ay ay se describe how..uh Muslim study ...studies... ah she say write...write a letter first like *Khmai* also...but ...I don't know ah what ah Muslim said about ah book that ah she study ...you want to know the book that she study first time?

J: (17:30) Koran

D: Koran...maybe do you want ah just...a letter ah...no Koran...maybe?

J: it's ok um that's background so now we tell themes and we ask for stories about wanting about choices about...daily life...about transformation

D: nn

J: see if we can find story...and also...(18:00) mother say story about boat almost... sinking... so maybe she on boat...then that's a very good story... if she there...for that...for that um... event

D: mm

J: (18: 15) you know...when that happened...so first we say four theme (A coughs)... asking if she's thinking... if she knows a story about that...something wanting...something choices...that she knows from daily life...so it's that first and then after...we try for...boat story...right?...but first this one

D: *Khmer* (A replies)...(19:43)...she says ah want to learn...uh want to learn

J: mmhm...great ...(19:53) learn what

D: *Khmer* (A replies)...uh she want to learn *Khmer* and Muslim

J: (20:02) mmhm ...(20:10)...does she have something she wants to be when or do when she's grown up? Future

D: sorry (overlapping) sorry?

J: (20:16) for future, ...does she have a dream or something she wants...uh...for future...be working or maybe married babies...or ...I don't know but something for future

D: *Khmer* (A replies) um in the future she wants to be a teacher...a *Khmai* teacher

J: (20:56)...a teacher of what age?

D: *Khmer* (A replies)...uh a little girl in ah...5 year...(*Khmer* to her/she replies) yeah

J: (21:14) just little one

D: mm

J: because right now uh what...how old when start school?...So she 10 now, 9 years old start school, right?

D: mm

J: (21:26) last year grade 1?

D: but ah

J: so little girl 5 year old no school

D: maybe here no but in the town...5 years old go to kindergarten

J: I know in...town go kindergarten...but...ask

D: mm

J: (21:42) ask her, kindergarten here?

D: uumm *Khmer* no it isn't at school

J: no...and she want

D: mm

J: for little one,

D: mm

J: (22:00) little girl,...I know, I thought of another question...in her school is girl only together, boy only together? or mixed?

D: Muslim school?

J: boy girl together (overlapping) yeah at her school yeah

D: *Khmer* (A replies, coughs) *Khmer* (A replies) ok like one class have...uh boy and girl... there...but...but ah the seat different...row for boy and uh row for girl

J: (22:52) so one side boy one side girl

D:mm

J: but same classroom

D: same classroom

J: (23:00) ok...right

D: ok?

J: yeah

D: What question, (overlapping) you can ask

J: (23:13) its ok we go wanting we she uh did a bit of wanting so now we do everyday life theme, something...in...uh what does she what things does she do in everyday life?

D: Khmer (A replies) she always uh help her mother like uh at home like wash uh washing plate washing plate and uh

J: washing plate like dishes

D: mmhm...dishes yeah... and uh her doing with the boat and uh the boat always what is this uh (gestures)

J: tie up the boat?

D: and like this (gestures again) ?

J: (24:14) rope for tie boat?

D: mm and then she help for fine out

J: take off the rope put on the rope,ok

D: mm

J: those are great pictures

D: mm something

J: (24:36) yeah that's great...something else? (baby crying)

D: nan a na na aa *Khmer* (A coughs) *Khmer* conversation with A (25:17) uh...afternoon she ah sell cake (*Khmer* conversation with A) ah she sell ah 'da wan' like ah like the fruit ah that you ate before yesterday

J: (25:44) fruit?

D: ah...she sell she sell fruit...she sell fruit ah she walk to the house and she has a basket uh ad put 'dawan' sometimes 'dawan' sometimes uh

J: (26:02) so in this village uh

D: yeah

J: after 5 o'clock

D: ah ah ah

J: come home

D: afternoon, ah...afternoon (overlapping)

J: after finish school

D: yeah

J: (26:11) come back village

D: Khmer (27:18) she always sell uh...fruit, go to one house one hour the day that have free time ah no school

J: (27:30) no school day

D: mm

J: that's what she does when, so Sunday...oh...ask her that, is it Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday? Or only 2 day weekend? Or one day weekend Muslim school?

D: yeah

J: yeah

D: *Khmer* conversation with A (28:17) ah Saturday Sunday holiday

J: so 2 day weekend, but other school, government school only...one day weekend

D: mm

J: so she use Saturday...day she's here and she can work selling with fruit door to door...great...So is the Muslim school the same time? Like October start and finish July? Or different?

D: mmm can ask (*Khmer* conversation with A) same same in *Khmai* school

J: (29:02) so October start

D: yeah

J: and finish uh July, so...August September no school

D: yeah

J: ...awesome...ok...we...don't have...too many more minutes, we have maybe ten more nine more minute to ask her about things so...(29:20) what can we find out from her? Cuz we have good stories so far but maybe we go boat story...so uh ask her if there was a time...that they were going in the boat and had problem boat...like boat almost go down or...maybe bad weather or water in boat or something like that...ask her... kind of adventure story in boat...something happen one day, kay?

D: does she happen in boat

J: (30:00) yeah...only one time uh...maybe cuz mother already...say

D: hm

J: boat almost sink one day...so maybe she on boat...very good story for that one exciting...you know? So ask

D: *Khmer* (rooster) conversation with A ...ah she say ah one time her boat broken (rooster) and then uh they use a plastic for stick it...and the water can not come in

J: (31:11) use a plastic

D: put in a hole

J: ah fix hole in boat

D: boat leaking

J: so boat leaking...water coming in

D: yeah

J: and fix...with plastic...ok great...great ...I like it (rooster)

D: *Khmer*

J: does...does she have any other...any other story that she want to tell us?

D: *Khmer* conversation with A (rooster) no

J: (32:17) no? no other story, nothing really good happen to her? Nothing happy? What happy day from life? Happy exciting day from life? Best thing happen...ask her

D: *Khmer*

J: ten year life, best thing that happen

D: *Khmer* conversation with A (rooster) ah she say happy when go to school first

J: she's happy to go to school

D: go to school the first time

J: first time...first day of school...its good for her

D: the first day of school (rooster)

J: was she a-scared?...Too frightened?

D: no she said happy

J: afraid?...No...not afraid

D: no say happy happy first day of school

J: ok... so thank you *Awcoon Awcoon* (*Khmer word for thank you*) so great after next week we come visit house

D: *Khmer* (rooster)

J: (33:43) maybe...maybe we say Wednesday

D: mm Wednesday ah next week

J: yeah

D: Friday not (rooster)

J: because...we not come Monday village, we work back home, work hard for make stories, get ready then Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday we come next week, so Wednesday we go photos

D: mm

J: and maybe Tuesday we go with uh Rose uniform

D: kay

J: great

D: finish ah

J: so bye bye... *Awcoon*...see you next week

2. Apple session two: story verification of September 4th, 2013

Transcription completed June 1 - 8, 2015

J: ok we are here in Manco's house with Apple it is 5 after 10 and she has finished listening to the 8 points and now we're gonna ask her if she wants to continue with ah working with us in the study (there is a high pitched 'cheep cheep' from baby chicks being kept below the house throughout the tape)

D: ah(asks in Khmer)conversation to 2:02

happening

1:49 J-what's

ask her she said oh I want to stop, but then after I explain (rooster crow) she said oh yeah I want to something more

1:50 D-first ah

1:58-9(overlap, unintelligible)

know, I don't understand, but we have to be clear, if she wants to stop then it finish I erase everything and it's gone

2:00 I don't

D: uhh huh

J:,ok but if she wants to continue then we continue and it's totally her choice, if she choose we do this...and she will finish the story with us

D: uh huh

J: and we'll give her the paper story and whatever, but, but if she stop --then that - we don't do that

D: (*Khmer* to Apple, she replies) (2:44) She doesn't understand.

J: (2:47) ok. Just say to her, ever - she say yes in the beginning, she say yes I want to do, (girl voice and other voices in background with chicken noises) but that yes for that day everyday we work we say 'You wanna work?' and she have the opportunity for volunteer again and change her mind again so this different (rooster) because most of the time people only say yes one time but this study people say yes every time we work so we go we finish something and we say 'do you want continue?'...and they say yes again, if they want, or...they can stop and it their choice...ok so I sorry that it difficult for her understanding but try one more time...just explain this different because we say yes many time but say, ok? (3:37)

D :*Khmer* with girl (4:13) ok now she understand, she said ah she want to continue work

J: ok...so uh I did that, I didn't mean to do that (press wrong button on computer) the title I have for her story is 'Apple's mother's boat' because a lot of...she was the only person with a boat in her family

D: Apple mother boat

J: Apple's mother's boat (4:36) so she can change the title or have different one so that's the one I picked so she can make her own title too,...that's the name of the story, the title

D: *Khmer* ...uhhh...Apple mother boat...*Khmer* with girl (5:18) She doesn't want to change because it is a good for her

J: it's a good for her

D: yeah

J: ok, so now we just look at the picture and we talk a bit about what the story is so so she can make the words in her – in her mind cuz I wrote in English, but she's gonna say her words too...in *Khmai* (shows pictures on iPad)

D: in Khmer to girl, she responds

J: mmhm so

A: *Khmer*

J: this is her school uniform

D: *Khmer*

J: and her mother's boat

J: so her name is Apple she's 10 years old and she lives in a village in Cambodia , a fishing village in Cambodia...and this is my school uniform

D: *Khmer/answers*

J: (6:33) so mother divorced, 2 brothers,

A: *Khmer*

J: they go fishing

D: *Khmer* with A

J: (7:00) my mother has small row boat

A: *Khmer* with D

D: *Khmer* (rooster)

J: (7:20) cuz not a motor boat, not a motor boat

J: (7:28) the boat has holes, so I help by...that's...my job...I mmhm and I also
(7:45 rooster)

J: my mother pushes the plastic bag into the hole she is good at it

J: (8:01) and she takes the students across the river to the Islam private school
and they pay 500 Rial one, one trip

D: *Khmer* with A mmhm continues

J: (8:32)grade 2

D: *Khmer* with A

J: ok, this one's (8:45)

D: continues/overlap

J: this one's... long, we have subjects from 7 to 11 in *Khmer*, and subjects in
Islam from 1 to 5 for (hammering 8:55) and both (A coughs) her teachers were
women and that's ...unusual...she had 2 women teacher this year one *Khmer*

D: mmhm

J: and one Islam both ing both women

D: mmhm

J: for this picture,

J: this classroom at that school but

D: *Khmer*

J: (9:13) she say girls one side boys other side so this this school here but
same

D: um

J: I have no picture for people in that school so I have to use this one...right?
girls one side boys other side

D: but ah how bout ah uniform of

J: it's... it's a small...point, it's a small point I'm sorry because we can't

D: ok

J: it's a small point, it's a small point ok,

D: hello hello hello I have no picture

J: another time another time we can make a picture possible but no because we didn't so this ok

D: ok, ok

J: because girl one side boy other side

D: ok

J: So this ok, idea idea there, from picture

D: ok

J: ok (9:56) explain to her

D: *Khmer* to A, (10:03 A coughs) A answers (10:25 hammering)

J: (10:45) (hammering) mmm

D: (10:47) it's a hard one for her

J: mm Arabic

D: *Khmer* with A (hammering continues) D (*unintelligible*)

J: (11:28) why what she say?

D: (11:29)...because ah she doesn't understand all the things I say,

J: no

D: I say this, and she say that , she say this is that

J: ok we try

D: ok we try

J: Ok we try...anyway what was this one?

D: (11:46) in *Khmer*

J: this...afternoon, not morning

A: *Khmer*

J: afternoon

D: *Khmer* with A

J: (12:29) does her homework on the porch

D: mmhm ... *Khmer*

J: uh huh ok this about school ah school fee and computer upstairs

D: *Khmer* say ah for... also

J: (13:11) but she need money for every day for eat

A: (13:16 coughs)

D: *Khmer*

J: (13:29) mmhm, but upstairs is computer, that different than other school

D: *Khmer* with A ok (unintelligible)

J: (14:10) ok next one

J: oh...this one good, she have Saturday and Sunday off and she do the fruit

A: *Khmer* with D

J: (14:40) ok...no?...ok?

D: (14:48) ok now we go

J: so when people give her money, she put in little plastic bag

D: *Khmer* with A

J: (15:31) and then she goes

J: (15:41) ok?

D: *Khmer* – ok, (15:56) we start

J: we do the recording, the sounds

D: *Khmer* with A and women in background

J: (16:34) Do we need to give her ah some words to help her remember 4 things: "Apple, 10, fishing village, and school uniform" (writes the 4 key words on clip board, tries to get him to use a visual cue, this is not successful)

D:mm *Khmer*

J: (17:04) ok, we try?

D: *Khmer*

A: tries to record on iPad with photos, very disjointed, choppy, then D dictates 'my name is Apple:' (17:32 *Khnyom chom pai pom*) she repeats after him, just one or two word sentences at a time.

J: (17:40) live in fishing village (overlapping)

A tries again...

D: *Khmer*

J: (18:21)so just do the 4 words

D: (18:23) I think just say a 2 time

J: say

D: say 2 thing, my name is and I'm 10 years old just 2 thing

J: I'm Apple and I'm 10 years old (overlapping)

D: so 2 thing then finish

D: (18:30) finish just 2 thing then another 2 thing I live in fishing village
J: ok only thing (18:40) the only problem is
D: (18:39) mmhm
J: then I have to put another page with another picture...because for this App, it not flexible (voices in background)
D: but how she say, now but she...she can not say anything...just say like
J: (18:52)...so try...try say one time
D: yeah
J: just try
D: yes try, try
J: rehearse
J: yes try,...rehearse
D: (19:00) *Khmer*
A: tries, D coaching
J: (overlapping) (19:05)name is Apple,...10 years old, (19:11) fishing village Cambodia (19:15) school uniform
D: *Khmer* with A
J: (19:22) kay, so, she do it
A: (19:26) *pai pom*
D: Khmer, (19:35) A repeats one word at a time (19:57 hammering)
J: (20:06) hmm and this one
D: Khmer, A repeats
J: (20:22)ok practice one more time, say it
D: groans...
J: ok practice one more time, say it
D: awwwww hey *Khmer* hey
J: if not, then we add another page, we do it one more time, we see
A: tries to record again, very disjointed, one word at a time after Den
J: (21:01) yeah try, we do it one more time and we see, if not I add another page shhh shhh shhh shhh
A: Khmer, tries again
D: (21:43) aahhh

D: oh, why why she say Cambodian party?
J: I don't know
D: she say Cambodian party
J: ok it's nothing in the story
D: (21:54) ohhhhh
J: ok we'll make it 2 pages then
D: mmhm
J: I can do it, (21:59)it just makes it wrong
(Girls talking in background)
J: um... so what should we put ? I'm Apple 10 years old in one?
D: (22:12) yeah
J: I live in a fishing village and...this is my school uniform in the other,
D: mmhm
J: (22:18) ok?
D: I think that the village actually you can take the village...you have to check that in the village right so you can take put in another place
A: (coughs)
J: but see...already...this story very long
D: mmhm
J: so already 20 page long so I try not to make so many...but I understand for this one(22:42) because we have too many ideas for one thing...but ok
D: (22:44)I know
J: Yeah so
D :but ah we can not blame her for speaking (22:49)
J: no
D: and ah her story it long also
J: mmhm
D: (22:54) it four four four thing at one time so she not remember all
J: mmhm mmhm yes I understand
J: ok I understand that too but let me do it
D: yeah
J: so the first part is 'My name is Apple, I'm 10 years old'

D: mmhm

J: and the second part is : live in a fishing village in Cambodia, (22:09) and this is my school uniform, 2 things ok? Right (23:15)

(Background noises)

D: *Khmer* (23:29) with Manco, girls in background, laughing

J: (25:15) mmhm...My name is Apple I am 10 years old...right?

D: yeah *Khmer*

A: tries again

D: *Khmer*, she repeats after him, (26:15) continues – repeating over and over (27:27) Ok now she can say what you do?

J: I'm just trying for a visual(27:32) visual support

D: mm

J: just be calm don't get (?)

D: ah now she can say now

J: it's ok I wanna try this strategy anyway this (27:46) picture

Manco and D in *Khmer*

J: (27:54) kay

A: (tries again)

D: *Khmer* – corrects her first sentence (28:15) ah hah ok

A: (tries again)

D: *Khmer* (tells her again, voice raised in volume and pitch)

D: in *Khmer* with Manco

J: (30:02) if it's if it's gonna be too hard for her we'll find a different way...maybe this not good for her that's ok...we find another way...right...if it's too hard it's ok she want to do?

D: asks her in *Khmer*, she answers, repeating after him, he corrects her (30:52) Yes, do again

A: tries again (nam moi la pom)

J: best we're gonna get k (31:34)

D: *Khmer*

J: K so where she live and what she wear, she live and she wear right? (points to hand drawn visual support)

D: *Khmer*, she repeats after him (32:26 hammering) no no nonono

J: should we stop?

D: Khmer, she repeats after (pom moi) na na na

J: (32: 43) mmhm?

D: Khmer, she repeats (32:55)

A: moi moi moi

D: (33:02) uh oh what do you think?

J: what this is what I think, I think we have to find another way because this is this part is too hard for her

D: what way what way? (overlapping) can you say

J: (33:13) maybe that's why she said lets I'm thinking a bit it's ok don't have to get upset

D: yeah

J: we have to do it we find a way that's good for her, maybe she say to somebody 'you do the voice for my story, still my story' but we have someone else do voice--- other girl maybe but see if she would like that see if she would like to have another girl voice but still her story, o k? And then because we want

D: no

J: we want her

D: (overlapping) can thinking maybe we can do like that

J: (33:40) maybe we can do like that

D: ok we can do like that ok

J:so ask her if it's ok with her

D: ok

J: cuz we don't want something too hard for her yeah?

D: (33:50) yeah we can fix it ohh

J: ask her

D: Khmer

A: coughs

D: Khmer

J: it's still her story

D: and A Khmer (34:34) ah she want to speak for herself she don't want

J: she doesn't want someone else to do it

D: yeah she doesn't want someone else

J: ok we'll have to go for

D: mm

J: it'll take us a little bit longer so today we do one part another day we do another part another day we do another part cuz very hard for her

D: (burps) and now what we do (34:50)

J: can we have another girl whisper to her and she can say it?

A: Khmer and girls talking in background

D: but she said she want to speak by herself

J: right (35:03) but another girl say in her ear what to say and then she say it just whisper

D: ok

J: and then help her, help her just help her (35:10) not she do it

D: another girl can hear in the

J: another girl can whisper in her ear ssspssss sspsss ss and then she say it

D: but

J: it help her

D: na

J: and these guys wshht (gestures with broad sweeping arm movement to signify the boys who had been clowning around during this exchange should go out of the room, D tells them to leave)

D: Khmer to A (35:23)

Manco in background

J: (35:45) kay so she's gonna help her, right? Mmk k (Tenflower has been sitting beside Apple, and agrees to help her) so we'll start with the first one: 'My name is Apple'

D: Khmer

J: hello...

D: Khmer ok (36:04) na da da da da da da da da da Khmer

J: (coughs) ok (36:36) (overlapping) so she's gonna whisper and she's gonna do it

D: mm

J: ok

D: Khmer

A: Khmer

J: K (36:51)

T whispers in her ear and A repeats it, D: no no no no (37:06) kids in background throughout muffled microphone on clothing sounds

D: again speak loudly loudly again loudly

J: let them listen they'll get it, plays back on iPad

D: Khmer

A: Khmer (speaks louder)

D:mm

T and A practice recording

D: lu lu Khmer

J: ok (38:17) we leave this one go next one

D: yeah

J: k lives in a fishing village in Cambodia school uniform

D: (38:29) Khmer to girls they practice again, both voices can be heard, A is able to repeat one or two word phrases, makes a very disjointed delivery (39:49)

J: (40:06) ok? Good enough you do one more time?

D: one more time

J: ok one more time and try to make a little bit more smooth

D: Khmer (girls re-tape)

J: (41:23) ok um

J: (41:34) so done now we ok how we need this to go so mom divorced and brothers go fishing k?

D: mmhm

J: at night mom divorced brothers

A: coughs

J: go fishing at night ok

J: brother ages are in there but maybe too much so mom divorced brother go fishing at night alright 2 things

D: Khmer (coughs) continues

J: (42:14) mmhm

A: repeats what T is saying to her (*page 3 of 20 in iPad story*)

J: (42:32) uh huh, good enough?

D: K

J: mm my mom has a small row boat (42:40)

D: *Khmer*: A repeats after (42:45) (page 4 of 20 in iPad story)

J: holes in the boat

A: (coughs)

J: I help by dumping out water (43:08)

D: *Khmer* (A repeats after T) (page 5 of 20 in iPad story)

J: (43:40) I have to tie up the boat too

D: mmhm *Khmer* (page 6 of 20 in iPad story)

J: (43:47) she knows this one...she can say it

A: *Khmer*

D: no no no no *Khmer* (correcting her) (chicken sound)

A: repeats after him and after T

D: (44: 44) *Khmer*

J: chop chop chop chop so try and

D: in *Khmer* gives example of smoother delivery, Apple tries again (45:00)

A: (45:04) OK

J: mm...OK (laughs)

D: ok *Khmer*

J: so this is about how her mom puts a plastic bag into the hole...to fix it (45:16) (page 7 of 20 in iPad story)

D: in *Khmer*

A: (45:35) continues, repeats after T

D: (46:06) *Khmer* (Manco in background)

J: (46:20) hums 4 notes... (46:43) It's not good, it's just not...working I push it and dead ah (*the power to the iPad runs out and it is plugged into the electric so the task can continue*)

D: ah

J: she knows what to eat

A: continues...repeating after T (47:57) (coughs)

J: this for her

J: (overlapping) (48:12) somewhere

D:mm with Apple (48:45) *Khmer* (hammering...)

D: *Khmer*

J: (48:50) it's good fix the holes this is where we're at

D: (49:00) Khmer (says a sentence, T repeats it after him) Khmer oh she want ah she

J: (49:35) she's gonna help her ? k mmhm

T: from this point, Tenflower continues putting the audio into the iPad story with pictures already inserted, Apple remains sitting beside her (*page 7 of 20 in iPad story*)

J: for 500 one trip (50:02)

D: Khmer

T: repeats it and records (*page 8 of 20 in iPad story*)

J: (50:29) grade one last year, this year grade 2 k this my school grade one last year

D: Khmer, (50:42) T repeats it (*page 9 of 20 in iPad story*)

J: (50:57) Khmer in the morning, Islam in the afternoon and 2 women teachers

D:mmhm (51:03) Khmer T repeats it

D: 2 2 ah

J: (51:20) 2 women teacher

D: ah 2 women teacher Khmer (girl coughs) D says the sentence in Khmer, T repeats it then records it into the iPad App (51:50) hammering (*page 10 of 20 in iPad story*)

J: (52:00) girls on one side boys on the other

D: mmhm

J: (52:27) ok

D: Khmer

T: repeats (*page 11 of 20 in iPad story*)

J: (52:52) homework on the porch in front of my house

D: Khmer T repeats it then records it mmhm (53:39 Rooster) (*page 13 of 20 in iPad story*)

T: repeats D and Manco: Khmer (53:58 Dooster) overlapping music from mobile seller's cart

J: sings same tune as seller's cart rooster coughs (54:14 coughs) ok um school fee and computer upstairs

D: right (54:22) rooster hammering Khmer kids voices background

A: coughs

D: Khmer

J: ?sequence?

D: *Khmer*

T: repeats (rooster 54:37) female *Khmer* voice in background
D: pay for school four thousand Riel?

J: 40 thousand

D: (54:49) forty thousand year and

J: upstairs computers...kay? (54:54 rooster)

D: *Khmer*

T: repeats then records (55:19 rooster) (*page 14 of 20 in iPad story*)

J: nyup whatever...it's ok (refers to rooster crow in mid-iPad sentence) no school Saturday Sunday and I (55:31) sell...fruit

D: *Khmer*...T repeats (56:08) then records (*page 15 of 20 in iPad story*)

D: ok ok overlaps recording (56: 15 rooster)

J: (56:18) your 'ok' is on there

D: (56:20) Ahhhh na

J: ahhh

D: I think you get it but

J: if I don't push it then it not done

(56:28 playback of recorded audio on iPad)(*this is page 15 of 20 on i-Pad story*)

J: (56:33) 'ok' you didn't hear it? I heard it it's ok we don't we don't worry about it rooster overlaps Someone buys my fruit I put the money in plastic bag ok (*this is page 16 of 20 on iPad story*)

D: in *Khmer* T repeats then records

J: rooster overlaps (57:09) and give it to my mom you do this one (talking to Apple) I give it to my mom you can do this one (hammering)

D: in *Khmer* then Apple repeats after him and records it (it takes multiple tries, hammering in background) (*page 17 of 20 in iPad story*)

J: (57:58) I like to make things out of balloons this one turned out to be a gourd

D: *Khmer* T repeats and records (hammering)

J: (58:46) kay?

T: repeating and recording (*page 18 of 20 in iPad story*)

(59:01) ?- *Khmer* woman's voice

D: *Khmer* T records

J: (59:24) I like to eat freezies when it comes round cold sweet things good on a hot day kay?

D: Khmer T repeats then records (*page 19 of 20 in iPad story*)

J: (59:53) so could she say this one? someday I want to be teacher of little children?

D: Khmer (hammering)

J: mmhm

A: coughs

D: says it for Apple, she repeats it as he corrects her then she records (*page 20 of 20 on iPad story*)

A: (61:25) (61:47) play it back to listen

J: (61:50) it's good ok yay oh I hit the wrong one... I wish I didn't do that khmm

D: Khmer (girl's voices in background) replay of entire iPad story

D: (63:53) Khmer (overlapping) Manco's voice

(66:02) iPad story ends applause

J: (66:07) so ask her if there anything she wants to change

Coughs

D: Khmer no

J: she ok with that

D: Khmer

J: ask if she want it in English and Khmer

D: (66:30) Khmer just Khmer

J: just Khmer ok that's what she gets

D: Khmer (66:56) ok we go to Tenflower?

J: k so the two of them can listen at the same time to the 8 points, OK?

D: Khmer

J: coughs start of 8 points on iPad

APPENDIX L

Field Notebook (excerpts)

Visits to schools in the area

The school year in Cambodia typically begins in November and ends in June.

Aug. 27/2013 (field notebook transcription)

-get App for photo to iPad

-to market – change \$

-fix watch

-search for cheap hairbows 1000 Reil for 2 barrettes

-go to Secondary school – photo

-go to Wat – see 1

-

-had a book for story in library- use here – can borrow

-director waiting inside – we at locked gate

-then see the speech impaired boy inside through temple & find her waiting

-show permission letter

-any questions for her?

-monthly test – get form

In her office – long table with blue satin skirted table cloth

-one man became Muslim teacher – some at secondary school now – far in Phnom Penh

-go to agency or office but not teaching

-head of school for 20 years

-her thoughts on barriers [opinion and description]

-have Muslim and Khemai student

1. family want to get them married

2. everyday life so hard

3. parents think for girl not necessary more- only primary/sec & can't get work so why get education

What can we do?

- Before – explain to parents but they do not do anything
- Many factory near village

- --want them to go to get \$ for help family

What age go to factory?

At 18 allowed

-girls borrow card from married sister & go younger

-poorest people go to chief of commune- make card or them – cry at office

Many times she call parents best student & good student parent give advice to bads student parent- they say – no listen to me – I tell them go to school they no listen

Girl #1 & #2 in class but at house parent always stop from learning because of everyday life – want \$-- have to stop their children to school (problem)

-1 org give material for girl – bicycle – 10 girl want to help finish gr. 12 – just 2 ...8 stop studying

-help parents work @ home- do crab

2 path to choose

-early to marry and feed baby—husband go fish

-stop study & go to factory—

Enough for them

Need Parent to [join us](#)

BANSOPHAL

092 205811

School Director of Tricos Primary School

Related to Den – my father is her mother’s nephew

Little Mermaid – book is in the school library (Den says it is the origin of the alligator story Tenflower mentioned) It is in both English and Khmer. At the end, the moral of the story is written: Troubles bring us experiences, while the experiences provide us with wisdom.

At the school there are- 15 teachers, 1 Director (Head of School), 1 Secretary (male, also teaches piano) 1 Deputy Director (male)

Grade 1 – 3 classes

Grade 2- 3 classes

Grade 3 – 3 classes

Grade 4 – 2 classes

Grade 5 – 2 classes

Grade 6 – 2 classes

Wednesday September 4th

-to village

-forgot my zippy pouch with the microphone & digital recorder so will do without rather than go back----

7: 50 a.m. Butterfly 8 points

Butterfly

Babysits

8:40 – Rose 8 points

I go to school

by Rose

✓ -changed picture

9:20 – Sunflower and Apple listen to 8 points

-Sunflower –

Title

I go to school

-father &

brother vishing –

-many nights

away

10:05 – Apple

Apple's

Mother's Boat

Had a lot of trouble when recording so Tenflower helped her

Tenflower

Me and My Bike

Khmer only

Rabbit and children's Rights

8 done – 2 to go

Evening – translate

- confidentiality agreement for local transcriber
- correct Sari story
-
- feeling stressed – my flight was wrong – had to change it –
- computer internet out –
- weight of what is yet to be done was pressed upon me
- Alan and cronies yammering on
- went next door to use computer
- Need- map of village (Den drew) {photo of girls/iPad for poster}

Thursday September 5th

7:10 a.m. – copy center

-explaining confidentiality agreement to Boy

-signing and dating all copies

8:10 a.m. – Star – story verification

-just Khmer

Moon – Story of Moon

only Khmer

PM – printshop for certificates and draft letter to Kampot Chief/Commune Chief

Thursday September 5th , note added later that day:

as we enter the village Rabbit on a moto with a passenger is heading out

-thinking of the uncollected stories

-Rabbit's views on marriage

-Sunflower's disabled sister

-teasing and bullying (push slap to the face by Apple)

-sweet drink – (photo)

-the untended graveyard

-the TV – what programs

-the games & toys of village children and adults

-? Local music/musicians ?dance/dancers

-wedding traditions

-funeral traditions

Friday September 6th

7:25 AM—

Heading into our last week

8:20 AM – gave Manco her certificate – &\$

Manco's interview (done by Den in Khmer, recorded and he transcribed and translated to English later)

8:55

Tenflower entry

-forgot to do 8 points iPad so paused and did that ---

Notes from questions I asked Manco:

Den- says he sees similarity between me who she didn't see [*know*] and husband who she didn't see [*know*]

[he continues to translate what she is saying]

-I know who is rich or poor who is mean or kind –

When you came – shook my hand

-girls always happy when they saw you

--learn from you so much

But how much was the \$ [money] & how much was the opportunity?

- meeting – they they don't know why then after when they know always want to meet you & send daughter to study with you – they heard when finish get money

Vacation – can learn get \$ & knowledge & what teach to them

How to learn with you

Parent want to know

What happen after finish study with you

Vacation for girl—

Find \$ buy new clothes & school supplies

So good day for them

Parent want to know how teach to them & what come after

how feel when stay alone overnight

-she never have foreigner to sleep – little happy little worried –her village not comfortable

-dusty

-if [I] die big problem but happy – good time also

Talk about photo she showed me & how honored I feel [Den expresses my feelings]

What possible future for girl? Factory/baby

Other? Want to change? Most girl = teacher?

Maybe answer from girl

-get parent very poor

Hand one-

-expensive for good school

-her son= he finish gr 12 & now want to let go to Thailand study Muslim & English there...wanting that

? her wanting to learn to read

- Doesn't know how to read

-Other women? Morningstar's mother has joined us

Most women can not read

How old? 30 [Morningstar's mother]

women can not read in village (too busy working so no chance)

- Find place for learn centre – learn together there
- - for long time – people come from Ed Kampot Prov – teach for old lady – come then stop –
- She not know why stop

Small group – can change world

One girl vs group

First dtr (Morningstar mom)

2 brothers 3 sister have to stop & go fishing

Khmer not like Cham – what her [Manco's] wisdom?

- not real – by some people not all – she is kind so Khmer contact with her

-some people mean – Morningstar god mother Khmer

(hear hammer pounding)

Hammer= tool build house

Book = tool build understanding

People go

9:30 – baby crying

Story girl important for them – power for studying – when go school show friends

Khmer Chinese

Wonder

A good thing –

Girl own book

APPENDIX M

Reflections

Reflections on Trust, January, 2013

Cambodia, Phnom Penh International Airport January 20, 2013 1:15 pm

Reflection on Trust (research assistant)

Occurs to me while riding along on the back of a moto at hi-way speed that the quality of trust between us – is greatly defined by placing my life in his hands. It is more by necessity than informed consent on my part – I have a helmet but that is scant protection and I know this. I conveniently block the certainty of it though. If we do crash there is nothing at all I can do. Thinking about crashing may precipitate it in some way. Not thinking about it or thinking about Not-it are preferable. Back to trust. Having placed my life in his hands to get from one office or stop to the next, the greater dependency is on his linguistic abilities. He is my voice. I have no way of knowing what he is saying on my behalf. I explained my planned study the best I could and showed him pictures. He has a measure of me from our encounters in his classroom and how I treat him and the students. I am moved to tears in the office of the Department of Women as I attempt to explain in English (simple, slow, English) to the young woman there. What is it? The fear of rejection at this vulnerable and precarious moment in my mind as I fulfill the requests (dictates) of the Chief of Kampot is part of it. The whoosh of neurochemicals from the emotional roller coaster of the day so far – (It is after 4 pm when we are there) takes its toll on me. I sense in the young woman's offer of help the specter of interference and I feel protective towards my work, my study, and my subjects. It was that same mother lion hard-wired protective response that spurred me on to argue with the Chief of Kampot – sitting in his office in front of his desk in my plastic chair. He told me his third requirement was for my results to be shared with school children as part of their education and I passionately argued that it would be possible only if the subjects of the study agreed to it. In my world power rests with the subjects of the study, while in his, power resides at the top of the hierarchy and is sold or doled out in a downward direction. People here are still shot for arguing with that status quo – a fact that dawns on me much later as I reflect on that vignette. The scenario is a bit entertaining, a bit incredible, a bit frightening, and largely educational for me. I am reminded of how essential it is for me as a visitor in this country, of these people, in their culture to respect their ways. I am just unprepared ahead of time for this aspect of the permission gaining process. And in fairness, how could one be? So many lessons I have yet to learn.

Reflections on Relationships (entering the village)

Sept. 28, 2013

I enter the village in August of 2013 wrapped in the assumption that the quality of the relationships I can establish will determine the caliber of the data I am able to collect. Another way to say it is: the story comes from the connection. The stage has been set long before, on a prior visit, even though I am not aware of the importance of this, in that moment. My story to live by begins with wearing a smile and extending my hand. I

can never know, at the time, what the ramifications of my seemingly simple overtures of friendliness might be. That story of the bond between two women only unfolds and reveals itself in the time yet to come. I visit a village; I shake hands with a woman. I am following a script set down in my culture, from childhood; that is so ingrained it has become automatic. I only find out much later that this is a moment of great import for her, she has never in her 55 odd years of life, ever had a handshake from a *barang*/white woman/foreigner offered to her. This brief handclasp really means something to her and it is a pebble in the pool that starts ripples of a deep connection between us, despite the fact we cannot communicate with a common spoken language.

I have been to villages before as a traveler, never as a researcher. Through experiences at every age of my life I have discovered a threshold between being a stranger and belonging. The threshold can be crossed over by sleeping with someone and waking the next day in their presence. I feel safe with people in a new way once we have shared the vulnerability of our sleeping bodies. When we awaken, the veil of strangeness, and being other, is somehow lifted and we can continue our encounter whole person to whole person. I want this intimacy for my first research experience. I know with the deep knowing of my bones and my blood that unless I make this sort of bond with the woman who I will hire as my village assistant, I will not be able to meaningfully enter and share the stories of daily life of girls there. I want to experience the flow of village life first-hand, to live the opening and closing of a day and all that transpires in between. I ask her if I can spend the night, she agrees.

I reflect back on things to make sense of them. I had felt something too during our brief first encounter. Something clicked between us. The doctor who translated her words from Khmer into English had brought me to her village to show me his project: a toilet and a wall. He studied public health in Japan and returned to his country with a modest donation from people there. He chose to invest it in a place known as “the ugliest village” and he introduced me. That day I saw with an outsider’s shocked eyes the dirt and the garbage. I took refuge in the familiar turf of my profession and that secure identity of therapist I know so well. He translated my question: “are there any disabled people living in this village?” She told us yes, and pointed to a woman carrying a baby who led us to a nearby house on stilts. Sitting in the doorway above was a girl of 17 with legs that had never worked, hands that could never move the ways that a hand should, and eyes with a penetrating look of raw longing and despair that burned their mark on my soul. “We want to help her but we do not know how, so we bring her food,” the woman explained and the doctor translated. I felt called to respond from the depths of compassion, but I did not know in that moment how best to do it.

I come from a culture of privilege and plenty where our stories to live by are “all about me”. Ironically that is close to the ‘Stories About Me’ name of the i-Pad App I decide to use in my research. My determination to spend a night in the village at the beginning of my time there I carefully conceptualized as this brave act I was prepared to risk because I wanted to create a certain bond or connection. For my two assistants, however, it was not all about me. More than any other single learning, this one stands out from my time in the village. I was going into this overnight with worries and anxieties about what dread disease I might catch or what deadly insect might bite me. I took precautions against all that perceived risk. The woman was taking a risk too, and I only began to understand it later when she explained that she was terrified I might die in the night, in

her village. This would create so much unimaginable difficulty and hardship in her life. I hadn't even thought of it from her perspective, in my blind way I just assumed that what was necessary for me would be accommodated by all those around me: humbling moment, this startling wake-up call to the real world. She described that her village was not "comfortable" for foreigners, because they had no "sheets", no western toilet. No foreign person had ever come and requested to stay there before, the neighbours told her she was very brave to consider letting one stay over with her. And yet, everything that followed hinged on that intense opening act. The meaning might have been different, but our responses were the same. We both thought it over and took the risk.

The male research assistant, my partner who made the research possible in the first place, had another perspective on it altogether. Having been engaged as my translator, transporter, logistics master, and cultural advisor he felt a burden of obligation to protect me. He did not want to leave me alone in the village overnight, knowing I could not communicate at all in Khmer. He informed the woman he wanted to sleep in a hammock under the house. I really did not understand all the nuances at the time, but his wife put a stop to that idea. She told him to give us his phone number so he could be contacted in the night if needed, but he was to sleep at home. Discussions with friends revealed later that there is a very close control maintained by women over their husbands in Cambodia, coupled with an ever-present fear of losing them.

The issue of trust and that feeling of having placed my life in his hands inserted itself between Den (his chosen pseudonym) and I months earlier. It came to a head on our three day whirlwind tour of official offices to obtain the formal permission I needed in order to have access to do research in the village. I can relive the moment in vivid technicolour, hugging the back of his motorcycle with my legs, in a helmet and tank top, going highway speed, dodging puddles and traffic, knowing with certainty that a crash and deadly skin scraping injury were but a flicker away. I slowly forced my focus away from mishap and instead visualized a cocoon of safety spun securely around us, it took all my attention to hold that image. I live by the maxim that energy follows attention and in my terror I chose to invest my attention in a vision of safety. We subsequently navigated all the travel during the study, through the soupy red slippery mud of pot hole riddled roads, through the traffic, the dust, the bumps, barbed wire inches away at times, we did it all safely. What began as two strangers sizing each other up, continued to deepen and strengthen over our five weeks of working closely together.

For me, it was so much more than a boss to employee relationship. I chuckle when I receive his emails now with the appellation 'boss'. I understand more of what that means now, him choosing to call me boss. And I am deeply aware that buried within those layers of understanding, the concrete fact becomes a safe refuge for us. There is a level of intimacy that is not duplicated elsewhere in my life. He did not specifically speak of it from his perspective when I asked, but knowing what I do of his life and the typical working conditions in Cambodia, he does not have a similar relationship with another either. Although we are of different ages and genders, we are open to each other and can learn, touch, taste, and experience things that are novel and even risky. He invites me to share Chinese Ancestor celebration, great aunt's Buddhist funeral and cremation, nephew's second birthday party, visiting niece in hospital with a concussion, and we share family outings to the beach and to the temple. He comes to my 38th anniversary party, my home where we work together is offered as his second home. Despite that

invitation, he continues to request permission to use the bathroom or to have a drink of something. It takes a lot to begin to feel at ease in another's life and world.

I notice how my response to arriving in the village in the morning, and their reception of that arrival, changes over time. The indifference and awkwardness of our first few days of going there is gradually replaced with a sense of eager anticipation on my part and a joyful reception on theirs. One of my most treasured moments is walking back from a photo shoot completely surrounded by children who all want to hold my hand so have covered both my arms with their hands instead, and we move as one down the narrow path laughing and enjoying the bliss of connection. Those hands started with such tentative gestures, a stroking of my finger nail or toe nail as we sat on a floor mat making someone else's story. They progressed to touching and stroking my freckled arms. I know they grew bolder over time, I did not pull away from their touch nor did it ever occur to me to do so. This very small act of acceptance of their intrusion into my space, my person, my world gave our story exchanges some measure of reciprocity. They were sharing stories of their daily life with me, I was sharing the feel of a white person's skin with them.

Sharing of space and time has a different rhythm in the village. Different altogether than what I know of from a lifetime as 'typical Canadian'. I notice gradually as I stay there alone for the hours of the day, forced to listen with my eyes (Kayser, 2007) more than my ears as I cannot speak their language. People come, they stay for a while, other people come, some may leave, some return again. There is no sense of rush or urgency. There is a gentle flow of moving, working, sharing, playing, taking care of necessities, taking care of each other. My decision to fit our story sessions into this natural rhythm rather than trying to demand the privacy and exclusive access dictated by research norms is founded on this. During our sessions with the girls, others are there beside us watching and talking in the background. They are no more intrusive than the cheeping of chicks under the house or the crowing rooster or the hammers and power tools of men fixing fishing boats outside. Den tries to shoo them away sometimes, annoyed by their child chatter and their little bodies leaning on us and the girl we are focused on. I am amused by his reaction, I accept their presence and their overtures, their leaning against me and stroking my arms and fingernails. A few times I *shhh* them, gesturing to them to go outside if they want to talk. A few times I burn with curiosity to know what the editorial comments from the gallery of women might be, these are on the recordings but we have no time to explore them. Our number one priority and reason for being there is the stories of the girls.

Ten girls and ten stories. At first we are uncertain if we will even have one volunteer. The morning we arrive Manco (her chosen pseudonym which is the Khmer word for rooster) tries to round up some villagers for the meeting. She says they want to know "what will we get if we come?" They are accustomed to receiving something, she explains, like the toothbrushes they got at the Mosque the other day. She advises us to give them bottles of water. A group gathers under her house. There are plastic chairs for some, a wooden bench, some stand in the background, some are on the hammocks, some children are sitting on the ground. We begin. Den explains about who I am and what being a participant in the study will entail. I feel uncomfortable and exposed. We

demonstrate with the Hungry Caterpillar story, they look at the cardboard book as the iPad speaks the story in Khmer in the voice of a little girl. They join in on the repeated phrase “but he was still hungry” and they crowd in closer and closer as the story continues. At the end they clap and everyone, adults included, is smiling. We continue the explanation then Den goes and buys 19 bottles of water which we hand out. A large number of those bottles go to children, they are the majority at the meeting. We ask if anyone would like to volunteer, and explain they can let Manco know later if they want to think it over. When we ask if there are any questions, the only question is “can we hear the story of the caterpillar again?” So we repeat the story. Three people volunteer on the spot and we arrange to start sessions with them the next day.

Manco’s adult daughter makes a list that night of village girls who have volunteered, their names and ages. There are thirteen names. The next morning when Den arrives, the three of us discuss how we will select the ten for the study, I decide we will do it by drawing names. The three initial volunteers will be included, the rest will be drawn from the list. Manco tells us that now everyone in the village wants their daughter to be in the study, her words are: “to study with you”. She asks us “what about the rest of the girls in the village?” I wonder if it is because of the three dollars they will receive, the money being a significant incentive, but in the moment to avoid a possible uprising I promise that I will return in one year. Other girls can have a chance then. We only have room for ten girls at this time. The villagers are apparently satisfied with having a future opportunity and the possible unrest is eased.

The first volunteer is 18 years old. She sleeps at Manco’s house with us and in the morning when Den arrives we start with the consent. I feel validated that the Hungry Caterpillar is proving to be such a good choice. Food and eating are central to this culture where the typical morning greeting is “have you eaten rice yet?” I am somewhat relieved that our first girl is a little older, maybe it will be a little easier. I am thoroughly excited that we are now actually doing the thing that has been prepared for and worked up to for so long. Mostly I have a sense of being propelled by the momentum of the study. It seems to have a life of its own as if it really wants to be done, that these stories want to be told. Sari (her chosen pseudonym) selects the colour red from the assortment of felt squares presented to her. I need the colour code to keep each story and each girl straight as we go. I am hopeful that this strategy will prove to be both practical and powerful. One of the four themes we try to focus on is ‘choices’ and this is very fitting that each girl begins her participation by making a choice of a colour to represent her and a name to identify her.

Sari tells us about leaving Cambodia at age 15 to work as a domestic in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia.

Reflections about the Research, December 2013

Reflections and musings following watching Hunger Games II— December 10th, 2013 (Barry’s birthday, my late younger brother)

A Prelude

The Hunger Games transports me to a dystopic world full of strange, captivating yet disturbing images and people. I leave the movie thinking about the puzzle of my research that asks how can I work authentically with people on the other side of the world who I do not share a language or culture with. I reflect on how whenever I am surrounded by the strange and the exotic, I seek something familiar. It becomes an anchor, a hook, a refuge, an oasis. I use my internal measuring stick to compare it to what I already know, it is how I begin to make sense of it. I escaped into the world of books as a child and I still do it as an adult. I live the book, the characters are as real to me as flesh and blood. A book is equivalent to a movie is equivalent to a life for me. My father read me countless stories from books as a child, but my mother is blind so she *told* me countless stories. I am a visual thinker, most comfortable in the holistic world of the big picture. As she spoke the words, my imagination was free to illustrate them and in this way story became the language I best understand the world by. Story does not equate with make believe, it is the real to me.

Immersed in the strange, I seek the familiar. The familiar can be very elusive however. What seems to be something I know, can in fact turn out to be something strange and unknown. In Cambodia they have a story of the Tortoise and the Hare. When I heard they had that story, I was surprised and happy. A piece of the familiar! I made the incorrect assumption that because their story and the Aesop's fable I know so well, the one with the moral: "slow and steady wins the race" have the same title, that the story I know is the same story they have. It is not. And it is because of this attractive seduction of the familiar, that I so easily fall into the trap of making these assumptions and not inquiring to find out more about it. I only find out that the two stories are different, and precisely how they differ, by chance and design and much later. It only happens when I look up their version of the Hare and the Tortoise in a collection of Cambodian folk tales on the internet, and read it. How is this any different than if a village girl tells me... "I help with the laundry" or "I do the cleaning" , or "the cooking"? I hear a word or words with a common familiar meaning, it is understandable that I might fall into the trap of assuming their story of doing these things is the duplicate of what I already know.

It is a paradox. On the one hand as I engage in my research in Cambodia I am intentionally immersed in the unfamiliar, yet seeking a piece of familiarity to enable me to have a starting point for understanding. I seek a common ground that will serve to begin a connection, one that I hope will be enough to build relationships on. On the other hand, the minute I hook onto a piece of seeming familiarity, I have lost the detective stance of curious observer that I, as researcher, would most like to maintain. To move past the superficial I must circle and spiral inward and downward through layers. I must learn to be apprehended by the obvious and encounter each thing with the awe and wonder of seeing it as if for the very first time. This is very challenging. When I miss the opportunity to do this "first-seeing" I must systematically return to re-examine the obvious and try to penetrate what are obvious but erroneous layers that initially appear to be familiar, in order to uncover the alternate meanings that exist and hold true for the people I am engaging with.

Stories are the vehicle that makes this journey possible for me. I enter the village. I have eyes for the obvious and the familiar and I see the garbage. I not only see garbage, I see garbage everywhere and to the exclusion of almost everything else. Two stories are given to me that allow me, or force me, to uncover and consider alternate meanings. A

six year old girl draws me a picture of her house on stilts, in a row of houses on stilts, with flowers between the houses. At first, my reaction is a disdainful: "there are no flowers in this village, only garbage". The minute the words leave my lips I regret that I have said them, I am troubled by my blindness to what is there for her. It is her village so I reason she must see what is really there. With the gift of her picture and the story it tells me, she takes me from my initial piece of the familiar, to her personal piece of the familiar. The flowers are there, they have been there all along but I was not seeing them. She sees them, and in her picture shows them to me. This revelation hits me, and stops me abruptly in my less than worthy approach to seeing the village. She literally "shows me where to look among the garbage and the flowers" as the poet Leonard Cohen describes in his song Suzanne, a song that plays in my mind at the time. The second garbage story starts with a dialogue and ends with a change in behaviour. A mother of one of the village girls asks me if I am happy in the village. We are under her house at the time. I respond: "yes I am very happy, the people are very kind and the stories from the girls are very good but I am heart broken by all the garbage." She tells me "it is easier in the dry season" and then for the next several days the area under her house is swept clean and all the garbage burned.

When I enter the village, I am very conscious of entering a Muslim space where women wear a head scarf. Head scarf... it is a recurring theme in my travels. I am at the border crossing between Greece and Turkey in November 1987, entering Turkey for the very first time, sitting in the front seat of our VW van, eyes downward, scarf on my head. The border guard opens the sliding door behind me and sees our five year old son sitting in the back then notices me. He asks my husband standing beside him: "Is your wife Muslim?" My husband answers no. "Why she cover head?" We are respectful when we enter another country is the answer given. The guard smiles, ruffles my son's hair. He says "I like this." He closes the sliding door and says, 'Welcome to Turkey' with a beaming smile. On my first solo journey in 2002, I am back in Turkey on a local bus in Anatolia on my way to Goreme. I admire the fine crocheted border on the head scarf of the large woman sitting beside me. She takes out a scarf from her bag with a similar border, crocheted by her, and makes a gift to me. I am very moved by her generosity and the beauty of the scarf, and thank her with tears flooding the corners of my eyes. I am looking at this scarf where it is hanging on my wall as I write this.

I am in Zanzibar in 2006, [another kind of Muslim place] travelling from the home I am staying at across Stonetown on the local bus, to get to the conference I am there to attend. I wear a head scarf, people smile and sit beside me pressed tightly up against me, I am the only white person on the bus. Another day I wear no scarf. People give me disapproving looks, move away from me on the crowded seat and do not speak to me. I am in Antalya in 1988 after five months in Turkey, I encounter a woman from Iran who fled to Turkey to protect her young son from being conscripted as a soldier. He is thirteen. She befriends us and invites us into her home, she offers us the use of her shower when she realizes we are living out of our van. She makes us tea with dehydrated lemons in it, she dresses me in a burka and head scarf like hers and we take a picture. I cover my head with a scarf whenever I enter the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, it is a place of surpassing beauty and great peace. I cover my head with a scarf in Istanbul in 1987 to protect my hair from the smoke in the air from the burning of low grade coal. I arrive in the village in Cambodia, four months ago, in August 2013, and ask for the loan of a head scarf to wear while I am there as a way to demonstrate my respect. A head

scarf has become a piece of the familiar for me that marks spending time in a Muslim place.

Reflections on Head Scarves

Reflections on Head scarves and veils cont'd May 14, 2015

-while reading 'Do Muslim Women Need Saving' by Lila Abu-Lughod, I have this layered thought cluster about what I wrote about the woman in Budapest, about what Clarissa Pinkola-Estes says in her becoming a crone story about veils and shawls and about the story the girl at the resilience research thing told me about how her personal decision to wear a hijab was due to the deep and sacred connection she felt to god (Allah) when she wore it.

July 2011 (flashback to earlier reflections, same theme)

Reflections on an old woman in a kerchief

The streets of Budapest have changed since I visited in 2002, now they are full of fancy cars and fashion designer labels, tourist shops and retail chain stores. On a personal level as I wander through its streets after nine years, the modern glitz and superficial glamour of the city clashes with the charm of the cobblestone streets. Something is missing from the heart of the city I thought I knew, and know I loved. Empty buildings and storefronts with the skillfully embellished architecture of a bygone era are systematically being replaced by modern glass and concrete boxes. On an old street with empty shops, a row of neglected antique wood facades frame recessed doorways. An old woman in layered long skirts and a kerchief on her head carefully slides flattened cardboard boxes one at a time from her cache, preparing her bed for the night. The image is fleeting, a flash in the corner of an eye as I walk past. She haunts me for hours and days the way only the little girl in the pink coat in Spielberg's movie: Schindlers List has done before her.

It is a strange bond of intimacy I feel for her, we have things in common this old woman and I. One who chose to sleep on the floor for the last twenty years, looks away from she who is forced to the ground this summer night in Budapest. The young man already asleep a few doorways down does not capture my conscience the same way she does, and I pause to wonder why this is so. Is it the commonality of gender? Is it resonance as two old women pass on the same street? Is it that, once again, the picture I do not take is the only one with the power to haunt me? On the other hand, does the invisible bond I feel even begin to give me the right to take her picture? And how does she insert herself so thoroughly into my reality as to become an icon or archetype? Insidiously, she becomes symbolic of the way our society discards old women, useless husks of humanity, the very image I strive to avoid as I construct my personal right of passage into the old age time of my own life. Whatever it is, I carry her with me for hours and days. I speak of her late at night to my Hungarian friend Panna who is herself approaching her seventieth year, and she offers to go find the woman and give her money as a way to salve my conscience. We discuss the options, the good and right response to encounters of the poverty kind. Long ago I have decided on a personal code of giving to destitute street dwellers only when my inner voice suggests it, not when

they beg me for it. This time, though, the encounter is too brief for even my inner voice to capture. Yet, there is the inescapable twinge of something.

As Panna and I discuss the woman and her effect on me, I realize that I am the one who has been given something here, I just didn't see it at first. The gift the one in a kerchief has given me is to set ripples in motion that lead to opening a door in my soul for reflections on aging and how I might proceed with my own. I can find this clarity only through expressing my experience, by telling the story of it to Panna as we construct the meaning together. This is the wisdom of our shared story. My silent gratitude to the woman in a kerchief is the only offering required. It is sufficient and satisfying. It honours her careful construction of a bed of cardboard on the street with silent witness and makes something important of this moment in an anonymous life without intrusion or interference. From a purely practical perspective, it is the only way available to me as the moment itself with its opportunity for some alternative form of generosity or compassion is long past. I suspect that she will become a part of me now though, and whenever I tie a kerchief on my head hopefully it will be with a more mindful knot than the careless ones of the past.

March, 2016 in Phnom Penh – head scarves continued

Flash forward to Phnom Penh, March, 2016 with Farina So at Anise restaurant. It is the first time she has been there and the first time I have taken her out for lunch in our growing friendship. It amazes me that I am here knowing her, the scholar of work on "Hijabs of Cambodia" I have quoted. She enjoys the novelty of the food and setting as I relate to her my latest understanding of why the village girls did not talk to me about wearing a head scarf and its significance to them. When something is so completely embedded and expected of you, as hijab is for Muslim village girls, it is not something to think about, reflect on, or discuss – it is merely enacted. The way every mother did before, the way every daughter does now. The 'Hijab Boutique' (Khan & Salem, 2011) book I recently found, although written for children, made an emotional impression on me. Farina says she is interested and will read it, I anticipate our future discussion with new twinges of hope for feeding my insatiable curiosity.

Reactions to re-reading Melina's chapter in Occupational Therapies Without Borders

May 8, 2015

-I saw what she saw, but I saw other things too – e.g., when she talks about the 'value' of children to a family and how Cambodian's treat their young ones – no mention of the protectiveness or the limitations they impose with constraints of play/playfulness (eg. Children at parent's work) although she states that play opportunities are subordinate to work – the meaning making of what we both saw is perhaps the difference, or on the other hand she doesn't mention seeing the tenderness and devotion as with Lyhour's daughter

-no mention of garbage, or flowers, or lack of personal space, or what it means to live with mice etc. that eat your hair bow

-she doesn't talk about living with them by sharing (however briefly) in their conditions or making a personal 'bond' with the place or people, nothing on the relational ethics or what it might mean for them of her being there for a few months then just leaving, or what it meant to her to do that

- Cham village is different context than Siem Reap, some things are the same – I am reading it already knowing the Cambodian context and I am filling a lot in in my mind, visually and viscerally so that likely means that a western reader is just assuming that it is life as they know it (it is actually more like 'life, Jim, but not as we know it')

-interesting that there was no mention of being bored or unstimulated in class (content and/or pedagogy) as a reason for truancy

-the whole occ justice concept stems from the assumptions of Western thought on individual agency, there is an unacknowledged between the lines undercurrent that the Western Justice way is somehow better and more valid than the relational hierarchical contextual way prevalent in the Cambodian culture

-there is something about how she acknowledges the assistants that does not feel like they were included as equals in the study 'thanks I couldn't have done it without you and so long'

-having only one example of 'day in the life' does not represent diversity within community/family life

-when I spoke with her, she gave me the impression that because I had only spent 6 weeks there my study was in some way less than adequate, now that I have lived there for 8 months albeit not in a researcher capacity I can begin to see there was a lot I missed, however that which I saw and experienced is no less valid, nor the meaning making – different doesn't necessarily mean better or worse as in the Zen Koan

-she describes from the philosophical perspective what brought her there, but Siem Reap was just a location of convenience with a set of attributes making it attractive, in my case I needed to fall in love with the place and people slowly and I was transitioning to living there, planning a longer term relationship and investment in the country/towards the people

Reflections on Shyness Dec. 4, 2015

I observed her, Manco, performing her ablutions, changing into clean white clothes and praying facing Mecca. Standing, kneeling. Standing, kneeling. First she completed meticulous preparations. She had put powder on her just-washed skin, sprinkling it onto her hand then discretely smoothing it over her body beneath a layer of clothes; offering the container to me, I shook my head and smiled 'no'. She was sitting in front of the draped television, cross legged, across from me. It was an intimate moment, watching her prepare and pray. I was trying to take it all in, but without looking directly at her. We live the moment together, yet in parallel spaces. She had watched me earlier that morning as I brushed my hair, brushed my teeth. As I put my body through Yoga sun salutations. It was not an act of piety on my part though, just the practical stretching of old body parts to ensure I could sit on the floor like everyone else. She had wanted me to sit in the chair when I first arrived the day before to spend the night. The only chair in

her home, at the table by the small window with wooden sliders that came off in my hand when I tried to open them. I declined even though it would have been easier for my hips and knees, it would have put me at a different eye-level. She sat in the chair in the afternoon, showing me the lone photo of her with her parents in the time before the 'bad times'. She never attended school, her gestures and facial expressions revealed the work and hardships of life for her under the Khmer Rouge. Ghosts of so many accounts I had read of atrocities and tortures played graphically in my mind as I knelt in front of her; rapt attention I offered to her, soul to soul, though I understood nothing of the Khmer words she spoke. Both her and her husband urged me to bathe in the evening before sleep. I was sweaty, but knew I could sleep in my clothes and shower when I got home the next day. Like camping when I was a child. It was already dark, I had no idea where one would go to bathe, assumed it would require dipping and dumping water over my naked body somewhere. I did not know where to go, how to get there, how to do that simple washing task in this unfamiliar setting. I usually 'boldly go' but this time, my shyness, that feeling of discomfort and fear that stops me from trying the unknown or new on stage in front of others, freezes me from action. I am helpless before the wall of it in that moment. It's the exposure. The thought that everyone will know exactly what I am doing, like when I used the village toilet earlier in the afternoon, although their actual eyes are not in the space with me - I am feeling them on me. I flash back to that moment in 2005 in the village in Nigeria, where there is a room in the compound with slanted floor for urinating behind a closed door; but the need to perform 'relieving myself in the bushes' in the open space cleared by machete especially for me just moments before gives me that same vulnerable exposure as bathing in Manco's village in Cambodia. In the 'bushes' in Nigeria, the product goes into a plastic bag which I throw as far as possible away from the spot where the act took place: it is a futile attempt to distance myself from scrutiny.

Reflections about Questions, December, 2015

Is it a lie or a misunderstanding? the emotion (of *betrayal-anger-confusion-disappointment*) from being lied to eventually dissipates as it becomes clear that a difference in language/conceptualizations/time-sense has caused a question to be misunderstood: what grade are you in? sounds obvious to me but since no 'past/present/future' exists in the Khmer language it is not self-evident....when do you start school could mean: what time of day, what month of year, what age, and so on. In English we have subtle meaning markers with the difference between verb tenses: when 'did' you start school, vs when 'do' you start school. Not in Khmer. The word 'start' is another hurdle, as it refers to an aspect of time: does it mean the very first beginning, or the beginning of the continuation for the current year? Does it mean for the morning session, or for the afternoon session? How I have to ask any question in order to give a clear message for the translator is not readily available to me at first. I quickly learn what does not work. I can not ask an opinion question (what is your favourite...? what do you like about...) because the answer will be: 'I don't know' which saves face for the responder but leaves me in the dark. I can not ask a description question (tell me about...what is it like for you to....how do you....) because the question itself will not be understood. In school all learning is repetitious rote learning and that sets up a pattern of possibilities for interaction between me (the curious stranger sitting across from

them) and the girls (doing it the way they always do and have done). What does that leave? I can ask a factual question with an obvious answer such as 'what time do you get up in the morning?' or 'what is 2 plus 2?'. This defines the boundaries of my information gathering regarding the context of daily life in the village, and not knowing how things work at first means that I do not even know what to ask about. That is difficult enough; however, when even a concrete question (for example: when do you start school?) is problematic, in a life where learning by asking questions is not just a habit but like the air I breathe, how can I ever find out anything about these little girls let alone co-create stories with them? And in the light of ideas from *Asiacentricity* with the shift in focus from 'me' as center to the 'interaction' as center, how does my understanding change/insight grow/cultural humility take root?

Reflections on letting the story work on you

Let the stories work on you...

(notes and reflections from December 2015)

-the mouse ate my hair-bow and the sister stole my perfect test (give me the impact of what it means in a little girl's life of not having any 'me-space' in your life)

-Rabbit rides the moto out of town (shocks me into the realization that the 'real' story is not found by asking for it with questions, but by carefully observing life as it unfolds), further evidenced by candid pics of Moon with the little bag of vitamins and with the bottom-shaped ground stain on her trousers, further evidenced by Apple folding balloons into shapes, further evidenced by the 'marble pool' game at Rabbit's house

-the garbage and the flowers (hits me hard in my culture blindness and assumptions that I know the meanings of what I am seeing/experiencing)

-not taking a 'shower' and not getting into Apple's mother's boat (reveal my self-limiting fears, still too scared to try)

-waiting at the neighbor's to be allowed into Butterfly's house (to be seen in a positive light means cleaning house before guests arrive, I am interrupting their patterns and routines with my curiosity intrusion) An hour of waiting is followed by entering a spotless and clear space with a large wood frame bed in one corner and items stored on the walls. (is it a universal, wanting to be seen in a good light by others from outside? Not so different than when I would invite people over in order to give myself an impetus to clean.)

-is it a lie or a misunderstanding? the emotion (of *betrayal-anger-confusion-disappointment*) from being lied to eventually dissipates as it becomes clear that a difference in language/conceptualizations/time-sense has caused a question to be misunderstood: what grade are you in? sounds obvious to me but since no 'past/present/future' exists in the Khmer language it is not self-evident....when do you start school could mean: what time of day, what month of year, what age, and so on. In English we have subtle meaning markers with the difference between verb tenses: when 'did' you start school, vs when 'do' you start school. Not in Khmer...[abbreviated, full reflection is above] -(from this story working on me, penetrating down to the core of that issue of the 'trustworthiness' of the stories they are telling me, I begin to grasp

what it is to sit with something uncomfortable, to let contradictory things both be true at the same time and to try to make a new kind of sense of them)

Reflections on Importance of Story in my life May 15th, 2017

I do not remember a time before stories in my life. My memories from childhood are vivid, with textures-colours-smells-emotions, the same as my memories from my travels. I believe I had a very enriched childhood. I loved watching Glooscap Tales in black and white on the television with the rabbit ears; to imagine life and living off the land in those times. I loved my father's way of reading all the different voices in the stories that could bring them to life every night at bedtime. I loved my mother's faithful word-not-lost-or-out-of-place renditions of all the nursery rhymes and fairy-tales on long car rides. I was not yet five years old. My world was small town Ontario. My world was full of mystery and adventure in 'the field of the three trees' across the street. Michael Palko from next door buried dead frogs in glass jars there, claiming we could dig them up later to see real skeletons. The lane behind our duplex on Benson Avenue in Cardinal was carpeted with catkins in the spring that tickled my toes, and with leaves in the fall that crumpled and shushed when I waded through them. Rotting grass smells after the snow and burning leaves smells before the snow again marked the changing seasons. I loved the lightening from my window in the summer, and the stars overhead skating at night on the ice rink my father made in the backyard. I found the biggest rocks I could carry to drop into the St. Lawrence river when we walked along the boat house road together; wanting to make a big splash. Everything was magic. He told me about the constellations, about the plants, about the rocks. It was the same to me, I believed all the stories he shared whether they were from nature or from a book. I could read before I went to school. Books were always another real world, or worlds. I saw the ballet at the theatre and dinosaur bones skeletons (bigger than Michael Palco's) at the museum when we went to see my grandmother in Toronto. These were incorporated into my play. I made up visions of what I wanted my future to be, and I have lived them out as an adult in the real world. I wanted to be a princess – I was a 'two-day princess' in Zanzibar staying where Princess Salme had lived. I wanted to have long auburn hair that would shine in the sun when I brushed it – just like my ballerina doll – and I do. I wanted to hear the bells and see the stars when I first kissed my love, I did and I married him. I believe so strongly in the things I want that somehow I live them. My skeptical adult side maintains that it is impossible to 'make' things happen, and yet....I have lived my dreams.

APPENDIX N - 8 Points Consent/Assent Script and Card

1. It is possible I may feel discomfort from talking about a sensitive topic. If this happens I can handle it by telling my mother/parent what is happening, asking for a break, or deciding to talk about something else. I know I can stop being in the study at any time by saying I want to stop.
2. It is possible I might feel discomfort or fear about talking with strangers, or about using unknown items such as an i-Pad. If this happens I can handle it by telling my mother/parent what is happening, taking a break, or going very slowly so I can get used to new things. I know I can stop being in the study at any time by saying I want to stop.
3. It is possible I might feel sad when the computer and i-Pad are taken away after I have had a chance to try them. If this happens I can handle it by telling my mother/parent what is happening, reading my paper story book and remembering the good parts of being in the study. I can remember that I can tell stories anytime without having any special items, all I need is my mind and my voice.
4. It is possible that people who are not chosen for the study may be jealous of those who are (for example boys jealous of girls, girls jealous of other girls). If this happens I can handle it by telling my mother/parent what is happening, we can talk to the Female Village Elder if we need more help in deciding what is the best thing to do.
5. It is possible that girls who are not chosen to be in the study may feel rejected or unwanted. If this happens I can tell my mother/parent what is happening, I can share my paper copy of my story with another girl who does not have one, I can help another girl to make a story with a crayon and paper.
6. It is possible that if I use my real name, I could be identified in the future by someone outside the village. To make sure this does not happen, I can use a made-up name or I can use a symbol like a star or a fish or a butterfly to be my special name for the study. I can still have my own name on my paper copy of my story if I want to.
7. It is possible that there might be tension about who I agree to share the results with. I may not want to share my story with other people outside my village. This is my choice. If this happens I can tell my mother/parent and she will help me let others know (the RA) so that what I want to happen is what really happens.
8. It is possible that I may see myself differently or that others may see me differently as a result of doing the study. If this happens I can handle it by talking to my mother/parent and we can decide what to do together.

The following card has been provided to this person:

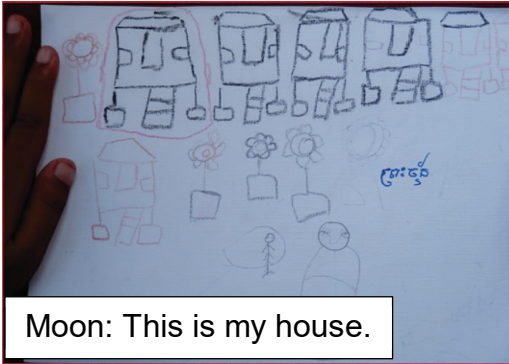
ប្រសិនបើអ្នកមានការលំបាកណាមួយជាមួយនឹងការ ឬ មានចំណងចង់សំឡេងការព្រួយបារម្ភ អំពីទិដ្ឋភាពនៃការចូលរួមរបស់អ្នកក្នុងការសិក្សានេះណាមួយ អ្នកអាចទាក់ទង **Catherine**

Connors នាយកនៃការិយាល័យ **Dalhousie** របស់សាកលវិទ្យាល័យដ្ឋានមនុស្ស ការស្រាវជ្រាវក្រុមសិល ធម៌សម្រាប់ជំនួយ។ លេខកូដប្រទេស **1(902) 494 –**

1462, Catherine.connors@dal.ca ការហៅប្រមូលនិងជ្រុលបានទទួលយក ។ If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice

concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, you may contact Catherine Connors, Director of Dalhousie University's Office of Human Research Ethics Administration for assistance Country code 1(902) 494-1462, catherine.connors@dal.ca. Collect calls will be accepted.

Girl's Drawings



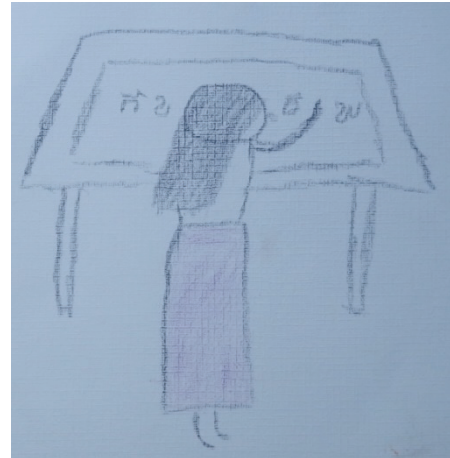
Moon: This is my house.



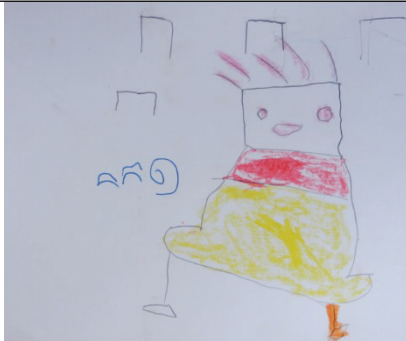
Butterfly: I give my niece a bath.



Rose: I am 5th in my class of 30.



Star: I want to be a teacher



Apple: Someday I want to be



Sunflower: There are 3 kinds of people: Khmer, Chinese Khmer, and Khmer Islam. Overnight a mouse ate my hairbow.



APPENDIX P

Michelle Lavoie—Seeing stories

<http://www.michellemlavoie.com/awPortraits.html>

ART PORTFOLIO
SEEING STORIES: A PORTRAIT SERIES
by Michelle M Lavoie
Original prints
Digital archival printing
on Epson canvas
Not editioned
Size 24"x 6"
[Project Description](#)


[< Back to Art Portfolio](#)

I thought that we might be more compassionate towards each other if we saw a glimpse of each other's stories. The reading of the text causes the viewer to prolong looking, to spend more time with the image. I have found that this multilayered looking allows the viewer time; time to be with the individual and to process the story; time to recall personal memories, and time to look more closely at the image, at the person. 'Seeing' and 'being seen' is a vulnerable space. This deeper seeing calls forth a tenderness in us; a way of being that requires time and thoughtful, careful attention.



APPENDIX Q

Powerpoint, February, 2014.



DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
Inspiring Minds


I learned from them:

- Kindness is powerful, humbling and challenging
- Thinking that money is the only way to get things is a barrier, the paradox of not working together in a collectivist and relational setting
- Rote learning in school has a ripple effect
- That it is possible to want something and have absolutely no idea how to get it


I learned about me:

- How much I rely on asking direct questions, how hard it is to figure out indirect ways to get at things
- In spite of all the tolerant upbringing and all the travel and exposure to difference, I am still ethnocentric and culture blind at times
- That the cost of connectedness is a burden of relational responsibility
- That I want to live in Cambodia and that I can be a researcher

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Jocelyn Campbell, O.T.
Post Professional Masters of Occupational Therapy (Thesis Stream)



Feb. 27, 2014
Lunch & Learn